

The Relationship Between an
Incumbent Governor's Popularity and
State Legislative Election Outcomes:
A Contemporary Assessment of the Coattails Phenomenon

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Abstract

The thesis explores the relationship between an incumbent governor's popularity and state legislative election outcomes in the contemporary era. The study employs data collected from 49 states over a 16-year period (1988 – 2003). Existing archival election and economic data were compiled, compared and analyzed using regression analysis to provide additional insights into the state legislative elections literature. The paper offers a better understanding of the relative effects that certain variables may have on state legislative election outcomes.

The study provides evidence that voters are apt to "split their ticket" between state and national elections: that state elections are not mirrors of national elections. This could be a consequence of the trend towards devolution and state government's increasing jurisdiction over a broadening array of public policy. The findings suggest that the coattails of presidential and senatorial candidates are not extending to state legislative candidates in any consistent, significant way.

However, the positive relationship between a governor's popularity and legislative seats gained by his/her party in the legislature is the one pervasive theme that emerged consistently throughout this project. The result was evident even when variables representing national level candidates, elections and/or officeholders are included. The predicted/expected value for the dependent variable increases during "on" gubernatorial election years, when an incumbent governor is seeking reelection. The consistent statistical significance associated with both variables representing the governor's popularity indicates that party "cues" and partisanship may be pertinent factors that help determine voting behavior in state legislative elections.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1.	Introduction	1
Chapter 2.	Literature Review	4
2.1	Gubernatorial Coattails	5
2.2	Presidential Coattails	6
2.3	National Issues and Elections	7
2.4	Impact of Coattails	7
2.5	Split-Ticket / Candidate-Centered Voting	7
2.6	An Increase in the Independent Voter	8
2.7	A Trend Towards Realignment?	10
2.8	Term Limits and Membership Turnover	11
2.9	Legislative Professionalization / Institutionalization	12
2.10	Economic Conditions	13
2.11	Voter Turnout	15
2.12	The Role of Money / Campaign Expenditures	15
Chapter 3.	Research Design	17
3.1	Dependent Variable	18
3.2	Principal Independent Variables	18
3.3	Additional Explanatory Variables	20
3.4	Data Collection	24
Chapter 4.	Data Sources	27

Chapter 5. A Discussion of the Test Equations, Analyses and Results	30
5.1 Bivariate Relationships / Scatterplots	31
5.2 Regression Analyses: An Explanation of the Testing and Analytical Procedures	32
5.3 Test Equations, Analyses and Results: (Part I: Governor’s Job Approval/Performance Rating)	34
5.4 Test Equations, Analyses and Results: (Part II: Percent of Vote Garnered by Incumbent Governor)	43
Chapter 6. Synopsis and Discussion of Statistically Significant (and Insignificant) Variables	51
6.1 Statistically Significant Variables	52
6.2 Analysis of National Level Indicators	62
6.3 Variables that were Not Statistically Significant	66
Chapter 7. Conclusion	67
Appendix I: Test Results Graphs and Figures	75
Scatterplot Graphs	76
Label Reference for Variables	78
Figures (Regression Analyses)	81
Works Cited / References	107

List of Graphs

- Graph 5-1. The Bivariate Relationship between the *Actual Percent of the Vote Garnered by an Incumbent Governor* seeking Re-election and State Legislative Seat Changes 76
- Graph 5-2. The Bivariate Relationship between an *Incumbent Governor's Job Approval or Performance Rating* and State Legislative Seat Changes during "Off" Gubernatorial Election Years 77

List of Figures

Figure 5-1. A Basic Model Assessing the Relationship between an Incumbent Governor’s Popularity and Legislative Seat Changes during “Off” Gubernatorial Election Years	81
Figure 5-2. The Relationship between a Governor’s Popularity and Legislative Seat Changes During “Off” Gubernatorial Election Years	82
Figure 5-3. The Relationship between the Governor’s Job Approval Rating and State Legislative Seat Changes during “Off” Gubernatorial Election Years: Does Legislative Institutionalization Matter?	83
Figure 5-4. The Relationship between a Governor’s Popularity and State Legislative Seat Changes During “Off” Gubernatorial and “On” Senatorial Election Years	84
Figure 5-5. The Relationship between the Governor’s Job Performance/Approval Rating and Legislative Seat Changes during “On” Senatorial Election Years: An Assessment of Senatorial Coattails.	85
Figure 5-6. The Relationship between the Governor’s Popularity and Legislative Seat Changes Relative to both “On” and “Off” Gubernatorial Election Years	86
Figure 5-7. The Relationship between the Governor’s Popularity and State Legislative Seat Changes during “Off” Gubernatorial Election Years when State Political Party Expenditures are Introduced	87

Figure 5-8. The Coefficients associated with the State’s Unemployment Rate and Political Party Campaign Expenditures during “Off” Gubernatorial and “On” Presidential Election Years	88
Figure 5-9. The Coefficients associated with the Straight Party Vote Option and the State’s Unemployment Rate during “On” Senatorial and “Off” Gubernatorial Election Years	89
Figure 5-10. The Relationship between a Governor’s Popularity and State Legislative Seat Changes during an “Off” Gubernatorial and “Off” Presidential Election Year	90
Figure 5-11. The Relationship between National Level Indicators, Economic Variables and State Legislative Seat Changes Relative to both “On” and “Off” Gubernatorial Election Years	91
Figure 5-12. The Relationship between National Level Indicators, Economic Variables and State Legislative Seat Changes during “Off” Gubernatorial Election Years	92
Figure 5-13. The Coefficients Associated with National Level Indicators and Economic Variables during “Off” Gubernatorial and “On” Senatorial Election Years	93
Figure 5-14. The Statistical Significance of the Governor’s Popularity and Economic Variables during “On” Presidential, “On” Senatorial and “Off” Gubernatorial Election Years	94
Figure 5-15. The Predicted Effect of Gubernatorial Coattails and the Straight Party Vote Option during “On” Gubernatorial Election Years: A Basic Model	95

Figure 5-16. The Coefficients associated with Gubernatorial, Senatorial and Presidential Coattails	96
Figure 5-17. The Relationship between the Governor’s Popularity, the Straight Party Vote Option and State Legislative Election Outcomes during “On” Gubernatorial Election Years	97
Figure 5-18. The Coefficients Associated with the Governor’s Popularity and the Straight Party Vote Option during “On” Gubernatorial Election Years	98
Figure 5-19. The Predicated Effect of Gubernatorial Coattails combined with the Straight Party Vote Option during “On” Gubernatorial Election Years	99
Figure 5-20. A Simultaneous Assessment of Gubernatorial, Senatorial and Presidential Coattails	100
Figure 5-21. An Examination of the Coefficients Associated with the Governor’s Percent of the Vote Garnered and the Straight Party Vote Option	101
Figure 5-22. The Coefficients Associated with the Governor’s Popularity and State Political Party Expenditures during “On” Gubernatorial Election Years	102
Figure 5-23. The Predicted Effects of Gubernatorial Coattails and State Political Party Expenditures on Legislative Seat Changes during “On” Gubernatorial Election Years	103

Figure 5-24. The Coefficients Associated with the Governor’s Popularity, National Level Variables, and State Political Party Expenditures during “On” Gubernatorial Election Years	104
Figure 5-25. The Relationship between Gubernatorial Coattails and State Legislative Seat Changes During “On” Gubernatorial and “Off” Presidential Election Years	105
Figure 5-26. The Relationship Between Institutional Instability and State Legislative Seat Changes during “On” Gubernatorial Election Years: Who Benefits from Membership Turnover?	106

CHAPTER 1.

Introduction

Perhaps no field of legislative research has received as much scholarly attention as legislative elections (Ragsdale, 1994). This project seeks to break new ground in the literature by answering the following question: does a positive relationship exist between an incumbent governor's popularity (principal independent variable) and the outcome of state legislative elections (dependent variable). The thesis examines the following proposition: an incumbent governor's popularity¹ is positively related to the percentage of seats gained by his/her party's state legislative candidates in the general election.

According to Underwood (2001), scholars concur that the nation has recently witnessed a candidate-centered period. While political campaigns are becoming increasingly candidate-centered (meaning voters "split their ticket" and do not base their decisions strictly upon political party affiliation), governors are considered the "head of their state party" and often lead the ticket on which their party's legislative candidates campaign. Therefore, it is often theorized that a popular incumbent governor can energize a party's entire ticket, grass-roots constituency, and party apparatus. While legislative candidates are advised to maintain a certain degree of independence during a campaign and to develop their own identity amongst the electorate, they can certainly benefit from the coattails of a popular incumbent governor. Also, due to a lack of other information, many voters may use their impression of the incumbent governor as a "cue" or guide in casting a vote for state legislative candidates.

While numerous tests have been conducted on the impact that "presidential coattails" have on gubernatorial, congressional and state legislative elections, research on "gubernatorial coattails" is less well developed. This project endeavors to provide a comprehensive assessment of the dominant forces or variables affecting voter behavior in state elections. Such inquiry is important, for these matters ultimately determine the composition of legislative chambers and the public policy agenda. The project examines the conditions or circumstances under which the coattail effect occurs, as well as its predicted impact.

¹ Measured by the actual percentage of the vote garnered by an incumbent governor seeking re-election, or his/her job approval/performance rating during "off" gubernatorial election years.

By gauging the potential effects of various forces on state legislative election outcomes, the study should contribute to the existing body of political science academic literature while providing strategic guidance for those engaged in the actual practical application of state electoral politics.

CHAPTER 2.

Literature Review

2.1 Gubernatorial Coattails

While the strength of (presidential, senatorial and gubernatorial) coattails have diminished since the late 1960's (Chubb, 1988), a study conducted by the Council of State Governments/Eastern Regional Conference (1996) indicates that one of the most significant trends discovered in the Northeastern section of the nation after the 1996 Presidential Election was the importance of gubernatorial coattails providing assistance to candidates in close races, as well as the increasing popularity of ticket-splitting (Nor' Eastern, 1996).

According to Bill Frenzel of the Brookings Institution, Governors are — other than the president — the strongest predictors of voter turnout and participation in elections. Gubernatorial candidates can impact a statewide or local race in a wide variety of ways. In some cases, voters supporting a popular incumbent or gubernatorial candidate will also vote for the lesser-known legislative candidates of the same party (Stevens, 2002). Popular candidates for higher office bring party supporters to the polls, and candidates at lower levels enjoy “spill-over” effects (Campbell, 1993; Jacobson, 1997). Strong gubernatorial candidates also frequently mount coordinated campaigns with their fellow legislative candidates — a factor that can make the difference in tight elections for legislative candidates whose names appear further down the ballot (Stevens, 2002).

"If you have a situation where a governor is unusually popular, that could be a situation where he or she might have coattails," claims Darrell West, a professor of political science at Brown University. According to Frenzel of the Brookings Institute, “Governors are awfully important in their own states, and they tend to get more ink or more electronic time than senators do. Other than presidents, they really are the ones who are going to make the difference over who decides to vote and who decides not to vote.” In addition, a gubernatorial candidate of a particular gender, ethnicity or ideology may help increase turnout among a responsive core group of voters (Stevens, 2002).

Lowry (1998) found that governors have long coattails during “on” gubernatorial election years, with a magnitude of effect similar to that of the president. Gubernatorial coattails could mean that a strong gubernatorial candidate willing to stump for legislative candidates may be enough

to push a few close races over the top, but does not have a big overall effect on voting (Lowry, 1998). Chubb (1988) found that “off-year” gubernatorial coattails add only 0.8%, while other data suggest that gubernatorial coattails only help if the candidate is "unusually popular." Campbell (1986) found that gubernatorial coattails can exert a significant influence on state legislative elections. In fact, positive gubernatorial effects were found in over 75% of the states surveyed (29 of 38), suggesting that a strong run by a party’s candidate for governor helps the party win seats in the legislature. According to Campbell (1986), a party should gain about 2% of the state legislative seats for every five additional percentage points won by its candidate for Governor. Weber and Parent (1985) argue that the pattern of evidence is such that gubernatorial coattails should not be ignored in "any comprehensive analysis" of state elections.

2.2 Presidential Coattails

Studies suggest that presidential candidates exert the greatest potential influence over state legislative election outcomes (Chubb, 1988). According to Campbell (1986), as it concerns state legislative contests, the effect of gubernatorial and presidential coattails are roughly equal, with presidential coattails appearing a bit stronger. Campbell (1986) reports evidence that presidential coattails extend to the division of seats in state legislatures, and finds that gubernatorial coattails have some independent impact. In fact, the president’s party invariably loses state legislative seats in midterm “off” presidential election years. In a study of aggregate state legislative election outcomes between 1944 and 1984 in 41 states, it was discovered that the president's party consistently loses partisan control of state legislatures in midterm elections, a pattern similar to the loss of seats in the U.S. House of Representatives in midterms. The analysis indicates that the president's party gains seats in presidential elections in proportion to the presidential vote in a state, and subsequently loses seats in midterm elections also in proportion to the prior presidential vote in the state (Campbell, 1986). In 2002, the Republican Party became the first party occupying the White House to gain state legislative seats in a mid-term election cycle since records were maintained. Historically, the President's party has lost an average of more than 350 seats in every mid-term election cycle since at least 1938 (Rose and Wyatt, 2002).

The presidential coattail and the midterm repercussion effects are evident even when gubernatorial coattail effects are introduced, but are fairly modest in states lacking competitive parties (Campbell, 1986).

However, while the Johnson and Reagan landslides of 1964 and 1984 generated major state legislative gains for their parties, the large margins won by Nixon in 1972 and Bush in 1988 did not. The Democrats actually lost seats in state legislatures in the elections of Carter in 1976 and Clinton in 1992 (NCSL, 1996).

2.3 National Issues and Elections

Early studies uncovered evidence of strong national effects on legislative elections in the United States (Ragsdale, 1994): that outcomes of state legislative races appear to be influenced by a context dominated by national political concerns. A body of research suggests that national elections and concerns about national government issues can influence non-national, state legislative races. In fact, sub-national elections are often mirrors of national elections. In the past, both governors and legislators have been vulnerable to swings in the national economy and attitudes towards the party of the President. In other circumstances, legislative elections might be entirely independent of national races (Chubb, 1988).

2.4 Impact of Coattails

Berry et. al. (2000) found strong support for their theory that coattails are strongest for the president, weakest for senators, and in-between for governors. Chubb (1988) found that presidents, senators and governors all have significant coattails: a 10% increase in the vote for any one of these statewide candidates increases a party's share of seats in the lower house of the state legislature by 3.2%, 3.3%, and 3.5%, respectively -- suggesting a positive relationship between the principal variables of interest in this project.

2.5 Split-Ticket / Candidate-Centered Voting

Numerous scholars have tested whether party identification is a valid concept in various settings. While governors may have more power to influence the midterm elections than most politicians, gubernatorial coattails have generally shortened in recent years, according to Stephen Hess of the Brookings Institution. “When people voted very strongly on party, it made a great deal of difference who was at the head of the ticket,” he said. “I think that is less the fact today than it was at least through the first 150 years of American history. People really do tend to vote the person and are more apt to split their ticket.” Wattenberg (1996) provides further evidence that the public’s increased split-ticket voting and registration as Independents is a move away from political parties.

It is significant that the number of states dominated by one of the two major American parties has declined precipitously, and the one-party south has virtually disappeared. As of the 1999 elections, 35 out of 50 states were served by a governor and at least one U.S. Senator from different parties, some elected on the very same day. Again, research suggests there is an increase in personality-centered candidacies occurring at the expense of party-centered campaigns (Stevens, 2002).

After the 2002 elections, 29 states had divided government, up from 28 before the election. In these states, no single party controls the governor’s office and both chambers of the legislature. The number of states with divided government has hovered near 30 since 1984, and increased from 21 to 28 resulting from the 1984 elections. State governments remain nearly evenly divided between the two major parties (Storey, 2003).

2.6 An Increase in the Independent Voter

According to 1998 data, for 28 states, 78% of eligible voters were registered as either Democrats or Republicans, while 20% were registered as Independents or miscellaneous. Fewer than 2% were registered as members of a Third Party (Rosenthal, 2003). Since national voter registration data are not readily available in the aggregate, data from the five most populous states for which

these data were available was compiled and examined. These states (which included New York, California, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Florida), taken in the aggregate, have diverse demographic characteristics and play a very prominent role in national politics. Therefore, they serve as an appropriate proxy for national voter registration statistics and trends.

Voter registration data in Florida, one of the nation's most demographically diverse states, suggests there is an increasing independence amongst the state's electorate. The number and percentages of Independent voters has surged in recent years. One of the most significant, noticeable trends in state politics is the strong growth of Independent voters – those who are not affiliated with a party or who are registered with a minor party (Barnett, 2004). According to the Florida Department of State, registered Independents have increased by 18% since 2000, and now account for 20% of the electorate (up from 18% in 2000). This trend is consistent in each of the other states examined.

According to the New York State Board of Elections, between April 1999 and March 2004, citizens registered with a party other than Democrat or Republican increased by 39.1%. In 1999: 46.82% were registered as a Democrat (compared with 43.58% in 2004); 28.83% were registered as Republican (compared with 25.96% in 2004); and 28.83% were not affiliated with either of the two major parties (compared with 30.45% in 2004).

According to the California Secretary of State's office, between February 1999 and February 2004, citizens registered with a party other than Democrat or Republican increased by 20%. In 1999: 46.72% were registered as a Democrat (compared with 43.2% in 2004); 35.27% were registered as a Republican (compared with 35.55% in 2004); and 18.01% were not affiliated with either of the two major parties (compared with 21.25% in 2004).

According to the Pennsylvania Department of State, between November 1998 and April 2004, citizens registered with a party other than Democrat or Republican increased by 23.4%. In 1998: 42.33% were registered as Republicans (compared with 41.6% in 2004); 48.42% were registered as Democrats (compared to 47.47% in 2004); and 9.25% were not affiliated with either of the two major parties (compared with 10.93% in 2004).

Voter Registration Data in Ohio follows a similar pattern. In 1999: 11.74% of voters were registered as Republicans (compared with 9.89% in 2003); 13.16% were registered as Democrats (compared with 9.14% in 2003); and 75.05% were registered with No-Party Affiliation (compared with 80.97% in 2003). While the number of registered voters decreased by 63,916 during that time period, those registered as non-partisans increased by 7%.

It is important to note that even though one-third to one-fourth of voters consider themselves “Independent,” many of them lean Democrat or Republican (Rosenthal, 2003). While party registration may not necessarily represent the best proxy for assessing the nexus between party identification and voting behavior, it does provide a quantifiable means of assessing whether there is a trend towards partisan realignment or dealignment amongst the electorate. It has been argued that the shifts observed in party registration and identification may occur more amongst non-voters than voters. On balance, commitments to party appear to be declining, but they still add a degree of consistency between elections for voters’ preferences (Ragsdale, 1994). Others argue that despite the decline, party identification is still extremely important (Rosenthal, 2003).

2.7 A Trend Towards Realignment?

A body of research suggests the relationship between political party identification and vote choice has been increasing in recent years, and that the number of independents has remained relatively stable since 1980 (Abramowitz, 2003). Bartels (2000) argues that identification structures voting decisions for most people. Evidence shows that many voters use party identification in state legislative races (Ragsdale, 1994), and Rosenthal (2003) claims that party identification and voting behavior are closely connected in state elections. In the 1960’s and 1970’s, there was an increase in independent voters, a trend that some researchers argue has been reversed in recent years. There is a reconfiguration in coalitions comprising the parties, and a gradual decline in identification with the Democratic Party (especially in the South). This has resulted in a new composition for both major parties (Abramowitz, 2003).

It has been suggested that a realignment took hold in the 1990's and that a strengthening has occurred within the electorate in recent years (Abramowitz, 2003). Bartels (2000) found that the impact of partisan loyalties on voting behavior has increased in both presidential and congressional elections over the past 30 years, and that the conventional wisdom of there being a decline in parties is badly outdated. Nonetheless, there is still a great deal of importance placed on the candidate-centered organization, where each candidate establishes his/her own campaign organization and identity, separate from that of the party organization.

2.8 Term Limits and Membership Turnover

Term limits are undoubtedly the most significant change to effect state legislatures in recent history, and they will dramatically accelerate the rate of member turnover. In the 2002 elections, 9 of the 10 highest turnover states had term limits (Bowser, 2003). It is anticipated that term limits are likely to change significantly the organization and operation of legislatures (Jones, 1992/93), and they could certainly impact the partisan composition of legislative chambers. For instance, 41% of legislative seats were subject to term limits in Florida in 2000, and 42.6% of seats were subject to term limits in Michigan in 1998.

Beginning in 1990 in Colorado, California and Oklahoma, some 21 states approved term limits for state legislators. Subsequently, courts in three states overturned these limits, and in Idaho and Utah the legislatures repealed them. The net result is that 17 states currently have term limit laws "on the books." By 2003, nearly a thousand legislators have been termed out in 11 states (Moncrief et. al., 2004). Since the introduction of legislative term limits, state legislative scholars have been interested in understanding their effect on electoral politics. As a consequence, there is a growing body of literature that examines how term limits affect the prevalence of open-seat races, the number of candidates running for office, campaign finance, and the closeness of elections (Clucas, 2002). Despite this attention, there is still a lack of understanding of how term limits affect electoral outcomes. Carey, Niemi, and Powell (2000) argue that term limits may constrain partisan electoral tides, while Moncrief et. al. (2004) claim the effects of term limits vary depending on the length of the term limit and the opportunity structure in the state

Term limits are important because they restrict the ability of members to make a career of legislative politics. With incumbents forced out, term limits thus have the potential to have the opposite effect of institutionalization, while making elections more responsive to broader trends (Clucas, 2002).

Almost eighty years ago, Robert Luce (1924) referred to high turnover rates and lack of tenure in American legislatures as an “evil” that led to “weaknesses of our legislative bodies.” In some chambers, more than half of the members were new in each biennium. By mid-century, legislative turnover began to decline. By the mid- to late-1980s, sharply decreased turnover and a growing cynicism about government in general and legislatures in particular led to the opposite concern -- that there were too many career politicians and too little “fresh blood” (Moncrief et. al., 2004). Legislative turnover has declined steadily for nearly two decades before leveling off in the 1990’s, where it hovered around 20% throughout the decade (Storey, 2002). Moncrief et. al. (2004) attribute the abatement of this long downward trend to term limits. Turnover peaked in the post-redistricting years of 1982, 1992 and 2002, and 2002 was the first year that redistricting and term limits converged to affect legislative elections and increase turnover (Storey, 2002).

2.9 Legislative Professionalization / Institutionalization

It is well established that legislators from highly professionalized bodies are more likely to win re-election, and that state legislatures are becoming more institutionalized. The historical record suggests that the level of legislative professionalization is a major factor in determining turnover (Moncrief et. al., 2004). Berry et. al. (2000) found that the effect of professionalization on incumbent electoral success is quite pervasive. As the level of professionalism of a legislature increases, the effects of external political and economic forces on a legislator's chances for re-election diminish in strength. This implies that legislative professionalization promotes institutionalization by establishing boundaries that insulate members from externalities.

Chubb (1988) found that institutionalization substantially insulates legislative elections against major threats. Carey et. al. (2000) provide evidence that professionalization affects incumbency safety. The result is that institutionalization has made elections less responsive to swings in public opinion, electoral conditions, economic trends, and other forces outside the legislators' control (Chubb, 1988). Carey et. al. (2000) state that there are three key indicators of legislative institutionalization: days in session, salary, and legislative operating budget.

2.10 Economic Conditions

Researchers generally accept a simple theory of economic voting, which states that the economy affects elections (Ragsdale, 1994). Chubb (1988) claimed that state legislators and governors have less to fear from their state economies than is often thought, and that state elections are more susceptible to swings in the national economy. Others contend that changes in the structure of the governorship since World War II have established a foundation for increased political independence and power. Hansen (1999) found that the job performance ratings of governors are increasingly based on state rather than national economic conditions, specifically unemployment. Since the late 1960's, state legislatures have undergone significant institutional reforms and have been granted more authority due to devolution. It can be argued that these trends have resulted in increases in economic leverage for governors and legislators, rendering them increasingly accountable to the citizenry for state economic performance.

Legislative elections can be influenced by economic conditions (Ragsdale, 1994), and state unemployment has a significant negative impact on a governor's popularity, an effect that has increased over time (Hansen, 1999). Leyden and Borrelli (1993) found that the state economy makes more of a difference when government control is clearly in the hands of a single party – that government performance relative to the economy is more easily rewarded and punished when it can be traced to a single party. They further contend that the effect of state unemployment on the incumbent gubernatorial party's vote percentage is greatly enhanced when the governor's party controls both chambers of the state legislature.

Other studies have conceptualized legislative elections as collective judgments or referenda on the incumbent party's handling of the economy (Ragsdale, 1994). Changes in the rate of real per capita disposable income growth are estimated to exert a significant, independent effect on the share of state legislative seats captured by the president's party. Through the mid-1960's, a one-percentage point (+1%) change in the rate of real per capita disposable income growth changed the average state legislative seat share of the president's party by one-half of a percentage point (0.5%).

Exit poll data from 34 gubernatorial races in 1986 shows that voters reward legislative candidates of the same party as the incumbent governor for increases in state per capita disposable income (Niemi et. al., 1995). Other data indicate that the incumbent governor's party is punished for increasing taxes but not rewarded for decreasing taxes (Kone and Winters, 1993). Effects may also be relative to political party affiliation. Voters penalize the governor's party in the legislature if the budget is mismanaged. They punish fiscal irresponsibility and imbalance in a collective way by weakening the governor's party in the legislature, as though desiring to divide government (Lowry et. al., 1998).

Clear fiscal policy effects were apparent in legislative elections between 1968 and 1992, independent of the effects of incumbency, coattails, term limits, and macroeconomic conditions (Lowry, 1998). Other research suggests that state legislative elections do not turn appreciably on the performance of the state government in managing its economy (Lowry, 1998). Ragsdale (1994) concludes that the economy has an effect, has no effect, and has an effect under certain circumstances. Ragsdale (1983) observed that, among the wealth of studies on the electoral impact of the economy, there was a paucity of agreement about the specifics of that impact. Also, the impact of the economy on election outcomes hinges partly on how individual voters assess the government's handling of the economy. Feldman (1982) concluded that economic conditions and personal finances are relevant at the ballot box only to the extent that people perceive the government as having responsibility for these elements of personal well-being.

However, other data suggest that while state economic conditions have a statistically significant impact on gubernatorial election outcomes (albeit small), such conditions had little influence on state legislative elections (Chubb, 1988). Chubb could not provide more than little support for

the hypothesis that voters hold state politicians responsible for state economic performance. He found that when state economic changes are the only economic conditions in a model, their effect is small and nonsignificant. Chubb also found that national, but not state, economic conditions influenced party control of the lower house of 35 state legislatures from 1940 to 1982.

Since the 1970's, considerable work has been done on the relationship between economic voting and legislative elections. While researchers may suggest that much is known about the electoral effects of the economy, the suggestion is deceptively inaccurate (Ragsdale, 1994). As governors become increasingly powerful and legislatures more institutionalized, it is important to explore in more detail the extent to which these officeholders are being held directly accountable for a state's economic performance, and which variables and conditions are the most accurate, consistent and salient sources for making this assessment.

2.11 Voter Turnout

Turnout also counts, and it oscillates differently from state to state (Chubb, 1988). Changes in levels of voter participation between presidential and non-presidential election years may have differential effects on the political parties and consequently on the shares of state legislative seats they win. While coattails, especially those of the president, have arguably exerted the largest average influence, economic conditions and voter participation can cause significant swings in legislative races (Lowry, 1988).

2.12 The Role of Money / Campaign Expenditures

In U.S. elections, the extent to which candidates and parties get their messages out and thus claim their responsiveness to voters is largely dictated by the amount of money spent on those messages (Ragsdale, 1994). As a result, substantial importance is placed on raising and spending campaign funds. The universally accepted belief amongst political operatives, analysts and candidates is that whichever candidate or party spends the most money wins. Jacobson (1978)

found that the more challengers spent the more they were able to increase their name recognition and vote totals, but the more incumbents spent, the less successful they were.

The role of money in elections is a topic of such great interest that it has spawned a large volume of empirical research. This research has provided a basic understanding of the relationship between money and votes, so that it can be said with a great deal of certainty that there is a positive association between candidate expenditures and votes in gubernatorial elections and state legislative primaries and general elections (Breux & Gierzynski, 1996). Breux & Gierzynski (1991) found evidence that campaign expenditures play a significant role in state legislative election outcomes, with spending by challengers having a larger effect on the vote than spending by incumbents.

While fundraising is an increasingly important priority for candidates, particularly in the new era of term limits, an overall picture of the effect of money on state legislative campaigns remains blurred. The literature suggests that researchers go in many directions with few connections made relative to the studies of candidates, political action committees, and political parties. Ragsdale's (1994) conclusion is accurate: A theory linking the importance and timing of political action committee money and party money to the success of individual legislative candidates would be an important next step for the field of political science.

CHAPTER 3.

Research Design

While the literature suggests that there may be an increase in split-ticket, candidate-centered voting, it also offers evidence that a positive relationship exists between the principal independent variables of interest and the dependent variable: that gubernatorial coattails exist and are related to state legislative election outcomes.

A number of studies have examined research questions that are related to the central proposition of this thesis. However, a comprehensive analysis that employs recent data from 49 states over a 16-year period and includes the most relevant explanatory variables gleaned from the literature review is warranted. This project should clarify a number of lingering issues in the state legislative elections literature, while providing a clearer sense of the relative effects of different variables² on state legislative election outcomes.

This project will compare archival data obtained from the "running record" to ascertain the existence of a relationship between the variables. The project will consist of compiling, comparing, testing and analyzing existing archival election and economic data by developing Scatterplot graphs and conducting regression analyses. Researchers will exercise no control over the variables. The analyses should discover whether patterns exist that provide evidence that an incumbent governor's popularity is related to the success of legislative candidates that share his/her party affiliation.

3.1 Dependent Variable

Since the number of legislators serving in each state varies dramatically (from New Hampshire's 400 seat House of Representatives to Alaska's 20 member Senate), *the Dependent Variable will be the total percentage of legislative seats gained or lost in each state in each election cycle by the governor's party.*

3.2 Principal Independent Variables

² Including higher office elections and economic conditions.

While the project employs a total of 22 independent variables, there are two independent variables of greatest theoretical interest. The first is *the actual percent of the vote garnered in a state by an incumbent governor seeking re-election (during an “on” gubernatorial election year)*.

Separate analyses should assess the relationship between an incumbent governor’s popularity and state legislative election outcomes during “off” gubernatorial election years. In these equations, the principal independent variable is *the governor’s job approval/performance rating prior to the election* (as determined by prominent public opinion polls). This is an important assessment since the incumbent governor typically takes an active role in campaigning statewide on behalf of his or her party’s legislative candidates. This test will enable the researcher to assess the effect that select variables have on election outcomes during “off” gubernatorial election years, while testing whether voters punish or reward the governor’s party in legislative races during “off” years.

*A Dummy Variable will reflect whether it is an “on” or “off” gubernatorial election year.*³ The main purpose of this “dummy” is to enable the researcher to separate the data prior to conducting analyses, so that cases relative to both “on” and “off” gubernatorial election years can be analyzed separately.

Data were not included in the study from states in which a gubernatorial election was scheduled in a certain year but there was no incumbent governor seeking re-election (i.e., open seats). The rationale behind assessing only an incumbent governor’s potential or predicted impact on legislative electoral outcomes is that an incumbent governor is the chief executive of the state. He or she has occupied the office for at least two years, has had an opportunity to propose and set policy, and govern. Therefore, the electorate has had an opportunity to “get to know” the incumbent governor, identify with his/her personality and policies, and form an opinion of his/her performance in office. The test is designed specifically to measure whether or not this identification with the incumbent chief executive, as well as his/her popularity amongst the electorate, resonates to such a degree that it is related to state legislative elections.

³ For all Dummy Variables, 1 = yes, 0 = no

3.3 Additional Explanatory Variables

In addition to the principal independent variables, there are a number of other predictors that could impact or have a (positive) relationship with state legislative election outcomes. These variables and the basis for including them were discussed in detail in Chapter 2: Literature Review.

Presidential Coattails and National Elections:

Studies suggest that presidential candidates exert a strong influence over state legislative election outcomes (Chubb, 1988; and Campbell, 1986). Therefore, to control for the potentially substantial impact of presidential elections and coattails, the model includes a “dummy” representing whether it was an “on” or “off” presidential election year.

The Incumbent President’s Job Performance/Approval Rating was also used as a predictor. During “on” presidential election years, the analysis will include *the actual percentage of the vote garnered in a state in each election year by the presidential candidate/nominee that shares the incumbent governor’s political party affiliation*. This variable is designed to directly assess the relationship between the presidential nominee’s popularity and the dependent variable. It is intended to be a main proxy for presidential coattails.

To further assess the impact of presidential coattails, and its potential relationship with gubernatorial coattails, a separate “dummy” will indicate whether the incumbent Governor shares the same political party affiliation as the incumbent President.

Chubb (1988) indicates that national elections can influence non-national, state legislative races, and that sub-national elections are often mirrors of a national election. Campbell (1986) found that increases in the vote for a U.S. Senate candidate are positively related to increases in a party's share of seats in the lower chamber of the state legislature. Therefore, a “dummy” will represent whether a U.S. Senate race appeared on the ballot in a certain state during a certain

election year. Another predictor reflects the actual percentage of the vote garnered in a state by the U.S. Senate candidate that shares the incumbent governor's political party affiliation.

Economic Conditions:

Election outcomes have been affected in a wide variety of contexts by economic conditions (Alt & Chrystal, 1983). The literature suggests that changes in the rate of real per capita disposable income growth are estimated to exert a significant, independent effect on state legislative elections (Chubb, 1988). In order to further explore the dynamic relationship between a governor's popularity, economic conditions and state legislative election outcomes, this study employs three variables relative to economic conditions. While other tests have employed changes in per capita income, alternative specifications of state economic performance merit attention.

Therefore, the test includes two separate measures relative to the state's unemployment rate: one variable represents the state's *actual unemployment rate immediately prior to the general election*, while another variable represents *the percentage change in the unemployment rate*. The latter variable represents a direct comparison between the unemployment rate in the state two years prior to the general election with the rate immediately prior to the election. The study also includes a variable representing the *percent change in personal income in the state prior to the election*.⁴

Legislative Professionalization:

It has been established that legislators from highly professionalized bodies are more likely to win reelection than members of less professionalized bodies (Berry et. al., 2000). Carey et. al. (2000) state that there are three key indicators of legislative institutionalization: days in session, salary, and legislative operating budget. For this project, *the average number of days legislators spend in session per state, per year* represents one independent variable. This is considered a measure

⁴ This variable shows the change in personal income between two consecutive years. It represents the income received by all persons from all sources. It is calculated as the sum of wage and salary disbursements, supplements to wages and salaries, proprietors' income with inventory valuation and capital consumption adjustments, rental income of persons with capital consumption adjustment, personal dividend income, personal interest income, and personal current transfer receipts, less contributions for government social insurance.

of the time that is devoted to the job by state lawmakers. Another variable represents, in dollars, *the annual compensation or salary paid to legislators in each state*. Carey et. al. (2000) claim that salary best accounts for incumbency advantage, and compensation is considered an important factor in attracting potential legislators from a broad cross-section of society (CSG, 2002). Also, the *job approval/performance rating of a state legislature* was included as a variable.

Term Limits:

A total of 17 states currently have term limits “on the books” for members of the legislature, while limits were in effect and imposed on legislators in 11 states during the timeframe of this study (NCSL, 2003). Since this is a relatively recent phenomenon (with implementation commencing in Maine and California in 1996), a contribution to the literature that discusses the relationship between term limits and legislative seat changes is warranted. Therefore, included in this study is a variable that represents the *total percentage of legislative seats subject to term limits in a state an election cycle*.

Membership Turnover:

Membership Turnover can be considered another measure of legislative professionalization or institutionalization. It provides a measure of the stability of a legislature, as well as its independence from elections and circumstances at other levels. It also provides an assessment of the partisan competitiveness of state legislatures.

Therefore, a predictor was included that represents *the total percentage of seats that were “turned-over” in the lower chamber of a state legislature resulting from an election cycle*. Turnover rates are generally smaller in the upper houses, although the difference is surprisingly small (Moncrief et. al., 2004). While this predictor is effected by and related to the reelection rates of incumbent legislators, and perhaps serves as a proxy for reelection rates, it is not a completely pure or perfect assessment of those rates. Reelection rates consider only if an incumbent legislator seeks and achieves reelection. Turnover, however, offers a more comprehensive assessment of the stability and competitiveness of an institution, taking into account factors such as the impact of term limits, mid-session vacancies, deaths, open seats, redistricting, the retirement of a legislator, or a legislator’s seeking another elected office.

If a positive relationship is found to exist between a governor's popularity and the dependent variable, it could be expected that the governor's party could benefit from turnover and gain seats in the legislature (whether turnover resulted from term-limits or other factors).

Voter Turnout:

Since changes in levels of voter participation between presidential and non-presidential election years may have differential effects on the political parties and on the share of state legislative seats they win (Chubb, 1988), variables were included to assess voter turnout. One variable compared *the percentage of the voting-age population that cast a ballot in each state in each statewide election year with the mean (or average) turnout rate in the state in elections between 1988 and 2003* (the term of the study). The intent of the "averaging" is to determine a benchmark or baseline voter turnout rate that will provide for a more accurate assessment of surges and declines in voter turnout in the state. When determining the mean voter turnout over the 16-year period, a separate calculation was conducted for "on" and "off" presidential election years.

In addition, a separate variable reflected *the percentage increase or decrease in voter turnout from one statewide election to the next in each state*. This allowed the researcher to directly compare surges and declines associated with "on" and "off" presidential election years.

Straight-Party Vote Option:

In 2002, 16 states still featured the "straight party" voting option on their respective general election ballot (17 offered this option in 2000). Generally, it is accepted wisdom that the straight-party ballot option influences voters in two ways: (1) it reduces ticket splitting, and (2) reduces the number of ballots with unrecorded votes for particular offices, often termed "ballot roll-off" (Kimball). Research indicates that voters in the contemporary era are more apt to split their ticket and there is an increase in personality-centered candidacies (Stevens, 2002). Other studies suggest that "coattail" effects are stronger in states with ballot provisions for straight party voting (Campbell, 1986). To assess the potential relationship between the Straight Party Vote Option and the dependent variable, a "dummy" represents *whether a state offered this option during a particular election year*.

Campaign Expenditures:

A substantial body of research suggests there is a relationship between campaign expenditures and state legislative election outcomes. Breaux & Gierzynski (1993) found evidence that campaign expenditures play a significant role in state legislative elections. To assess the relationship between campaign expenditures and the Dependent Variable, *predictors represented the total amount of funds expended in each state in each election cycle by the two main competing state political party committees*. One variable will represent *the amount of funds expended in an election cycle by the state political party committee affiliated with the incumbent governor*, while another predictor reflects *the amount of funds expended in the cycle by the political party committee that is affiliated with the incumbent governor's main (general election) opposition*.

3.4 Data Collection

Currently, 34 states elect their governors every four years during even-numbered years when there is no presidential election. Nine states elect governors every four years during presidential election years, including: Delaware, Indiana, Missouri, Montana, North Carolina, North Dakota, Utah, Washington and West Virginia. Vermont and New Hampshire elect governors every two years during even-numbered years. Kentucky, Louisiana, and Mississippi elect governors every four years during odd-numbered years (i.e., 1991, 1995, 1999, 2003), as do New Jersey and Virginia⁵ (i.e., 1989, 1993, 1997, 2001).

Mississippi, Louisiana, New Jersey and Virginia elect members of the legislature during odd-numbered years. With the exception of the Nebraska Unicameral, all legislatures consist of members who are overtly affiliated with a political party. Since the Nebraska Legislature is elected on a nonpartisan basis, and they do not organize based on party affiliation, statistics from that state will not be included in this project.

⁵ Per the state constitution, governors in Virginia are ineligible from serving two consecutive terms. Therefore, data from this state were not available for inclusion in the study during "on" gubernatorial election years.

The data compiled for this study will span the years 1988 to 2003.⁶ During that time period, there were some variations to the timeframes by which certain states elected their governors. For instance, New Hampshire elected a governor every two years during even-numbered years until the mid-1990's, when it changed to electing a governor every four years (i.e., 1994, 1998, 2002). This matter was taken into careful consideration when the data sets were created.

While the following criteria were adhered to during the initial phase of collecting and recording the data, they were combined into one database prior to conducting the analyses. The data collection process yielded a total of 292 observations or cases to be used in the analyses.

Compiled data from 1990 to 2002:

H1: An incumbent governor's popularity (as measured by his/her percentage of the vote garnered while seeking re-election during an "on" gubernatorial election year and "off" presidential election year) will be positively related to the percentage of seats gained by his/her party in the legislature.

H2: An incumbent governor's popularity (as measured by his/her job approval / performance rating during an "off" gubernatorial and "off" presidential election year) will be positively related to the percentage of seats gained by his/her party in the legislature.

Compiled data from 1988 to 2000:

H3: An incumbent governor's popularity (as measured by his/her job approval/performance rating during an "off" gubernatorial and "on" presidential election year) will be positively related to the percentage of seats gained by his/her party in the legislature.

⁶ No data or cases specific to the year 2001 were available for inclusion in this study.

H4: An incumbent governor's popularity (as measured by his/her percentage of the vote garnered while seeking re-election during an "on" gubernatorial and "on" presidential election year) will be positively related to the percentage of seats gained by his/her party in the legislature.

Compiled data from 1989 to 2003 (in states that elect governors and/or legislators during odd-numbered years):

H5: An incumbent governor's popularity (as measured by his/her percentage of the vote garnered while seeking re-election during an "on" gubernatorial election year) will be positively related to the percentage of seats gained by his/her party in the legislature.

H6: An incumbent governor's popularity (as measured by his/her job approval/performance rating during an "off" gubernatorial election year) will be positively related to the percentage of seats gained by his/her party in the legislature.

CHAPTER 4.

Data Sources

Party Control of State Legislatures: A Microsoft Excel database containing these historical data were provided by Tim Storey of the National Conference of State Legislatures (Denver, CO), 1938 – 2002. The [National Conference of State Legislatures \(NCSL\)](#) provides archival compilations of data on statewide elections, including changes in partisan control. NCSL also provides access to information on the organizational structure of state legislatures.

Governor and President's Job Approval/Performance Ratings: These data were obtained from the following sources: [Mason-Dixon Polling & Research](#); [The Gallup Organization](#); [The U.S. Officials' Job Approval Ratings Website](#) (a cooperative project of the University of Rochester, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and George Washington University); and the [American Political Science Association](#).

Statewide Election Results: The [National Association of State Election Directors](#) provides links to each state election office where archived election results are available. The site also provides contact information for each respective state elections office. [Politics.com](#) is a web-portal that provides access to election information from various jurisdictions for certain years. [The CQ Voting & Elections Collection](#) is an electronic library that provides state and national election information, including election results by year by state for gubernatorial, senatorial and presidential elections. The [American Elections Statistics web portal](#) provides access to this elections information, as does [StateNotes Politics](#).

Unemployment Rates: [The National Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) provides historical Unemployment Rates for each state on a monthly basis.

Percentage Change in Personal Income: The [Bureau of Economic Analysis](#), an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce, maintains these data. Economic data were also available for a number of states from [stateline.org](#).

Straight-Party Vote Option: This information was obtained from the following source/article: “Straight-Party Ballot Options and State Legislative Elections,” Conference on State Politics and Policy, Milwaukee, WI, May 24, 2002.

Legislative Institutionalization or Professionalization: The National Conference of State Legislatures provides information on the length of legislative sessions for each state since 1962. Information concerning both the length of legislative sessions and the annual salary paid to legislators is available through the “Book of the States,” published and updated annually by The Council of State Governments.

Membership Turnover: Information concerning the total percentage of legislative seats “turned-over” in each state resulting from the most recent election cycle is available in Table 3.4 (“Membership Turnover in Legislatures”) of “The Book of States,” published annually by the Council of State Governments.

Term Limits: The National Conference of State Legislatures provides information on the number of legislative seats that are subject to term limits in each state in each year.

Job Approval/Performance Rating of the Legislature: These data were accessed through Polling the Nations, which includes more than 14,000 surveys from more than 700 polling organizations in the United States and 80 other countries. Data are also available through the Gallup Organization.

Voter Turnout Statistics: These data are available through: “America Votes: A Handbook of Contemporary American Election Statistics” (a publication of Congressional Quarterly, the Election Research Center); Lexis-Nexis; the U.S. Census Bureau (the Official Statistics); Statistical Abstract of the United States; and the CQ Voting and Elections Collection. Voting-age and Voting-eligible Population Election Turn-Out Rates are also available through ElectionNexus.

Campaign Expenditures by State Political Parties: This information is available through a variety of sources, including the Secretary of State or Elections Division in each state. Links to the various state organizations are provided by the Campaign Finance Information Center. Data are also available through the Center for Responsive Politics, the Federal Election Commission and the National Institute on Money in State Politics.

CHAPTER 5.

A Discussion of the Test Equations, Analyses and Results

5.1 Bivariate Relationships / Scatterplots

Once the data were collected, a ratio measurement of the principal independent variables were directly compared with the dependent variable by developing Scatterplots. The Scatterplot provides a means by which to graphically display and assess the existence of the bivariate relationship between the variables. In the following Scatterplots, the correlation coefficient, R^2 , indicates the percentage of the variance in the Dependent Variable that is explained or accounted for by changes to the Independent Variable.

Graph 5-1 displays the relationship between the *actual percentage of the vote garnered by the incumbent governor* during an “on” gubernatorial election year and the Dependent Variable. In this equation, $r^2 = 0.126$, indicating that the independent variable accounts for approximately 12.6% of the variance. Considering all of the variables that could potentially effect or account for the variance in the Dependent Variable, this coefficient should be considered statistically significant, lending support for the central relationship presented in this thesis.

Graph 5-2 displays the relationship between *the incumbent governor’s job performance/approval rating* and the Dependent Variable during “off” gubernatorial election years. In this equation, $r^2 = 0.0495$, indicating that the independent variable accounts for approximately 4.95% of the variance in the Dependent Variable.

5.2 Regression Analyses: An Explanation of the Testing and Analytical Procedures

To determine which independent variables were statistically significant within a variety of test equations, regression analyses were conducted. A main objective of the analyses is to assess the substantive effect that each statistically significant independent variable has on the dependent variable. Obviously, another priority is explaining the variance in the Dependent Variable to the fullest extent possible.

In total, 26 separate tests were conducted, each consisting of a different set of relationships amongst the variables.⁷ A variety of models were developed, arranging variables within different constellations of relationships. The tests varied and increased in complexity, with additional and/or different variables being included in each new equation. For each test, the parameter estimates were examined. The substantive effect (or predicted/expected value) that each statistically significant independent variable had on the dependent variable (when all other variables are held constant) will be discussed throughout the remainder of this paper.⁸

Included in the analyses (but not illustrated) were the results of a “dummy-year” test, where dummy variables were created for each of the different election years in order to test for temporal effects (i.e., are the independent variables explaining the variation in the dependent measure, or is the variation attributable to temporal effects). The results were encouraging: not any one year was statistically significant, suggesting that temporal effects were not responsible for the variation in the dependent measure.

A correlation procedure was also conducted to check for the existence of multicollinearity or autocorrelation amongst the independent variables. The results suggest that the highest correlation was between the Governor’s Job Approval/Performance Rating and the Unemployment Rate (-0.44). There is also a degree of correlation between the two principle

⁷ Analyse-it Linear Regression was employed in generating the test results.

⁸ Statistically significant variables from each test will be discussed in more detail in the following sections, especially in Chapters 6 and 7.

independent variables of interest, as well as the two variables that represent that amount of funds expended by the competing state political party committees. These results were expected.

5.3 Test Equations, Analyses and Results

(Part I: Governor’s Job Approval/Performance Rating)

The first 14 tests included the *Incumbent Governor’s Job Performance/Approval Rating* as the principle independent variable of interest. It is designed primarily to test the relationship between the incumbent governor’s popularity and state legislative seat changes during “off” gubernatorial election years. Unless otherwise specified, all results are relative to “off” gubernatorial election years.

Do Gubernatorial Coattails Exist During “Off” Gubernatorial Election Years?

The first test (reference Figure 5-1) was a very basic equation that included the following variables: *the percent change in the state’s unemployment rate; a dummy representing whether the state offers the straight-party voting option; the number of days the legislature spends in session; the percentage of legislative seats subject to term limits; and a variable representing the surge/decline in voter turnout.* This test examines the idea that state legislative election outcomes can be understood without including national level data.

The model accounts for only 8% of the variation in the Dependent measure. Three variables proved statistically significant: *the incumbent governor’s job performance/approval rating, the surge/decline in voter turnout, and the percent change in the state’s unemployment rate.* The results suggest that: for every 10% associated with the incumbent governor’s job approval/performance rating, his/her party could gain an additional 0.87% of the seats in the legislature; voter turnout would need to increase by 10% from the last election in order for the governor’s party to gain an additional 1% of the seats in the legislature; and for every 1% increase in the state’s unemployment rate, the governor’s party could actually gain an additional 0.89% of the seats in the legislature.

The next equation (reference Figure 5-2) adds the dummy variable representing whether it is a presidential election year; another dummy representing whether the incumbent governor shared the incumbent president's political party affiliation; and the percent change in income in a state prior to the election. It also employs the state's actual unemployment rate immediately prior to the election (instead of the percent change in the rate). The model accounts for only 4% of the variance in the dependent variable. Only one variable proved statistically significant: *the incumbent governor's job approval/performance rating*. Its coefficient (0.0848) remained virtually unchanged, suggesting that for every 10% associated with the governor's job approval/performance rating, his/her party could gain an additional 0.85% of the seats in the legislature.

Does Legislative Institutionalization Matter?

The next equation (reference Figure 5-3) removed the *unemployment rate variable* and employs a different measure of the *voter turnout variable* (comparing voter turnout with the 16-year average). It adds the "dummy" representing whether a U.S. Senate race appeared on a state's ballot during an election cycle. The test was designed to assess whether legislative institutionalization is related to legislative seat changes. Therefore, a variable representing *the total percentage of seats "turned over" resulting from the last election cycle* and another representing *the annual salary or compensation paid to legislators* were added.

The model performs the same, accounting for only 6% of the variance in the Dependent Variable. The *dummy representing whether it was an "on" or "off" presidential election year* and *the incumbent governor's job approval/performance rating* proved statistically significant. The results suggest that: the incumbent governor's party could an additional 3.3% of the seats in the legislature during an "on" presidential election year; and the governor's party could gain an additional 0.8% of the seats in the legislature for every 10% associated with his/her job approval/performance rating – a coefficient that is virtually unchanged from the prior equation.

An Assessment of Gubernatorial and Senatorial Coattails

This model (reference Figure 5-4) is also similar to the equation reflected in Figure 5-2, but adds the variable representing the actual percentage of the vote garnered by the U.S. Senate candidate that shared the incumbent governor's political party affiliation. It also employs an alternative measure of the unemployment rate variable (using the percent change in the rate). Adjusted R² increases to 0.11. *The incumbent governor's job approval/performance rating; the percent of the vote garnered by the U.S. Senate Candidate; and the percent change in the state's unemployment rate* were all statistically significant.

The results suggest that: the incumbent governor's party could gain an additional 1.2% of the seats in the legislature for every 10% associated with his/her job approval/performance rating; Senatorial Coattails could be a factor under certain conditions. The governor's party could gain an additional 1% of the seats for every 10% of the vote garnered by the U.S. Senate candidate that shares his/her political party affiliation; and the governor's party could gain an additional 0.9533% of the seats in the legislature for every 1% increase in the state's unemployment rate.

The next model (reference Figure 5-5) is similar to the previous test, and is designed to assess the relationship between the incumbent governor's job approval/performance rating and state legislative election outcomes during both "on" and "off" gubernatorial election years.⁹ The model includes a number of National Level indicators, and adds the following: *the actual percentage of the vote garnered in a state by the presidential nominee/candidate that shared the incumbent governor's political party affiliation, and a "dummy" representing whether it was an "on" or "off" gubernatorial election year in a state.* The model reverts back to *the state's unemployment rate prior to the election.*

The *governor's job approval/performance rating* is not statistically significant in this equation, and Adjusted R² is reduced to 0.06. Two independent variables did prove statistically significant: *the actual percent of the vote garnered by the U.S. Senate candidate that shared the incumbent*

⁹ For this model, data collected from both "on" and "off" gubernatorial election years were included in the analysis.

governor's political party affiliation and the state's unemployment rate prior to the election. The results suggest that: for every 10% of the vote garnered by the U.S. Senate candidate, the incumbent governor's party could gain an additional 0.9% of the seats in the legislature; and for every percentage-point associated with the state's unemployment rate, the incumbent governor's party could gain an additional 0.7% of the legislative seats.

A Further Assessment of Coattails during both "On" and "Off" Gubernatorial Election Years

The next model (reference Figure 5-6) is also designed to assess the relationship between the incumbent governor's job approval/performance rating and state legislative election outcomes during both "on" and "off" gubernatorial election years. It adds a variable representing *a state legislature's job approval/performance rating*, and exchanges the variable representing *the actual percentage of the vote garnered in a state by the presidential candidate/nominee that shares the incumbent governor's political party affiliation* with a dummy representing *whether it was an "on" or "off" presidential election year*. In this model, Adjusted R² increased to 0.09. Only one independent variable proved statistically significant: *the incumbent governor's job approval/performance rating*. Its coefficient suggests that the governor's party could gain an additional 1.5% of the seats in the legislature for every 10% associated with his/her approval rating.

Are Campaign Expenditures Related to State Legislative Election Outcomes?

The next model (reference Figure 5-7) was designed to assess the relationship between state political party committee expenditures and the dependent variable during "off" gubernatorial election years. It is similar to the equation reflected in Figure 5-4, but removes the variable representing *the actual percentage of the vote garnered in a state by the U.S. Senate candidate that shares the incumbent governor's political party affiliation*. It also uses *the state's unemployment rate prior to the election* (instead of the percent change in the rate), and adds the variables that represent the total amount of funds expended by the state political party committees (the committee affiliated with the governor's party, and the committee affiliated with

the party of the governor's principle opposition). The model accounts for just 7% of the variance in the Dependent Variable. Only one independent variable proved statistically significant: *the incumbent governor's job approval/performance rating*. The coefficient suggests that the governor's party could gain an additional 1.28% of the seats in the legislature for every 10% associated with his/her job approval rating.

The next equation (reference Figure 5-8) is similar to the one previous, but includes three additional variables: the annual salary or compensation paid to legislators; the percentage of legislative seats "turned-over" in a state resulting from the most recent election cycle; and the actual percent of the vote garnered in a state by the presidential nominee who shared the incumbent governor's political party affiliation. The value of Adjusted R² doubles to 0.14, and two independent variables were statistically significant: the state's unemployment rate prior to an election and the incumbent governor's job approval/performance rating. The results suggest that: for every 1% associated with the unemployment rate, the governor's party could gain an additional 1.65% of the seats in the legislature; and the governor's party could gain an additional 1.1% of the seats in the legislature for every 10% associated with his/her job approval rating.

Assessing the Straight Party Vote Option

This equation (reference Figure 5-9) is similar to that of the previous test with the exception that it excludes the *variables representing the amount of funds expended by the state political party committees*. This model adds a variable representing *the actual percentage of the vote garnered by the U.S. Senate candidate that shares the incumbent governor's political party affiliation*, and employs a different measure of *voter turnout variable* (votes cast in a state compared to the 16-year average). The *governor's job approval/performance rating* is not statistically significant, and Adjusted R² is reduced by 0.06 to 0.08. The variables that did prove statistically significant were the "dummy" representing *whether a state offers the straight-party vote option* and *the state's unemployment rate prior to an election*. The results suggest that the governor's party could gain an additional: 2.61% of the seats in the legislature when his/her state offers the

straight party vote option; and 1% of the seats in the legislature for every 1% associated with the unemployment rate.

Gubernatorial Coattails during “Off” Gubernatorial and “Off” Presidential Election Years

This equation (reference Figure 5-10) reverts back to a rather basic relationship amongst the variables, and is designed to assess the relationship between a Governor’s Popularity and the Dependent Variable during “off” gubernatorial and “off” presidential election years. It is similar to the equation represented in Figure 5-2, but does not include the “dummy” representing whether it was an “on” or “off” presidential election year, nor does it include a variable representing voter turnout. Conversely, it adds a variable representing the percentage of seats “turned over” in an election cycle and the percent change in the state’s unemployment rate.

The model accounts for just 7% of the variance in the Dependent Variable, and two variables proved statistically significant: *the incumbent governor’s job approval/performance rating* and *the percent change in personal income*. The results suggest that: the governor’s party could gain an additional: 1% of the seats in the legislature for every 10% associated with his/her job approval rating; and 2.8% of the seats in the legislature for every 5% increase in personal income.

*The Relationship between National Level Indicators,
Economic Variables and State Legislative Seat Changes*

This equation (reference Figure 5-11) includes a number of National Level indicators, designed to determine if presidential and/or senatorial coattails exist, and if they extend to state legislative elections. The model is also designed to assess the relationship between the *incumbent governor’s job approval/performance rating* and the dependent variable during both “on” and “off” gubernatorial election years. The model is similar to the one reflected in Figure 5-5, but adds the variable representing the *incumbent president’s job performance/approval rating*.

The model accounts for 35% of the variance in the dependent measure, and is the best performing model thus far. Of the 26 tests conducted, this combination of variables was one of the most effective in explaining the variance in the Dependent Variable. While this coefficient may suggest that national variables should perhaps be included in the model in order to account for the variance to the fullest extent, none of the national level variables were statistically significant. The variables that did prove significant were the *incumbent governor's job approval/performance rating*, *the state's unemployment rate*, the "dummy" representing whether the state offered the straight-party vote option, and the *percentage change in personal income*.

The results suggest that: the governor's party could gain an additional 2.5% of the seats in the legislature when the straight party vote option is offered in his/her state; for every 1% associated with the state's unemployment rate, the governor's party in the legislature could gain an additional 1.83% of the seats; for every 5% increase in personal income, the governor's party could gain an additional 4.47% of the seats in the legislature; and for every 10% associated with the governor's job approval/performance rating, his/her party could gain an additional 1.3% of the seats in the legislature.

The next model (reference Figure 5-12) also includes a number of National Level indicators. It is similar to the previous model, in both structure and results, and assesses essentially the same constellation of variables but only during "off" gubernatorial election years. It removes the *dummy indicating whether it was an "on" or "off" gubernatorial election year* in a state. The model accounts for 35% of the variance in the Dependent Variable. This was also one of the best performing models, with three independent variables proving statistically significant: *the incumbent governor's job approval/performance rating*; *the state's unemployment rate prior to the election*; and *the percent change in personal income prior to an election*. The results suggest that the incumbent governor's party could gain: an additional 4.49% of the seats in the legislature for every 5% increase in personal income; an additional 2.11% of the seats in the legislature for every one percentage-point associated with the state's unemployment rate; an additional 1% of the seats in the legislature for every 10% associated with his/her job approval/performance rating.

The next equation (reference Figure 5-13) also endeavors to assess the relationship between certain National Level Indicators and the dependent variable during “off” gubernatorial election years. It is similar to the previous test but employs a different measure of *voter turnout (turnout compared to the 16-year average)*. The model also adds data reflecting spending by the state political parties (one *variable representing the amount of funds expended in an election cycle by the state political party affiliated with the incumbent governor*, and another representing *the total amount of funds expended in the cycle by the state political party affiliated with the incumbent governor’s main opposition*). Despite the addition of these variables, Adjusted R² is actually reduced by 0.05 to 0.30. Two variables were statistically significant: the *state’s unemployment rate prior to the election* and the *percentage change in personal income*. The results suggest that: for every 5% increase in personal income in a state, the incumbent governor’s party could gain approximately 5.7% of the seats in the legislature; and for every 1% associated with the unemployment rate, the governor’s party could gain an additional 2.43% of the seats in the legislature.

The next equation (reference Figure 5-14) is similar to the one reflected in Figure 5-12. It includes a number of National Level Indicators, and adds the *annual salary or compensation paid to legislators*, and the *percentage of legislative seats “turned-over” in a state resulting from the most recent election cycle*. There are also some similarities in the results. The model accounts for 34% of the variance in the Dependent Variable, proving to be one of the best performing. Three independent variables were statistically significant: *the incumbent governor’s job approval/performance rating*; *the unemployment rate in a state prior to an election*; and *the percent change in personal income in a state prior to an election*. The results suggest that: for every 1% associated with the state’s unemployment rate, the incumbent governor’s party could gain an additional 2.1% of the seats in the state legislature; for every 5% increase in personal income in a state, the governor’s party could gain an additional 4.33% of the seats in the

legislature; and the governor's party could gain an additional 1.4% of the seats for every 10% associated with his/her job approval rating during an "off" gubernatorial election year.

5.4 Test Equations, Analyses and Results

(Part II: Percent of the Vote Garnered by the Incumbent Governor)

In the following tests, the principle independent variable was *the Actual Percent of the Vote Garnered by an Incumbent Governor Seeking Reelection during an “on” gubernatorial election year*. This is the main principle independent variable of interest – it is of central importance to this thesis. The results are relative only to “on” gubernatorial election years in a state.

Does an Incumbent Governor Provide Coattails when seeking Re-election?

This very basic equation (reference Figure 5-15) includes the following variables: the incumbent governor’s job approval/ performance rating; the state’s unemployment rate prior to an election; the dummy representing whether the state offers the straight-party vote option; the number of days the legislature spends in session; the percentage of legislative seats subject to term limits; and the surge/decline in voter turnout (compared to the last election). The model accounts for 13% of the variance in the Dependent Variable. Two independent variables proved statistically significant: the “dummy” representing whether the state offers the straight-party vote option and the actual percentage of the vote garnered by the incumbent governor seeking reelection. The results suggest that: the incumbent governor’s party could gain an additional 2.5% of the seats in the legislature in states that offer the straight-party vote option; and for every 10% of the vote garnered by the incumbent governor, his/her party could gain an additional 1.98% of the seats in the legislature.

The next equation (reference Figure 5-17) is similar to the one reflected in Figure 5-15. It adds two dummy variables: one representing *whether it was an “on” or “off” presidential election year*; and another *representing whether a state’s governor shared the same political party affiliation as the incumbent president*. The model also adds a variable representing *the percent change in income in a state*. The model accounts for 19% of the variance in the dependent variable. Three independent variables proved statistically significant: *the actual percentage of the vote garnered by an incumbent governor*

seeking re-election, the variable representing the surge/decline in voter turnout; and the straight party vote option. The results suggest that the incumbent governor’s party could gain an additional: 2.57% of the seats in the legislature in states that offer the straight party vote option; 1.1% of the seats in the legislature for every 10% increase in voter turnout in a state (compared to the last statewide election cycle); 2.39% of the seats in the legislature for every 10% of the vote he/she garners.

A Simultaneous Assessment of Gubernatorial, Senatorial and Presidential Coattails

This equation (reference Figure 5-16) includes a number of National Level Variables. It seeks to simultaneously assess the relationship between gubernatorial, senatorial and presidential coattails and state legislative seat changes during “on” gubernatorial election years. The model includes the following variables: *the actual percent of the vote garnered in a state by the U.S. Senate candidate that shares the incumbent governor’s political party affiliation; the actual percent of the vote garnered in a state by the presidential nominee/candidate that shared the incumbent governor’s political party affiliation; the total percentage of legislative seats “turned-over” resulting from an election cycle; the annual compensation or salary paid to members of the legislature; the percentage change in personal income in the state; and the “dummy” representing whether the state offers the straight-party vote option.* The model accounts for 27% of the variance in the Dependent Variable. Only one independent variable proved statistically significant: *the actual percentage of the vote garnered by the incumbent governor seeking re-election.* The variable’s coefficient indicates that the incumbent governor’s party could gain an additional 2.4% of the seats in the legislature for every 10% of the vote he/she garners.

The next model (reference Figure 5-20) is similar to the equation reflected in Figure 5-16. It also simultaneously assesses the relationship between gubernatorial, senatorial and presidential coattails, and state legislative election outcomes. The model adds a variable representing *the unemployment rate in the state prior to the election, and the dummy representing whether the incumbent governor shares the incumbent president’s political party affiliation.* While Adjusted R^2 remains the same (0.27), none of the independent variables proved statistically significant.

The Potential Combined Effect of Gubernatorial Coattails and the Straight Party Vote Option

This model (reference Figure 5-18) is similar to the one reflected in Figure 5-17. It adds the variable representing *the incumbent governor's job approval/performance rating*,¹⁰ which reduces Adjusted R² by 0.04 to 0.15. It also reduces the coefficient associated with *the actual percent of the vote garnered by the incumbent governor seeking reelection*. Two variables proved statistically significant: *the actual percentage of the vote garnered by an incumbent governor seeking re-election* and *the dummy representing whether a state offers the straight party vote option*. The results indicate that the governor's party could gain an additional: 2.76% of the seats in the legislature in states that offer the straight party vote option; and 1.98% of the seats in the legislature for every 10% of the vote that he/she garners.

The next model (reference Figure 5-19) is also designed to determine whether senatorial and presidential coattails exist and extend to state legislative seat changes. It is similar to the one reflected in Figure 5-18. This equation adds a variable representing *the president's job performance/approval rating*; and *the percent of the vote garnered in a state by the U.S. Senate candidate that shares the incumbent governor's political party affiliation*. This test also employs a different measure of the *unemployment rate (the percentage change in the rate in the two year period prior to the election)*. While the addition of these new variables reduces Adjusted R² by 0.04 to 0.11, the coefficient associated with the principle independent variable increases. Two independent variables were statistically significant: *The dummy representing whether a state offers the straight party vote option* and *the actual percent of the vote garnered by an incumbent governor seeking reelection*. The results suggest that: the governor's party could gain an additional 3.5% of the seats in the legislature in states that offer the straight party vote option; and for every 10% of the vote garnered by the incumbent governor, his/her party could gain an additional 2.48% of the seats in the legislature.

¹⁰ The variable was included to assess whether it has any predictive value during "on" gubernatorial election years.

The next model (reference Figure 5-21) is similar to the one reflected in Figure 5-19, but adds variables representing *the total percentage of legislative seats “turned-over” resulting from an election cycle*; and *the annual compensation or salary paid to members of the legislature*. Conversely, it eliminates variables representing *the president’s job performance/approval rating*, and the variable representing *the incumbent governor’s job approval/performance rating*. These changes result in the doubling of the value of Adjusted R² to 0.23. Three variables are statistically significant: *the actual percent of the vote garnered by the incumbent governor seeking reelection*, *the dummy representing whether the incumbent governor shares the same political party affiliation as the incumbent president*, and *the Straight Party Vote Option*. The results suggest that: for every 10% of the vote garnered by an incumbent governor, his/her party could gain an additional 2.72% of the seats in the legislature; the governor’s party could gain an additional 2.87% of the seats in the legislature in states that offer that straight party vote option; and the governor’s party could lose 2.12% of the seats if he/she shares the same political party affiliation as the incumbent president.

This next model (reference Figure 5-25) was designed to assess the relationship between the incumbent governor’s popularity and the dependent variable during an “on” gubernatorial and “off” presidential election year. It is similar to the model represented in Figure 5-21 but adds the variable representing *the incumbent president’s job approval/performance rating*, and removes the *dummy representing whether it was an “on” or “off” presidential election year*. Adjusted R² is reduced from 0.23 to 0.18. Two independent variables proved statistically significant: *the actual percent of the vote garnered by an incumbent governor seeking reelection* and the variable representing whether a state offers *the straight party vote option*. The results suggest that: for every 10% of the vote garnered by an incumbent governor seeking reelection, his/her party could gain an additional 2.61% of the seats in the legislature; and the governor’s party could gain an additional 2.91% of the seats in the legislature in state’s that offer the straight party vote option.

*The Coefficients associated with the Governor's Popularity
and State Political Party Expenditures*

The next equation (reference Figure 5-22) is virtually identical to the model represented in Figure 5-21, with the exception that it adds a variable *representing the total amount of funds expended in an election cycle by the state political party committee that is affiliated with the incumbent governor* and another variable *representing the total amount of funds expended by the committee affiliated with the governor's main general election opponent*.

The addition of these campaign spending variables reduces Adjusted R^2 to 0.19, and slightly reduces the coefficient associated with the principle independent variable. The dummy representing whether a state offers the *straight party vote option* is not statistically significant in this equation. Three variables were statistically significant: *the actual percentage of the vote garnered by an incumbent governor seeking reelection*; *the dummy representing whether the incumbent governor shared that same political party affiliation as the incumbent president*, and *the variable representing the total amount of funds expended in the election cycle by the political party committee affiliated with the governor's main general election opponent*. The results indicate that: for every 10% of the vote garnered by the incumbent governor, his/her party could gain an additional 2.6% of the seats in the legislature; and the governor's party could lose over 3.9% of the seats in the legislature when he/she shares the same political party affiliation as the incumbent president. The regression analysis program did not yield a coefficient that could be calculated for the state political party spending variable.

The next equation (reference Figure 5-23) removes the variable representing *the total percentage of seats "turned over" in the legislature resulting from an election cycle*, and the *annual salary or compensation paid to legislators*. It adds a variable representing *the president's job performance/approval rating* and the *incumbent governor's job approval/performance rating*.

The model accounts for 31% of the variance in the Dependent Variable, and rendered the most statistically significant variables of all the test equations. The coefficient associated with the *actual percent of the vote garnered by the incumbent governor* substantially increases in this model. The six variables that proved statistically significant are: *the incumbent governor's job performance/approval rating*; *the dummy representing if the incumbent governor shares the president's political party affiliation*; *the percentage change in personal income in a state prior to an election*; a "dummy" representing whether the state offers the straight-party vote option; *the variable representing the amount of funds expended in an election cycle by the state political committee affiliated with the governor's main general election opponent*; and *the variable representing the actual percentage of the vote garnered by an incumbent governor seeking re-election*.

The results suggest that: in states that offer the straight-party vote option, the incumbent governor's party could gain an additional 5.11% of the seats in the legislature, a potentially substantial effect; for every 5% increase in personal income, the incumbent governor's party could actually lose 5.83% of the seats in the legislature (a result that was inconsistent with other tests); the governor's party in the legislature could lose 3.79% of the seats if he/she shared the same political party affiliation as the president, regardless of whether it was an "on" or "off" presidential election year; for every \$1-million spent by the opposition party, the governor's party could actually gain an additional 1% of the seats in the state legislature.

Perhaps most significant is the coefficient for the *actual percentage of the vote garnered by the incumbent governor seeking reelection* (0.40577), indicating that for every 10% of the vote he/she garners, his/her party could gain an additional 4% of the seats in the legislature.

Another interesting result was the coefficient associated with the *incumbent governor's job approval/ performance rating* (-0.2808). This statistic suggests that for every 10% associated with the governor's job approval/performance rating (as determined by public opinion polls), his/her party could actually lose 2.8% of the seats in the legislature. The purpose of including the variable in this test was to assess whether it has any predictive value during "on" gubernatorial election years. This result suggests that correlation may not exist between the two principle independent variables of interest. Nevertheless, the *actual percent of the vote garnered by an*

incumbent governor seeking reelection is the principle independent variable whose coefficient should be afforded priority consideration in this equation.

The next model (reference Figure 5-24) removes the variable representing *the incumbent governor's job approval/performance rating*, and adds a variable representing *the total percentage of legislative seats "turned-over" resulting from an election cycle*, and another representing *the annual compensation or salary paid to members of the legislature*. It also employs a different measure of the *voter turnout variable (turnout compared to the 16-year average in a state)*.

The changes result in a substantial reduction in Adjusted R² (from 0.31 to 0.15). Only two independent variables proved statistically significant: *the actual percentage of the vote garnered by an incumbent governor seeking re-election*, and *the amount of funds expended by the state political party committee affiliated with the governor's main general election opponent*. The results suggest that for every 10% of the vote garnered by the incumbent governor, his/her party could gain an additional 2.58% of the seats in the legislature. The regression analysis program did not yield a coefficient that could be calculated for the state political party spending variable.

Does Legislative Instability Benefit the Governor's Party?

This model (reference Figure 5-26) is comparable to the one presented in Figure 5-25, except that it adds the variable representing the *Legislature's Job Approval Rating*, the *dummy representing whether it was an "on" or "off" presidential election year*, and another *dummy representing whether it was an "on" or "off" U.S. Senate election year in a state*. It also employs a different measure of the *unemployment rate (using the actual unemployment rate in a state prior to the election)*. The following variables were removed: *the president's job*

approval/performance rating, and the percent of the vote garnered in a state by the U.S. Senate candidate that shares the incumbent governor's political party affiliation.

The model accounts for 36% of the variance in the dependent variable, and was the best performing. Two independent variables proved statistically significant: *the total percent of the vote garnered by the incumbent governor seeking reelection* and *the percentage of legislative seats "turned over" resulting from the most recent election cycle*. The results suggest that: for every 10% of the vote garnered by the incumbent governor, his/her party could gain an additional 2.56% of the seats in the legislature; and the incumbent governor's party could lose over 2.64% of the seats in the legislature for every 10% of the seats that are "turned over" in an election cycle. This result suggests that institutional instability may prove counterproductive to the governor's party, under certain conditions.

CHAPTER 6.

Synopsis and Discussion
of Statistically Significant (and Insignificant) Variables

6.1 Statistically Significant Variables¹¹

A number of variables proved statistically significant: some on a consistent basis, others in just one equation. While political operatives, scientists, academics and others must constantly assess the variables and circumstances that impact the political landscape and state election outcomes, it would be advisable to afford particular attention to these variables, and the conditions that affect them:

Actual Percent of the Vote Garnered by the Incumbent Governor Seeking Re-election

This variable was included in twelve (12) test equations, and was found statistically significant in eleven (91.7%). The results predict that Gubernatorial Coattails will be “longer” during “on” gubernatorial election years. The variable’s largest predicted or expected value can be examined in Figure 5-23 (coefficient = 0.4058). The coefficient suggests that for every 10% of the vote garnered by an incumbent governor, his/her party could gain an additional 4% of the seats in the legislature. To put this coefficient into perspective, if an incumbent governor seeking re-election garners 55% of the vote, his/her party could gain an additional 22.3% of the seats in the legislature (when all other variables are held constant). These findings are relatively consistent with that of Campbell’s (1986), who found that a party should gain about 2% of state legislative seats for every 5 additional percentage-points won by its candidate for governor.

Two equations were relative to an “on” gubernatorial, “on” presidential election year, and the variable was statistically significant in one (reference Figure 5-16). The coefficient suggests that the governor’s party could gain an additional 2.4% of the seats in the legislature for every 10% of the vote that he/she garners.

One equation was relative to an “on” gubernatorial, “off” presidential election year (reference Figure 5-25). The variable was statistically significant in this equation, and its coefficient (0.2617) suggests that the governor’s party could gain an additional 2.6% of the seats in the legislature for every 10% of the vote that he/she garners.

¹¹ A number of the statistically significant variables addressed in this Chapter will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 7: Conclusion.

Governor's Job Approval/Performance Rating ("off" gubernatorial election years)

This variable was included in a total of eighteen (18) test equations, and was found statistically significant in twelve (12).

Three equations were designed to assess the predictive value of the variable when data collected from both "on" and "off" gubernatorial election years was combined in the test. In two of these equations, the variable was statistically significant. The variable's largest predicted value can be examined in Figure 5-6 (0.1563), suggesting that the governor's party could gain an additional 1.5% of the seats in the legislature for every 10% associated with his/her job approval/performance rating.

One equation was relative to an "off" gubernatorial, "off" presidential election year (Figure 5-10). The variable was statistically significant with a coefficient of 0.1018, suggesting that the incumbent governor's party could gain an additional 1% of the seats in the legislature for every 10% associated with his/her job approval/performance rating.

Five equations were relative to an "off" gubernatorial, "on" presidential election year. The variable was statistically significant in three equations. Its largest predicted value (0.1390) can be examined in Figure 5-14, suggesting that the governor's party could gain an additional 1.39% of the seats in the legislature for every 10% associated with his/her job approval/performance rating.

The variable was included in a total of eleven equations relative strictly to "off" gubernatorial election years (regardless of whether it was a presidential election year), and was statistically significant in nine (81.8%). The coefficient was positive in each of these equations, and its largest predicted/expected value can be examined in Figure 14 (coefficient = 0.1390), indicating that for every 10% associated with the incumbent governor's job approval/performance rating, his/her party could gain an additional 1.39% of the seats in the legislature. To put this coefficient into perspective, if an incumbent governor has a job approval/performance rating of 55% prior to an election, his/her party is predicated to gain an additional 7.65% of the seats in the legislature (when all other variables are held constant). This coefficient indicates that gubernatorial coattails

could have a meaningful impact on election outcomes and perhaps the control of legislative chambers during “off” gubernatorial election years.

Straight-Party Vote Option

This “dummy” was included in each of the 26 test equations, and was found statistically significant in nine (34.6%). One interesting finding is that the variable appears to have potentially greater effect during “on” gubernatorial election years. For instance, it was included in 11 tests relative specifically to “off” gubernatorial election years and was found statistically significant in only one (9%). Conversely, the variable was included in twelve tests relative specifically to “on” gubernatorial election years, and was found statistically significant in seven of those tests (58.3%).

Its largest predicted value can be examined in Figure 5-23 (coefficient = 5.11). The statistic suggests that the incumbent governor’s party could gain an additional 5.11% of the seats in the legislature during an “on” gubernatorial election year in states that offer this option. The consistent statistical significance of this variable during “on” gubernatorial election years may provide some evidence of a popular incumbent governor’s ability to energize his/her party’s entire ticket and grass-roots voting constituency. It could be considered a manifestation of the governor’s being the “head” of his/her party by providing the incentive necessary for citizens to vote a straight ticket.

These findings were consistent with the expectations and the literature, which suggests that “coattail” effects are stronger in states that offer this option (Campbell, 1986; and Kimball et. al). The results associated with this variable suggest that when the straight-party voting option is available, citizens will utilize it, and it can have a rather profound impact on state legislative election outcomes -- to the predicted benefit of the governor’s party.

Percentage Change in Personal Income¹²

This variable was included in a total of 24 equations, and was found statistically significant in six (25%). It was statistically significant in 40% of the equations (4 of 10) that were relative specifically to “off” gubernatorial election years, and 9% (1 of 11) relative specifically to “on” gubernatorial elections. Its largest positive predicted value can be examined in Figure 5-13 (coefficient = 1.1486), indicating that for every 5% increase in personal income, the incumbent governor’s party could gain an additional 5.74% of the seats in the legislature (during an “off” gubernatorial election year).

These findings suggest that changes in the rate of real personal income in a state can have a profound effect on legislative elections, and may be an indication that state officials are being held increasingly accountable for economic conditions. For instance, Chubb (1988) found a shift of legislative seats of only 0.07% for every 1% change in real personal income in a state. More recent studies, however, indicate that changes in personal income can exert a significant independent effect on state legislative seats (Niemi et. al., 1995). The results may indicate that under certain conditions, the electorate may reward or punish state legislative candidates that share the governor’s political party affiliation, based on changes in personal income. Again, this is consistent with Exit Poll data from 1986, which suggests that voters reward legislative candidates that share the governor’s political party affiliation for increases in income (Niemi, 1995).

One interesting yet inconsistent finding concerns the one equation relative to “on” gubernatorial election years in which the variable was statistically significant. The coefficient was negative (-1.1654) predicting that the governor’s party could lose over 5.8% of the seats in the legislature for every 5% increase in a state’s personal income. The results indicate that this variable has a more substantive positive effect during “off” gubernatorial election years.

State’s Unemployment Rate

¹² Subsequent to the data being collected for this study, new estimates of 2002 county personal income and revised estimates for 1969-2001 were released on 5/25/2004. These estimates incorporate the results of the comprehensive revision to the national income and product accounts released 12/10/2003, and to state personal income released 4/27/2004. The revised estimates also reflect the new and revised county-level source data. These estimates incorporate new OMB metropolitan area definitions released June 2003 (with revisions released February 2004).

Two separate measures of the unemployment rate were included in this study: *the actual unemployment rate prior to the election* and *the percent change in the rate over the two year period preceding the election*.

The variable representing the *actual unemployment rate prior to the election* was included in 19 equations, and was found statistically significant in seven (36.8%). The variable's coefficient was positive in each equation. Its most substantial effect can be examined in Figure 5-13 (2.4295), suggesting that the governor's party is predicted to actually gain an additional 2.43% of the seats in the legislature for every 1% associated with the state's unemployment rate. Therefore, if the state's unemployment rate was 6% prior to the election, the governor's party is predicated to gain an additional 14.58% of the seats. This result was not anticipated, and is difficult to explain. One potential explanation is that this particular variable, as operationalized, may not be the best measure of the unemployment rate. Therefore, the percentage change in the rate prior to the election was also examined in a number of equations.

The variable representing the *percent change in the state's unemployment rate* was included in a total of six test equations and was statistically significant in two. Its coefficient was also positive. Its greatest predicted value can be examined in Figure 5-4 (coefficient = 0.9533) suggesting that the governor's party could gain nearly 1% of the seats in the legislature for every 1% increase in the state's unemployment rate (during an "off" gubernatorial election year).

The effect of the Unemployment Variable appears to be more pronounced during "off" gubernatorial election years. For instance, the variable representing *the actual unemployment rate prior to the election* was included in eight tests that were specific to "on" gubernatorial election years, and was not statistically significant in any of those equations. However, the variable was included in eight tests relative specifically to "off" gubernatorial election years, and was found statistically significant in five (62.5%). The variable representing the *percent change in the unemployment rate* was included in three equations relative specifically to "on"

gubernatorial election years, and was not found statistically significant in any. It was found statistically significant in two tests relative to “off” gubernatorial election years.

During “on” gubernatorial election years: when the *percent change in the unemployment rate* replaces the *actual unemployment rate prior to the election*, there is virtually no change in the results across a number of equations (reference Footnotes in Figures 5-17, 5-18, 5-19, 5-20 and 5-22). In some instances, Adjusted R² is slightly reduced (reference Footnotes in Figures 5-24 and 5-26), and in one equation, Adjusted R² is substantially reduced (reference Footnotes in Figure 5-23). In a number of equations, the principle independent variable is rendered not statistically significant (reference Figures 5-23 and 5-26). In one equation, the coefficient associated with the principle independent variable is increased (reference Figure 5-24). When the variable representing the unemployment rate is completely removed, the tendency is for Adjusted R² to be reduced slightly (reference Figures 5-23 and 5-26); for the coefficient associated with the principle independent variable to be reduced (reference Figure 5-23); and/or for the principle independent variable to be rendered not statistically significant (reference Figure 5-26).

During “off” gubernatorial election years: when the *percent change in the unemployment rate* replaces the *actual unemployment rate prior to the election*, the tendency is to (substantially) reduce the value of Adjusted R² (reference Footnotes in Figures 5-8, 5-12, 5-13 and 5-14). However, in two equations, Adjusted R² actually increases slightly (reference Figures 5-4 and 5-9). This substitution resulted in the principle independent variable becoming non-significant in a number of equations (reference Figures 5-8, 5-12 and 5-14). In other equations, the coefficient associated with the *Straight Party Vote Option* was increased (reference Footnotes in Figures 5-9 and 5-12), or the variable became statistically significant (reference Figure 5-14). When the variable representing the Unemployment Rate is completely removed from the equation, the value of Adjusted R² is reduced, sometimes substantially (reference Figures 5-12, 5-13 and 5-14), while the principle independent variable is rendered not statistically significant (reference Figures 5-12 and 5-14).

In test equations that reflect data that were collected from both “on” and “off” gubernatorial election years, when *the percent change in the unemployment rate* replaces *the actual unemployment rate prior to the election*, the value of Adjusted R² is reduced (reference Figures 5-6 and 5-11). The principle independent variable (*the incumbent governor’s job approval/performance rating*) is rendered not statistically significant (reference Figure 5-11) or its coefficient is reduced (reference Figure 5-6).

The results indicate that it is important to include a measure of the state’s unemployment rate in the test model. Under certain test conditions, some correlation may exist between the two different measures of the variable. However, closer examination reveals that in addition to registering a positive relationship with the dependent variable, *percent change in the unemployment rate* tends to reduce, sometimes rather dramatically, the value of Adjusted R². Therefore, the *actual unemployment prior to the election* may very well be a better way to operationalize this variable, although its relationship with the dependent variable is difficult to explain.

There are a number of potential explanations for the findings that suggest a positive relationship exists between the state’s unemployment rate and the dependent variable. One is that the unemployment rate, as measured and reported, may not be a completely comprehensive, accurate assessment of state economic conditions.

Another potential explanation is that the party in control of the legislature will be held directly accountable by the electorate for increases or decreases in the state’s unemployment rate, particularly during “off” gubernatorial election years. This hypothesis, combined with divided government, may partly account for the findings in this study. It has been established that divided government itself can become a major issue in an election campaign (Leyden and Borrelli, 1993). Currently, 29 states have divided government, and since 1984, states with divided government have hovered near 30 (Storey, 2003). Especially when economic times are bad, there is probably no better strategy for the incumbent governor than to claim that an uncooperative legislature, controlled by the opposite party, has refused to enact his/her economic

proposals (Leyden & Borrelli, 1993). If such a message resonates amongst the electorate, the governor's party in the legislature may realize electoral gains – if they are the minority party. Again, the Unemployment Rate variable was statistically significant on a much more consistent basis during “off” gubernatorial election years – when the incumbent governor was not on the ballot and the electorate may have been more inclined to assign an increased level of responsibility to the legislature for factors associated with the condition of the state's job market. Obviously, additional work is necessary to address these assumptions.

Amount of Funds Expended during an Election Cycle by the State Political Party Committee Affiliated with the Incumbent Governor's Principle (General Election) Opposition

This variable was included in six equations and was found statistically significant in three (50%). The variable was included in three equations relative specifically to “on” gubernatorial election years, and was statistically significant in each. The coefficient was positive in each equation. The predicted value that can be examined in Figure 5-22 (0.00000101) suggests that for every \$1-million spent by the opposition party, the incumbent governor's party could actually gain an additional 1% of the seats in the state legislature during an “on” gubernatorial election year. The results provide support for Abramowitz's findings (1991) that challengers had a much lower rate of electoral return on their campaign spending, and that challengers spent more to get less.

Voter Turnout (Surges/Declines)

Two different measures of voter turnout in a state were used in this study: one comparing turnout to the turnout in the last statewide election, and another comparing the turnout with the average turnout in the state over the 16-year period of the study. A variable representing Voter Turnout was included in 21 test equations, and was found statistically significant in just three (14.3%). The predicted values were all positive.

The predicted/expected value of one measure (turnout compared to the 16-year average) can be examined in Figure 5-13. Its coefficient (0.7550) suggests that for every 5% increase in voter turnout, the governor's party could gain an additional 3.78% of the seats in the legislature during an “off” gubernatorial election year.

The largest coefficient for the variable representing an increase in turnout compared to the last statewide election can be examined in Figure 5-17 (0.1186). It suggests that for every 5% increase in voter turnout, the governor's party could gain an additional 0.59% of the seats in the legislature (during an "on" gubernatorial election year). The findings provide some support, albeit weak and conditional, that increases in voter turnout can modestly benefit the governor's party in legislative elections.

Total Percent of Legislative Seats "Turned-Over"

This variable was included in 12 equations, and was statistically significant in just one (8.3%). The variable was intended to be another measure of institutionalization, reflecting the stability of the legislature. It was also designed to be a proxy for re-election rates and the partisan competitiveness of state legislatures. It was further intended to assess whether the incumbent governor's party in the legislature is benefiting from increased "turnover" resulting from the imposition of term limits in numerous states.

While the pervasive statistical significance associated with the governor's popularity would suggest that turnover would perhaps result in gains being made by his/her party in the legislature, the test results indicate that "turnover" is not helping the governor's party. In the one equation in which the variable was statistically significant, its coefficient (-0.2642) predicts that the governor's party could lose over 2.6% of the seats in the legislature for every 10% of the seats that are "turned-over" during an "on" gubernatorial election year. However, the results are quite conditional.

Legislative Institutionalization (Legislative Annual Salary)

Two variables were employed in this study to assess the relationship between legislative institutionalization and legislative seat changes: one representing *the annual salary or compensation paid to legislators* (included in 11 equations) and another representing the *total number of days a state legislature spends in session*. At least one of these variables was included in each of the 26 test equations.

Initially, neither variable was found statistically significant, but there is one exception: When the variable representing the *percent change in the unemployment rate* replaces the *actual unemployment rate prior to the election* in the model reflected in Figure 5-26, the *annual compensation or salary paid to legislators* becomes statistically significant. Its coefficient (0.0001) suggests that for every \$10,000 paid to legislators annually, the governor's party could gain an additional 1% of the seats in the legislature. The results may provide some support – albeit quite weak and conditional -- for Carey's suggestion (2000) that legislative salary is a better measure of institutionalization.

The actual percent of the vote garnered by the U.S. Senate candidate that shares the incumbent governor's political party affiliation; the "dummy" representing whether it was an "on" or "off" presidential election year, and the "dummy" representing whether the incumbent governor shared the incumbent president's political party affiliation all proved statistically significant in at least one test equation. Their relationship with the dependent variable will be discussed in more detail in the following section (Analysis of National Level Indicators).

6.2 Analysis of National Level Indicators

The various equations included six national level indicators as variables, designed to test the relationship between national-level officeholders, elections and/or candidates and state legislative election outcomes. Again, these variables were: *the actual percentage of the vote garnered in a state by the U.S. Senate candidate that shared the incumbent governor's political party affiliation; a "dummy" representing whether it was an "on" or "off" U.S. Senatorial election year in a state; the incumbent president's job approval/performance rating; the actual percent of the vote garnered in a state by the presidential candidate/nominee that shared the incumbent governor's political party affiliation; a "dummy" representing whether the incumbent governor shared the incumbent president's political party affiliation; and a "dummy" representing whether it was an "on" or "off" presidential election year.* At least one of these variables was included in 24 of the 26 equations, and a degree of consistency in the results was recognized that warrants discussion in this section.

Dummy Variable: "On" or "Off" Presidential Election Year

This variable was included in 12 equations, and was statistically significant in just one (reference Figure 5-3). This variable is a proxy for assessing presidential coattails in state legislative elections. The coefficient was positive (3.34), suggesting that the incumbent governor's party could gain an additional 3.34% of the seats in the legislature during an "on" presidential, "off" gubernatorial election year (when all other variables are held constant). The variable was statistically significant in only 8.3% of the equations in which it was included, suggesting a very weak, conditional relationship between presidential elections and state legislative election outcomes.

Actual Percentage of the Vote Garnered by the U.S. Senate Candidate

This variable was included in 16 equations, and was found statistically significant in only two (12.5%), suggesting a relatively weak, conditional relationship. The coefficient was positive in

both, and its largest predicted effect can be examined in Figure 5-4 (0.0996), suggesting that for every 10% of the vote garnered in a state by the U.S. Senate candidate that shares the incumbent governor's political party affiliation, the governor's party could gain an additional 1% of the seats in the legislature. To put this coefficient into perspective, a U.S. Senate candidate garnering 55% of the vote during an "off" gubernatorial election year could help his/her party gain an additional 5.48% of the seats in the legislature (when all other variables are held constant).

The results suggest that the coattails of U.S. Senate candidates could be longer than that of presidential candidates, but are certainly shorter than that of the incumbent governor's. The variable is included in eight tests relative specifically to "on" gubernatorial election years, and was not found statistically significant in any. The results suggest that while senatorial coattails may be "longer" during "off" gubernatorial election years, they are still shorter than that of the governor's.

Dummy Variable: U.S. Senate Election Year in a State

This variable was included in two tests, and was not found to be statistically significant.

Dummy Variable: Does Governor Share the Incumbent President's Political Party Affiliation?

This variable was included in 23 test equations, and was found statistically significant in just three (reference Figures 5-21, 5-22 and 5-23). The variable is another proxy for assessing presidential coattails. In each equation, the coefficient (-2.1238, -3.9194 and -3.7904, respectively), suggests that the governor's party is predicted to lose seats in the legislature when he/she shares the same political party affiliation as the incumbent president. The variable is relative to both "on" and "off" presidential election years. An interesting finding is that the variable is only statistically significant during "on" gubernatorial election years. These results may suggest that Cover's (1986) findings could also be relevant at the state legislative level: that negative evaluations of the president had greater impact on congressional voting than positive evaluations.

Incumbent President's Job Approval/Performance Rating

This variable was included in eight equations, and was not found statistically significant in any. It is yet another proxy designed to assess whether presidential coattails extend to or have a positive relationship with state legislative elections.

Percentage of the Vote Garnered in a state by the Presidential Nominee/Candidate that shares the same Political Party Affiliation as the Incumbent Governor.

This variable was designed to be the main proxy for assessing the relationship between presidential elections and state legislative election outcomes (i.e., presidential coattails). It was included in nine models, and was found statistically significant in zero. While it may have been expected that there would be a stronger relationship between this variable and the dependent variable, the literature is actually inconsistent on this issue. The party of successful presidential nominees has gained legislative seats in certain states in certain years, while in other years that party has actually lost legislative seats (Campbell, 1986).

The findings may refute studies cited by Chubb (1988), which suggest that presidential candidates exert the greatest potential influence over legislative election outcomes. The results suggest that the strength of presidential coattails over state legislative elections may be diminishing in the contemporary era.

Taken in the aggregate, the test results suggest that state elections are not mirrors of national elections, and that the coattails of presidential and senatorial candidates may be diminishing or are no longer extending to state legislative candidates in any positive, meaningful way. The coefficients associated with each of these variables and their possible implications within the American polity will be discussed in more detail in “Chapter 7: Conclusion.”

6.3 Variables that were Not Statistically Significant

In addition to some of the “National Level” variables discussed above, a number of other variables were not statistically significant in any equation. These variables warrant some discussion. They are: *the total number of days the legislature spends in session, the total percentage of legislative seats subject to term limits in a state, and legislative approval ratings.*

Length of Legislative Session

The study included another variable designed to assess the relationship between legislative institutionalization and the dependent variable: *the total number of days the legislature spends in session each year.* It was included in 23 equations, and was found statistically significant in zero.

Total Percentage of Seats Subject to Term Limits

This variable was included in 23 equations. Since a total of 17 states currently have term limits “on the books” for members of the legislature (NCSL, 2003), they certainly have the potential of impacting state legislative elections and the partisan composition of state legislatures. For instance, 42.6% (Michigan in 1998), 41.25% (Florida in 2000), and 38.6% (Ohio in 2000) of the legislative seats in these states were subject to term limits. However, when considered in the aggregate, the test results suggest that term limits are not helping or hurting an incumbent governor’s party in the legislature.

Legislature’s Approval Rating

This variable was included in two test equations. The fact that it was not statistically significant infers that the electorate’s general impression of the legislature as a body or institution may not be effecting voting decisions. In addition, those impressions – either favorable or unfavorable -- are not helping or hurting the incumbent governor’s party in the legislature on election day.

CHAPTER 7.

Conclusion

The test results suggest that "Gubernatorial Coattails" is a relevant, statistically significant phenomenon as it relates to state legislative election outcomes in the contemporary era -- with higher predicted or expected values occurring during "on" gubernatorial election years. In numerous test equations and scenarios, the governor's popularity consistently proved to be a statistically significant factor in state legislative elections, with gubernatorial coattails being longer than that of presidential and senatorial coattails. The positive relationship between a governor's popularity and legislative seats gained by his/her party in the legislature is the one pervasive theme that emerged consistently throughout this project. Perhaps most important, the result was evident even when variables representing national level candidates, elections and/or officeholders are included. While emphasizing that these test results do not imply causation, it would be appropriate to infer that a popular incumbent governor can play an instrumental role in assisting his/her party gain seats in the legislature.

Initially, these results may appear contrary to the existing body of literature indicating that voters are becoming increasingly independent and splitting their ticket, which could be tantamount to a "decline of the parties." To a certain extent, the results do provide support for the claim that voters may be relying less on political party labels in determining voting selections. More specifically, the results indicate that the influence of presidential candidates over state legislative election outcomes may have diminished in recent years. It does not appear that a positive relationship exists between national level variables or votes cast for national level candidates and ballot-box support for state legislative candidates of the same party affiliation.

While Chubb (1988) claimed that state legislative elections appear to turn on factors that are substantially national, the test results relative to this project suggest that state elections are not mirrors of national elections. The electorate apparently compartmentalizes or separates their voting preferences based on the individual race, candidates and/or circumstances affecting each level of government. For instance, if a citizen is pleased with the performance of his/her governor or state legislator, or the legislature in general, but is not satisfied with his or her U.S. Senator or the President (or the party's nominee for said office), the voter will make that distinction at the polls – regardless of party affiliation and labels. The electorate is obviously judging state candidates on separate or different criteria from that of national level candidates. Since studies from the 1980's and early 1990's (namely Chubb; Campbell; and Ragsdale)

suggest a stronger relationship between national level variables and state legislative election outcomes, a rather significant shift in the political landscape may have occurred in the contemporary era (i.e., 1988–2003).

As it concerns elections for national office during 2004 (i.e., President, U.S. Congress and U.S. Senate), it should be expected that there will be substantial attention devoted to issues concerning the national economy, Homeland Security, the War on Terror, and the war in Iraq. However, candidates for governor and state legislature will most likely not be focusing primarily on those issues. Instead, state-level candidates will need to address state-specific issues (i.e., public education, the state's university system, the state's success in implementing Homeland Security measures, Medicaid and health care, infrastructure and transportation improvements, the state's economy, and state funding for local projects).

Over the past quarter-century, greater authority and flexibility have been granted to the states in managing public policy programs. A change in the political environment may have occurred resulting from a fundamental shift in American federalism: the devolution of power to the states after decades of expanding national authority. From the 1930's through the 1960's, state government declined in relative importance. Governors and state legislatures wallowed in mediocrity, while social and economic problems seemed to be susceptible only to national solutions (Keller, 1988). However, during the final decades of the 20th Century, states expanded their place in the governance of modern America (Keller, 1988). Starting with Richard Nixon's state and local revenue sharing and Ronald Reagan's New Federalism, more power and authority has been concentrated with state government.

According to Anton (1997), states have become much more aggressive in initiating innovative policies in a variety of fields, from education, to economic development, to welfare and health care reform. The emergence of states as policy-leaders, based on vastly improved state governmental capacity, means that a substantial amount of devolution has already taken place. In field after field, and particularly in health care, states have been acting on issues that appear stalemated in Washington, applying even more pressure for further devolution (Anton, 1997). Conlan (1998) states that significant decentralization is already underway in our system of government – that the tide is flowing away from Washington. Governorships have been

strengthened, state legislatures modernized, state bureaucracies professionalized, and revenue systems broadened (Conlan, 1998). States are where much of what is vital, interesting and important in American politics is transpiring (Keller, 1988). However, history has proven that such trends can be transitory and cyclical, and the federal government could once again take a larger, more jurisdictional role in our nation's public life.

One potentially logical explanation for the findings of this study is that the electorate is aware of this trend towards devolution and recognizes the increased power of their state's governor over an expanding array of public policy issues – and the quality of life in their homes and communities. The electorate may be holding the incumbent governor, the state's chief executive, and his/her party in the legislature increasingly accountable, which explains the statistical significance of the variable representing increases in personal income in each state. This variable could be construed as a proxy for the effectiveness of state government in managing the economy, with perhaps the governor being held directly accountable for perceived successes and failures, and his/her party in the legislature being beneficiaries or causalities of those successes or failures.

While a considerable percentage of the eligible Voting Age Population chooses not to participate in elections, those who do participate are perhaps increasingly sophisticated and informed, at least to the extent that they perceive the trend towards devolution and the increased concentration of authority within state government. While Lupia (1994) claims that voters in mass elections are notorious for their apparent lack of information about relevant political matters, Feddersen & Pesendorfer (1999) found that more informed voters are more likely to vote than their less informed counterparts. By “splitting-their-ticket” between state and national offices, informed voters may be making a conscious distinction between the actions of state and federal governments officials – mainly based upon their level of satisfaction with elected officials serving at each respective level of government.

Nonetheless, there seems to be a disconnect between the electorate and state legislative candidates and officeholders, with a low percentage of voters in a district able to identify an incumbent state legislator or legislative candidate by name. According to Pat Bainter (2004), president of two Florida-based political polling and consulting organizations, the name

recognition of incumbent state legislators and candidates for state legislature is consistently so low amongst the electorate that the percentage is almost always less than the margin of error. Dr. Richard Niemi (2004) and Dr. Peter Feld (2004) confirmed that few voters in a legislative district can identify their state legislator or state legislative candidates by name. While Feld does not have any systematic data to report, he expects very low scores for state legislators, perhaps in the 20% to 30% range, at best. Therefore, the electorate's perception of the incumbent governor can certainly be an important determinant in a voter's decision when selecting a state legislative candidate. Hence, this could explain, at least in part, the pervasive gubernatorial coattail effect that is apparent in the majority of the tests conducted for this project.

While voters seem to be making a clear delineation between state and national candidates, the trend associated with split-ticket voting should not be interpreted as being tantamount to a general decline of political parties or a general partisan decline. Political party organizations still play an instrumental role in a number of endeavors that directly benefit individual candidates. For instance, in over half the states, the political parties run campaigns for candidates, both incumbents and challengers alike (CSG, 2002). The results may further indicate that the viability of state political parties is becoming an increasingly important factor.

A body of evidence suggests that partisan alignments have actually strengthened over the past 30 years, particularly as it concerns presidential and congressional elections. In the 2000 Presidential Election, nearly 9 of 10 people who "identified" themselves as Republican voted for George Bush, while the same proportion of those "identifying" as Democrats voted for Al Gore – regardless of actual party registration (Rosenthal, 2003). Therefore, if party cues are important in high-visibility contests, they are even more important in low visibility contests such as state legislative elections, where people have virtually no other cues to guide them (Rosenthal, 2003). Other scholarship has emphasized the potential importance of cues and information shortcuts in allowing relatively uninformed citizens to act, individually or collectively, as if they were fully informed. Uninformed voters successfully use cues and information shortcuts to behave as if they were fully informed (Bartels, 1996). It could be inferred through the test results that voters use party identification and other cues in state legislative races, and that party identification and voting behavior are closely connected in state elections. It has been established through this project that there is a positive relationship between a popular incumbent governor (i.e., the

“cue”) and the success of legislative candidates that share his/her party affiliation. The length of gubernatorial coattails, combined with the statistical significance of the Straight-Party Vote Option in a number of equations, suggests that party labels and identification are related to state legislative election outcomes (especially during “on” gubernatorial election years).

Candidates for President, U.S. Senate, Congress and Governor typically wage high-priced, high-profile, multi-million dollar campaigns that invest heavily in television advertising. These high-profile campaigns and candidates often receive a great deal of coverage from both print and broadcast media, and the majority of attention from a voting public that is typically oversaturated with media messages. On the other hand, state legislative candidates typically do not have access to the resources that would enable them to compete with those other high-profile candidates for the attention of voters. Neither do these candidates receive significant media attention, especially when compared to statewide, presidential or congressional candidates. As suggested by Rosenthal (2003), voters are utilizing “cues” from higher office candidates or office holders in making decisions relative to electing members of their state legislature. The test results suggest that voters are looking to the job performance or popularity of an incumbent governor – but not that of presidential or senatorial candidates -- in selecting their state legislators.

Still, legislative candidates are advised to make every effort to define themselves amongst the electorate, and to the fullest extent possible, build their own strong reputation amongst the citizens in their respective voting district. In an era defined by split-ticket voting, these candidates should not depend solely upon gubernatorial coattails to sweep them into office, and they most certainly should not hinge their success upon the coattails of presidential or senatorial candidates.

In regard to strategy, political operatives typically focus on “turning-out” “super” voters.¹³ While targeting “super” voters certainly is a prudent strategy for managing precious resources and possibly achieving electoral success, the data suggest that it should not be assumed that a citizen who receives a ride to the polls or an absentee ballot courtesy of their political party organization will actually vote for the party’s entire slate of candidates (although the availability of the

¹³ Registered voters who consistently cast a ballot in each election.

straight-party vote option is predicted to increase the likelihood). The data suggest that voters may very well cast a ballot for a presidential and/or senatorial candidate of one party and a state legislative candidate of another. However, a voter is more inclined to support a state legislative candidate that is aligned politically with a popular incumbent governor, especially if personal income levels are on the rise and/or if the straight party vote option is offered.

The test results provide some additional insights into the potential effects that certain economic conditions and variables could have on state legislative election outcomes, suggesting that personal income is moderately related to legislative seat changes. Under certain conditions, the electorate seems to be holding the governor's party responsible for changes in their personal income situation. The results lend some support for the "pocketbook voting" explanation, in which people vote for the party in power when personal finances are good. However, while this study makes a contribution, there is still a dearth of scholarship concerning the electoral accountability of governors and legislators for state economic performance, particularly in an era defined by devolution. The relationship between economic conditions and state legislative election outcomes is certainly a topic of future research.

In closing, convincing evidence was provided that a positive relationship exists between the governor's popularity and the percentage of seats gained by his/her party in the legislature. This central relationship proved statistically significant across a number of different elections, equations and relationships involving both principle independent variables of interest representing both "on" and "off" gubernatorial election years. The test results seem to imply that governors are playing an increasingly prominent role in the nation's political and public policy arenas.

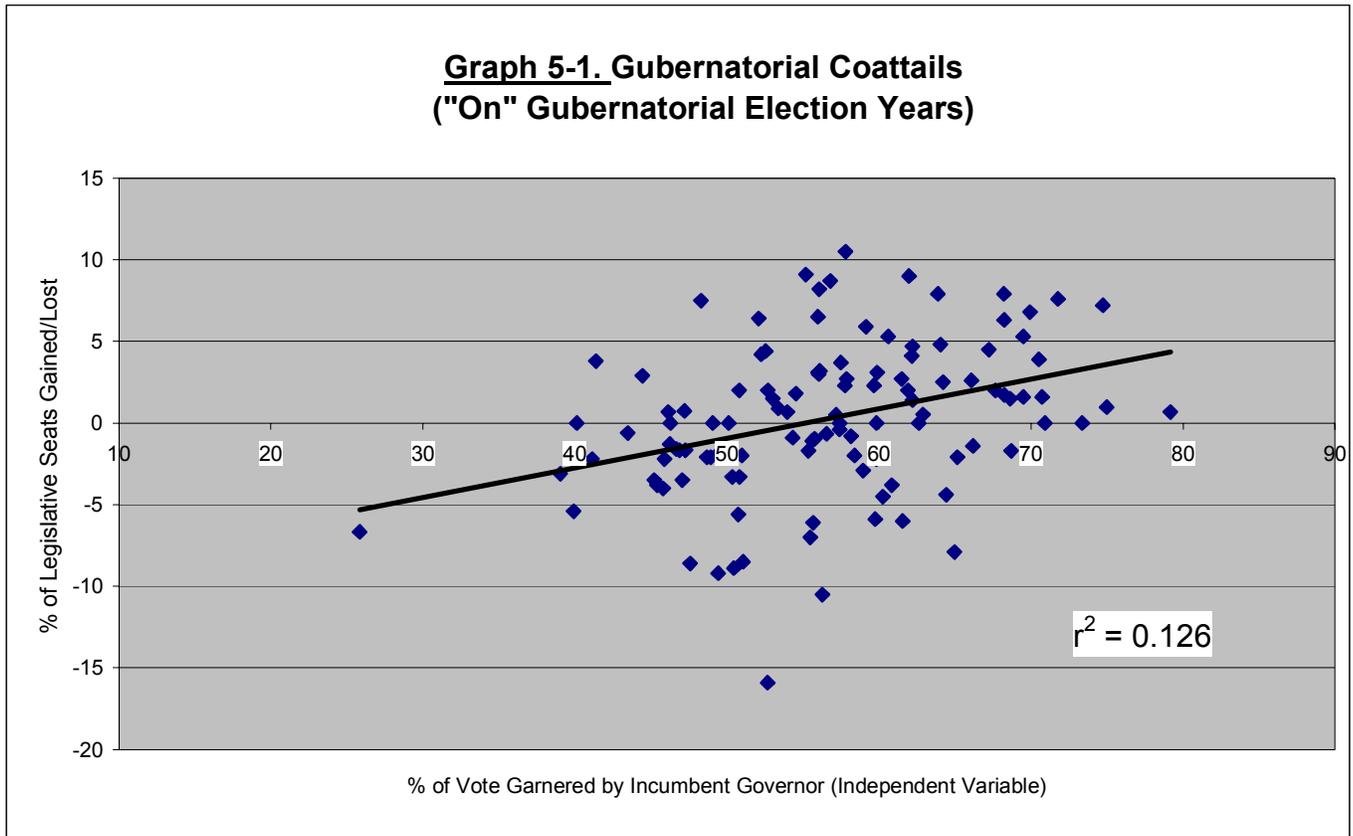
While the thesis accomplishes its objective of contributing to the existing body of academic literature by providing insights into some of the dominant forces, conditions and variables that are related to state legislative election outcomes, additional research and analysis is warranted. For instance, it would be advantageous to explore how far gubernatorial coattails actually extend. Do these "coattails" extend to local government elections, such as city council, mayor, county commission, or school board? While some of these races are "non-partisan," candidates --

particularly mayoral candidates in large metropolitan areas – often align themselves with and/or receive high profile support from a popular incumbent governor.

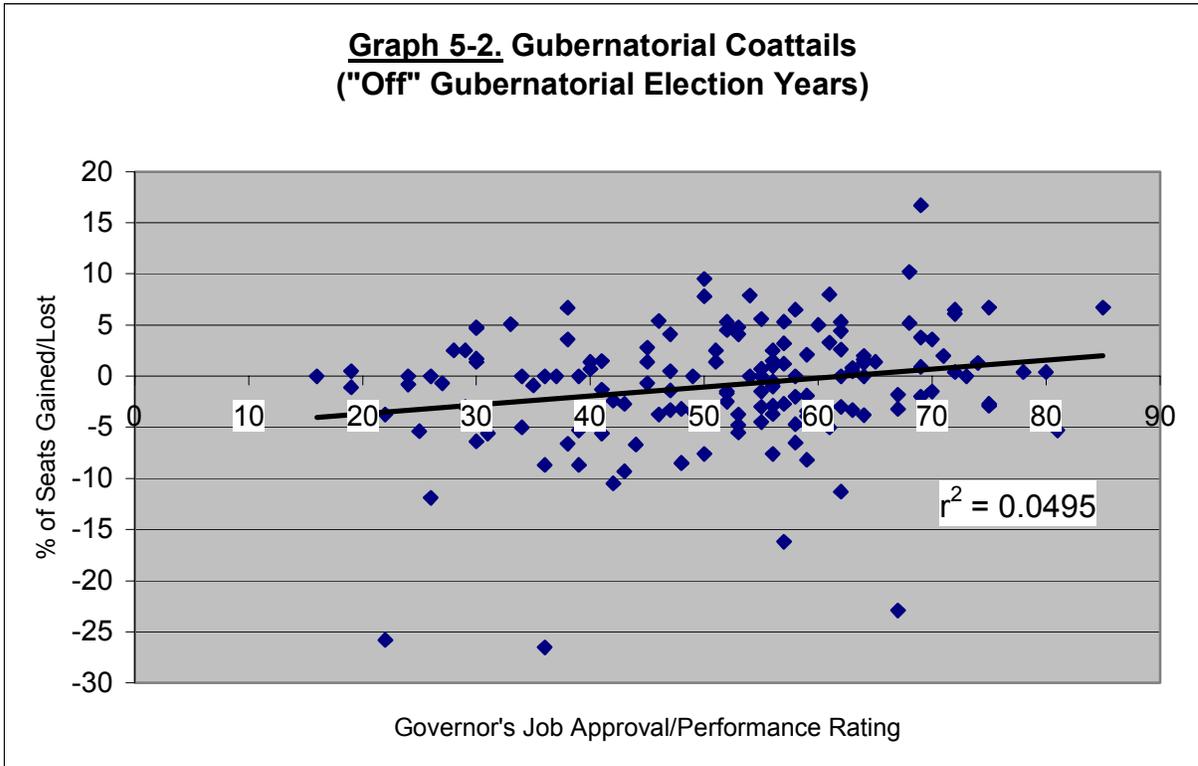
APPENDIX 1:

Test Results Graphs and Figures

Graph 5-1. The Bivariate Relationship between the *Actual Percent of the Vote Garnered by an Incumbent Governor* seeking Re-election and State Legislative Seat Changes



Graph 5-2. The Bivariate Relationship between an *Incumbent Governor's Job Approval or Performance Rating* and State Legislative Seat Changes during "Off" Gubernatorial Election Years



Label Reference for Variables

In the following Test Results Figures, each independent variable is coded with an abbreviated label. This Reference should prove helpful in interpreting the label assigned to each variable. For a more descriptive explanation of each variable, review Chapter 3: Research Design (“Additional Explanatory Variables” and “Principle Independent Variables”). For each Test Results Figure, the Dependent Variable is the “Percentage of Seats Gained or Lost by the Incumbent Governor’s Party in the Legislature.”

Days in Legislative Session = The average number of days the legislature spends in session per year.

Funds Expended by Gov’s Party = The amount of funds expended in each state in each election cycle by the state political party associated with the incumbent governor.

Funds Expended by Opposition Party = The amount of funds expended in each state in each election cycle by the state political party affiliated with the incumbent governor’s principle opposition.

Gov’s % of Vote = Actual percentage of the vote garnered by the incumbent governor seeking reelection during an “on” gubernatorial election year (principle independent variable).

Gov’s Job Approval Rating = The incumbent governor’s job approval or performance rating prior to the election (the principle independent variable in “off” gubernatorial year equations).

Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation = A Dummy Variable representing whether the incumbent president shares the incumbent governor’s political party affiliation.

Gubernatorial Election Year = A Dummy Variable representing whether it was an “on” or “off” gubernatorial election year in a state (1 = yes, 0 = no).

Legislature's Approval Rating = The approval rating of the legislature in each state prior to an election.

Legislative Salary = The annual salary or financial compensation paid to state legislators.

% Change in Income = The percentage change in personal income in a state in the year prior to the election.

% Change in Unemployment Rate = Compares the state's unemployment rate two years prior to the general election with the rate immediately prior to the election. The variable represents the percentage increase or decrease in the state's unemployment rate over that two year time period.

% of Seats Term Limited = The total percentage of state legislative seats subject to term limits in a state in a certain year.

President's Approval Rating = The incumbent president's job approval or performance rating.

Presidential Election Year = A Dummy variable representing whether it was an "on" or "off" presidential election year.

Presidential Nominee's % of Vote = The actual percentage of the vote garnered in a state by the presidential nominee that shares the incumbent governor's political party affiliation.

Senate Candidate's % of Vote = The actual percent of the vote garnered in a state by the U.S. Senate candidate that shares the incumbent governor's political party affiliation.

Senate Election Year = Dummy Variable representing whether a U.S. Senate race was held in a state during a particular election year/cycle.

Straight Party Vote Option = A Dummy Variable representing whether a state offers the straight-party vote option.

Turnover = The percent of legislative seats “turned over” in a state resulting from the most recent statewide election cycle.

Voter Turnout = The surge or decline in voter turnout (compared to the last statewide election or compared to the average turnout in the state over the 16-year period of the study).

Unemployment Rate = The unemployment rate in the state prior to the election.

Figure 5-1. A Basic Model Assessing the Relationship between an Incumbent Governor’s Popularity and Legislative Seat Changes during “Off” Gubernatorial Election Years.

n	145
R²	0.12
Adjusted R²	0.08
SE	5.3320

Term	Coefficient	SE	P	95% CI of Coefficient
Intercept	-5.2042	1.8072	0.0046	-8.7776 to -1.6309
Gov’s Job Approval Rating	0.0869	0.0304	0.0049	0.0268 to 0.1469
% Change in Unemployment Rate	0.8862	0.3729	0.0188	0.1489 to 1.6236
Straight Party Vote Option	0.3933	0.9610	0.6829	-1.5068 to 2.2935
Days in Legislative Session	-0.0046	0.0085	0.5929	-0.0214 to 0.0123
% of Seats Term Limited	0.0509	0.0695	0.4647	-0.0864 to 0.1883
Voter Turnout (Compared to last election)	0.0975	0.0376	0.0106	0.0231 to 0.1720

Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	537.178	6	89.530	3.15	0.0063
About regression	3923.304	138	28.430		
Total	4460.482	144			

Figure 5-2. The Relationship between a Governor’s Popularity and Legislative Seat Changes During “Off”
Gubernatorial Election Years

n	145				
R²	0.10				
Adjusted R²	0.04				
SE	5.4438				
Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient	
Intercept	-8.7883	4.0557	0.0320	-16.8092to -0.7675	
Gov’s Job Approval Rating	0.0848	0.0332	0.0118	0.0191to 0.1505	
Presidential Election Year	1.8185	1.3323	0.1745	-0.8163to 4.4533	
Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation	-0.4516	0.9382	0.6310	-2.3070to 1.4038	
Unemployment Rate	0.2941	0.3509	0.4034	-0.3999to 0.9882	
% Change in Income	0.1278	0.2530	0.6143	-0.3725to 0.6280	
Straight Party Vote Option	0.5164	1.0102	0.6101	-1.4815to 2.5143	
Days in Legislative Session	-0.0051	0.0088	0.5581	-0.0224to 0.0122	
% of Seats Term Limited	0.0392	0.0720	0.5873	-0.1032to 0.1815	
Voter Turnout (Compared to last election)	0.0562	0.0482	0.2454	-0.0391to 0.1515	
Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	459.787	9	51.087	1.72	0.0893
About regression	4000.695	135	29.635		
Total	4460.482	144			

Figure 5-3. The Relationship between the Governor’s Job Approval Rating and State Legislative Seat Changes during “Off” Gubernatorial Election Years: Does Legislative Institutionalization Matter?

n	139
R ²	0.12
Adjusted R ²	0.06
SE	5.3609

Term	Coefficient	SE	P	95% CI of Coefficient
Intercept	-8.4976	2.8809	0.0038	-14.1977to -2.7976
Senate Election Year	-0.3581	0.9931	0.7190	-2.3230to 1.6068
Gov’s Job Approval Rating	0.0835	0.0322	0.0106	0.0198to 0.1473
Presidential Election Year	3.3404	1.1929	0.0059	0.9803to 5.7006
Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation	-0.7525	0.9465	0.4280	-2.6251to 1.1201
% Change in Income	0.2455	0.2364	0.3011	-0.2223to 0.7133
Straight Party Vote Option	0.6290	0.9725	0.5189	-1.2950to 2.5531
Voter Turnout (Compared to 16-year Average)	0.0749	0.1507	0.6203	-0.2233to 0.3730
Legislative Salary	0.0000	0.0000	0.4542	-0.0001to 0.0000
Turnover	0.0072	0.0428	0.8665	-0.0774to 0.0918

Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	P
Due to regression	496.701	9	55.189	1.92	0.0545
About regression	3707.327	129	28.739		
Total	4204.029	138			

Figure 5-4. The Relationship between a Governor’s Popularity and State Legislative Seat Changes During “Off” Gubernatorial and “On” Senatorial Election Years

Term	Coefficient	SE	P	95% CI of Coefficient	
Intercept	-13.0791	4.2610	0.0029	-21.5541 to -4.6042	
Gov’s Job Approval Rating	0.1207	0.0403	0.0036	0.0405 to 0.2009	
Senate Candidate’s % of Vote	0.0996	0.0498	0.0488	0.0005 to 0.1987	
Presidential Election Year	2.0097	1.7284	0.2483	-1.4281 to 5.4474	
Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation	0.4982	1.2857	0.6994	-2.0591 to 3.0555	
% Change in Unemployment Rate ^a	0.9533	0.4745	0.0478	0.0097 to 1.8970	
% Change in Income	-0.1754	0.3189	0.5837	-0.8097 to 0.4588	
Straight Party Vote Option	1.3678	1.3013	0.2962	-1.2204 to 3.9560	
Days in Legislative Session	-0.0012	0.0108	0.9136	-0.0227 to 0.0204	
% of Seats Term Limited	0.0191	0.0855	0.8233	-0.1509 to 0.1892	
Voter Turnout (Compared to last election)	0.0849	0.0605	0.1640	-0.0354 to 0.2052	
Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	669.621	10	66.962	2.16	0.0287
About regression	2578.307	83	31.064		
Total	3247.928	93			

^a By employing the *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate* instead of the *Actual Unemployment Rate in the State Prior to the Election*, Adjusted R² increased by only 0.04.

Figure 5-5. The Relationship between the Governor’s Job Performance/Approval Rating and Legislative Seat Changes during “On” Senatorial Election Years: An Assessment of Senatorial Coattails.

N	87				
R ²	0.18				
Adjusted R ²	0.06				
SE	4.2364				
Term	Coefficient	SE	P	95% CI of Coefficient	
Intercept	-12.1259	4.6614	0.0112	-21.4118to -2.8399	
Presidential Nominee’s % of Vote	-0.0188	0.0704	0.7899	-0.1590to 0.1213	
Senate Candidate’s % of Vote	0.0915	0.0440	0.0409	0.0039to 0.1792	
Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation	1.0710	1.0700	0.3201	-1.0605to 3.2026	
Unemployment Rate	0.6989	0.3431	0.0452	0.0153to 1.3825	
% Change in Income	-0.1466	0.2099	0.4871	-0.5647to 0.2715	
Straight Party Vote Option	1.8638	1.0241	0.0728	-0.1763to 3.9038	
Days in Legislative Session	0.0076	0.0083	0.3640	-0.0090to 0.0243	
% of Seats Term Limited	0.0454	0.0686	0.5107	-0.0914to 0.1821	
Gov’s Job Approval Rating	0.0671	0.0362	0.0679	-0.0051to 0.1392	
Gubernatorial Election Year	-0.5069	1.4730	0.7317	-3.4413to 2.4276	
Voter Turnout (Compared to last election)	0.0428	0.0458	0.3540	-0.0486to 0.1341	
Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	298.933	11	27.176	1.51	0.1442
About regression	1346.005	75	17.947		
Total	1644.938	86			

Figure 5-6. The Relationship between the Governor’s Popularity and Legislative Seat Changes Relative to both “On” and “Off” Gubernatorial Election Years

N	54
R ²	0.30
Adjusted R ²	0.09
SE	4.7067

Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient
Intercept	-17.5542	7.9422	0.0327	-33.5938to -1.5145
Legislature’s Approval Rating	-0.0393	0.0830	0.6379	-0.2069to 0.1282
Senate Candidate’s % of Vote	0.1123	0.0632	0.0831	-0.0154to 0.2401
Gov’s Job Approval Rating	0.1563	0.0585	0.0108	0.0381to 0.2745
Presidential Election Year	-1.4714	2.3118	0.5280	-6.1401to 3.1973
Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation	1.9081	1.5656	0.2299	-1.2536to 5.0698
Unemployment Rate ^a	0.9573	0.6203	0.1304	-0.2953to 2.2100
% Change in Income	-0.2445	0.2749	0.3789	-0.7996to 0.3106
Straight Party Vote Option	1.7672	1.5772	0.2690	-1.4180to 4.9524
Days in Legislative Session	0.0291	0.0150	0.0597	-0.0012to 0.0594
% of Seats Term Limited	0.0479	0.0833	0.5678	-0.1202to 0.2161
Voter Turnout (Compared to last election)	-0.0592	0.0664	0.3780	-0.1932to 0.0749
Gubernatorial Election Year	-1.9724	2.3350	0.4032	-6.6880to 2.7433

Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	382.145	12	31.845	1.44	0.1886
About regression	908.264	41	22.153		
Total	1290.409	53			

^a When *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate* replaces the *Actual Unemployment Rate Prior to the Election* in the same equation, Adjusted R² is reduced to 0.04. The variable representing the Governor’s Popularity remains statistically significant, but its coefficient is reduced to 0.1264. When the Unemployment Rate variable is completely removed, Adjusted R² becomes 0.06. The variable representing the Governor’s Popularity remains statistically significant, and its coefficient is reduced to 0.1266.

Figure 5-7. The Relationship between the Governor’s Popularity and State Legislative Seat Changes during “Off” Gubernatorial Election Years when State Political Party Expenditures are Introduced

n	81				
R²	0.19				
Adjusted R²	0.07				
SE	5.8937				
Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient	
Intercept	-9.1470	6.5826	0.1691	-22.2789 to 3.9849	
Funds Expended by Gov’s Party	0.0000	0.0000	0.7605	0.0000 to 0.0000	
Funds Expended by Opposition Party	0.0000	0.0000	0.9225	0.0000 to 0.0000	
Gov’s Job Approval Rating	0.1286	0.0511	0.0141	0.0267 to 0.2304	
Presidential Election Year	0.8855	1.8423	0.6323	-2.7899 to 4.5608	
Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation	-1.5527	1.3961	0.2699	-4.3379 to 1.2325	
Unemployment Rate	0.4068	0.6342	0.5234	-0.8584 to 1.6721	
% Change in Income	0.2901	0.3895	0.4590	-0.4870 to 1.0672	
Straight Party Vote Option	-1.7061	1.5249	0.2671	-4.7482 to 1.3361	
Days in Legislative Session	-0.0258	0.0141	0.0728	-0.0540 to 0.0025	
% of Seats Term Limited	-0.0257	0.0974	0.7927	-0.2201 to 0.1687	
Voter Turnout (Compared to last election)	0.1099	0.0869	0.2102	-0.0634 to 0.2832	
Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	576.408	11	52.401	1.51	0.1484
About regression	2396.727	69	34.735		
Total	2973.135	80			

Figure 5-8. The Coefficients associated with the State’s Unemployment Rate and Political Party Campaign Expenditures during “Off” Gubernatorial and “On” Presidential Election Years

	R²			
	0.31			
	Adjusted R²	0.14		
	SE	3.5167		

Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient
Intercept	-16.9502	5.9702	0.0064	-28.9248to -4.9755
Gov’s Job Approval Rating	0.1093	0.0381	0.0059	0.0329to 0.1857
Presidential Nominee’s % of Vote	0.0041	0.0658	0.9504	-0.1279to 0.1362
Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation	0.5216	0.9765	0.5954	-1.4369to 2.4801
Unemployment Rate ^a	1.6583	0.5512	0.0040	0.5527to 2.7638
% Change in Income	0.3281	0.2742	0.2368	-0.2219to 0.8780
Straight Party Vote Option	1.3603	1.0465	0.1993	-0.7388to 3.4594
Funds Expended by Gov’s Party	0.0000	0.0000	0.7430	0.0000to 0.0000
Funds Expended by Opposition Party	0.0000	0.0000	0.8590	0.0000to 0.0000
Legislative Annual Salary	0.0000	0.0000	0.3050	-0.0001to 0.0000
Turnover	0.0029	0.0773	0.9702	-0.1521to 0.1579
Days in Legislative Session	-0.0004	0.0108	0.9717	-0.0221to 0.0213
% of Seats Term Limited	0.0642	0.0680	0.3493	-0.0721to 0.2005
Voter Turnout (Compared to last election)	0.0725	0.0565	0.2053	-0.0409to 0.1859

Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	291.865	13	22.451	1.82	0.0647
About regression	655.461	53	12.367		
Total	947.326	66			

^a When the *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate* is used as a replacement for the *Actual Unemployment Rate* in the same model, Adjusted R² is reduced to 0.03, and the *Governor’s Job Approval/Performance Rating* is no longer statistically significant. The *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate* is statistically significant and its coefficient (1.4263) suggests that the governor’s party could gain an additional 1.4% of the seats in the legislature for every 1% increase in the unemployment rate.

Figure 5-9. The Coefficients associated with the Straight Party Vote Option and the State’s Unemployment Rate during “On” Senatorial and “Off” Gubernatorial Election Years

n	72
R ²	0.24
Adjusted R ²	0.08
SE	3.8940

Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient
Intercept	-13.2792	4.8815	0.0086	-23.0471to -3.5113
Senate Candidate’s % of Vote	0.0771	0.0447	0.0901	-0.0124to 0.1666
Turnover	0.0000	0.0515	0.9998	-0.1030to 0.1031
Legislative Salary	0.0000	0.0000	0.3424	-0.0001to 0.0000
Gov’s Job Approval Rating	0.0684	0.0370	0.0696	-0.0057to 0.1425
Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation	1.1227	1.1084	0.3152	-1.0951to 3.3405
Presidential Nominee’s % of Vote	-0.0731	0.0779	0.3514	-0.2290to 0.0827
% Change in Income	0.3314	0.2736	0.2307	-0.2161to 0.8790
Straight Party Vote Option	2.6158	1.0976	0.0204	0.4195to 4.8121
Unemployment Rate ^a	0.9485	0.4007	0.0212	0.1467to 1.7503
Days in Legislative Session	0.0128	0.0094	0.1806	-0.0061to 0.0317
% of Seats Term Limited	0.0943	0.0692	0.1784	-0.0442to 0.2328
Voter Turnout (Compared to 16-year average)	0.1247	0.2006	0.5364	-0.2766to 0.5261

Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	276.027	12	23.002	1.52	0.1438
About regression	894.619	59	15.163		
Total	1170.647	71			

^a When the *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate* is used as a replacement for the *Actual Unemployment Rate Prior to the Election* in the same model, Adjusted R² increases slightly to 0.10. The *Straight Party Vote Option* remains statistically significant and its coefficient increases to 3.05. The *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate* is also statistically significant in that model, and its coefficient is 1.1192.

Figure 5-10. The Relationship between a Governor’s Popularity and State Legislative Seat Changes during an “Off” Gubernatorial and “Off” Presidential Election Year

n	142
R ²	0.13
Adjusted R ²	0.07
SE	5.6380

Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient
Intercept	-12.4832	3.9564	0.0020	-20.3095to -4.6570
Gov’s Job Approval Rating	0.1018	0.0346	0.0038	0.0334to 0.1702
Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation	-0.2258	0.9820	0.8185	-2.1682to 1.7166
% Change in Income	0.5601	0.2549	0.0298	0.0558to 1.0644
Straight Party Vote Option	0.6092	1.0385	0.5585	-1.4451to 2.6636
Days in Legislative Session	0.0002	0.0089	0.9803	-0.0173to 0.0177
% of Seats Term Limited	0.0479	0.0752	0.5252	-0.1009to 0.1967
Turnover	-0.0639	0.0403	0.1152	-0.1437to 0.0158
Unemployment Rate	0.6490	0.4185	0.1233	-0.1788to 1.4768
% Change in Unemployment Rate	0.6302	0.4214	0.1372	-0.2034to 1.4637

Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	646.342	9	71.816	2.26	0.0220
About regression	4195.934	132	31.787		
Total	4842.276	141			

Figure 5-11. The Relationship between National Level Indicators, Economic Variables and State Legislative Seat Changes Relative to both “On” and “Off” Gubernatorial Election Years

Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient	
Intercept	-19.5608	6.9364	0.0079	-33.6425to -5.4790	
President’s Approval Rating	-0.0737	0.0524	0.1680	-0.1801to 0.0326	
Presidential Nominee’s % of Vote	-0.0088	0.0695	0.8994	-0.1499to 0.1322	
Senate Candidate’s % of Vote	0.0191	0.0423	0.6549	-0.0668to 0.1049	
Gov’s Job Approval Rating	0.1304	0.0453	0.0068	0.0384to 0.2224	
Gubernatorial Election Year	-0.5912	1.5223	0.7001	-3.6817to 2.4993	
Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation	-1.0214	1.2071	0.4032	-3.4720to 1.4291	
Unemployment Rate^a	1.8346	0.5007	0.0008	0.8182to 2.8511	
% Change in Income	0.8940	0.3278	0.0099	0.2285to 1.5594	
Straight Party Vote Option	2.4927	0.9838	0.0159	0.4955to 4.4900	
Days in Legislative Session	-0.0024	0.0102	0.8150	-0.0232to 0.0184	
% of Seats Term Limited	0.0767	0.0530	0.1566	-0.0308to 0.1842	
Voter Turnout (Compared to last election)	0.0470	0.0530	0.3810	-0.0606to 0.1546	
Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	318.601	12	26.550	3.11	0.0043
About regression	298.481	35	8.528		
Total	617.083	47			

^a When the *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate* replaces the *Actual Unemployment Rate Prior to the Election* in the same model, Adjusted R² is substantially reduced to 0.20, and the variable representing the *Governor’s Popularity* is no longer statistically significant. In the new equation, the *President’s Job Approval Rating*, the *Straight Party Vote Option*, and the *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate* are statistically significant. Their coefficients are: -0.1196, 3.1357, and 1.2034, respectively.

Figure 5-12. The Relationship between National Level Indicators, Economic Variables and State Legislative Seat Changes during “Off” Gubernatorial Election Years

n	41
R ²	0.53
Adjusted R ²	0.35
SE	2.8081

Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient
Intercept	-24.6217	7.4552	0.0025	-39.8693 to -9.3742
President’s Approval Rating	-0.0237	0.0569	0.6798	-0.1402 to 0.0927
Presidential Nominee’s % of Vote	0.0966	0.0781	0.2259	-0.0631 to 0.2562
Senate Candidate’s % of Vote	-0.0082	0.0438	0.8532	-0.0977 to 0.0813
Gov’s Job Approval Rating	0.1079	0.0462	0.0267	0.0134 to 0.2024
Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation	-2.6166	1.3803	0.0680	-5.4396 to 0.2065
Unemployment Rate ^a	2.1189	0.5410	0.0005	1.0124 to 3.2253
% Change in Income	0.8977	0.3221	0.0093	0.2389 to 1.5565
Straight Party Vote Option	1.6721	1.0923	0.1367	-0.5619 to 3.9061
Days in Legislative Session	-0.0039	0.0101	0.6986	-0.0246 to 0.0167
% of Seats Term Limited	0.0390	0.0533	0.4698	-0.0699 to 0.1479
Voter Turnout (Compared to last election)	0.0736	0.0539	0.1828	-0.0367 to 0.1839

Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	260.271	11	23.661	3.00	0.0087
About regression	228.684	29	7.886		
Total	488.955	40			

^a When *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate* replaces the *Actual Unemployment Rate Prior to the Election* in the same equation, Adjusted R² is substantially reduced to 0.17. The *Governor’s Popularity* variable is no longer statistically significant, although the variables representing the *Unemployment Rate* and the *Straight Party Vote Option* remain statistically significant. The coefficient associated with the *Straight Party Vote Option* increases to 2.8805 and the coefficient associated with the *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate* is 1.3625. When the *Unemployment Rate* variable is completely eliminated from the equation, Adjusted R² is reduced dramatically to 0.05, and the variable representing the *Governor’s Popularity* is no longer statistically significant.

Figure 5-13. The Coefficients Associated with National Level Indicators and Economic Variables during “Off” Gubernatorial and “On” Senatorial Election Years

Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient	
Intercept	-16.2136	9.6003	0.1076	-36.3072To 3.8800	
President’s Approval Rating	-0.0686	0.0708	0.3445	-0.2167To 0.0795	
Presidential Nominee’s % of Vote	0.0213	0.1021	0.8370	-0.1925To 0.2351	
Senate Candidate’s % of Vote	-0.0354	0.0591	0.5562	-0.1592To 0.0883	
Funds Expended by Gov’s Party	0.0000	0.0000	0.2578	0.0000To 0.0000	
Funds Expended by Opposition Party	0.0000	0.0000	0.2155	0.0000To 0.0000	
Gov’s Job Approval Rating	0.0431	0.0635	0.5050	-0.0897To 0.1760	
Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation	-1.9684	1.5491	0.2192	-5.2106To 1.2738	
Unemployment Rate ^a	2.4295	0.7624	0.0049	0.8338To 4.0253	
% Change in Income	1.1486	0.4354	0.0162	0.2372To 2.0599	
Straight Party Vote Option	1.6898	1.2693	0.1988	-0.9668To 4.3464	
Days in Legislative Session	-0.0002	0.0110	0.9860	-0.0232To 0.0228	
% of Seats Term Limited	0.0421	0.0841	0.6226	-0.1340To 0.2182	
Voter Turnout (Compared to 16-year average)	0.7550	0.3487	0.0433	0.0252To 1.4848	
Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	219.542	13	16.888	2.08	0.0716
About regression	154.346	19	8.123		
Total	373.888	32			

^aWhen the *Actual Unemployment Rate Prior to the Election* is replaced by the *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate*, Adjusted R² is once again substantially reduced to 0.18. The *Percent Change in Income* is no longer statistically significant, and the *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate* is statistically significant. Its coefficient is 1.7221. When the *Unemployment Rate* variable is completely removed from the model, Adjusted R² is reduced dramatically to -0.01.

Figure 5-14. The Statistical Significance of the Governor’s Popularity and Economic Variables during “On” Presidential, “On” Senatorial and “Off” Gubernatorial Election Years

	n				
	41				
	R²	0.55			
	Adjusted R²	0.34			
	SE	2.8498			

Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient
Intercept	-27.5061	8.2613	0.0025	-44.4568to -10.5553
President’s Approval Rating	0.0018	0.0635	0.9779	-0.1284to 0.1320
Presidential Nominee’s % of Vote	0.1086	0.0886	0.2307	-0.0731to 0.2904
Senate Candidate’s % of Vote	-0.0150	0.0492	0.7623	-0.1159to 0.0858
Gov’s Job Approval Rating	0.1390	0.0591	0.0262	0.0178to 0.2602
Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation	-2.5798	1.4318	0.0828	-5.5176to 0.3580
Unemployment Rate ^a	2.0988	0.5565	0.0008	0.9570to 3.2407
% Change in Income	0.8660	0.3295	0.0140	0.1899to 1.5422
Straight Party Vote Option	1.8825	1.1326	0.1081	-0.4415to 4.2065
Days in Legislative Session	0.0028	0.0121	0.8217	-0.0221to 0.0276
% of Seats Term Limited	0.0621	0.0583	0.2957	-0.0574to 0.1816
Voter Turnout (Compared to last election)	0.0681	0.0602	0.2676	-0.0553to 0.1915
Legislative Salary	0.0000	0.0000	0.3159	-0.0001to 0.0000
Turnover	0.0562	0.0827	0.5026	-0.1134to 0.2258

Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	269.675	13	20.744	2.55	0.0192
About regression	219.280	27	8.121		
Total	488.955	40			

^a When *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate* replaces the *Actual Unemployment Rate Prior to the Election*, Adjusted R² is substantially reduced to 0.15%. The variables representing the *Percent Change in Personal Income* and the *Incumbent Governor’s Job Approval Rating* are no longer statistically significant. The *Straight Party Vote Option* becomes statistically significant, and its coefficient is 3.1572. The *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate* is also statistically significant in the new equation, and its coefficient is 1.35. When the *Unemployment Rate* variable is completely removed from the equation, Adjusted R² is reduced dramatically to 0.02, and the variable representing the *Governor’s Popularity* is no longer statistically significant.

Figure 5-15. The Predicted Effect of Gubernatorial Coattails and the Straight Party Vote Option during “On” Gubernatorial Election Years: A Basic Model

n	93				
R²	0.19				
Adjusted R²	0.13				
SE	4.4785				
Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient	
Intercept	-15.4866	4.6985	0.0014	-24.8285 to -6.1447	
Gov’s % of Vote	0.1984	0.0698	0.0056	0.0596 to 0.3371	
Gov’s Job Approval Rating	0.0269	0.0522	0.6083	-0.0770 to 0.1307	
Unemployment Rate	0.1400	0.4263	0.7435	-0.7075 to 0.9875	
Straight Party Vote Option	2.5034	1.0466	0.0190	0.4225 to 4.5842	
Days in Legislative Session	0.0114	0.0081	0.1621	-0.0047 to 0.0274	
% of Seats Term Limited	0.0732	0.0671	0.2779	-0.0601 to 0.2066	
Voter Turnout (Compared to last election)	0.0280	0.0460	0.5448	-0.0635 to 0.1194	
Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	408.916	7	58.417	2.91	0.0088
About regression	1704.810	85	20.057		
Total	2113.726	92			

Figure 5-16. The Coefficients associated with Gubernatorial, Senatorial and Presidential Coattails

n	19
R²	0.56
Adjusted R²	0.27
SE	2.9800

Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient
Intercept	-15.7172	9.3843	0.1221	-36.3719 to 4.9375
Senate Candidate's % of Vote	0.0142	0.0753	0.8541	-0.1515 to 0.1798
Gov's % of Vote	0.2402	0.1081	0.0481	0.0024 to 0.4781
Presidential Nominee's % of Vote	-0.0055	0.1294	0.9669	-0.2903 to 0.2793
Turnover	0.0944	0.0654	0.1769	-0.0496 to 0.2383
Legislative Salary	0.0001	0.0001	0.3296	-0.0001 to 0.0003
Straight Party Vote Option	3.2248	1.8008	0.1009	-0.7388 to 7.1884
% Change in Income	-0.3489	0.2200	0.1412	-0.8332 to 0.1354

Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	121.920	7	17.417	1.96	0.1529
About regression	97.684	11	8.880		
Total	219.604	18			

Figure 5-17. The Relationship between the Governor’s Popularity, the Straight Party Vote Option and State Legislative Election Outcomes during “On” Gubernatorial Election Years

n	107
R²	0.26
Adjusted R²	0.19
SE	4.1781

Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient	
Intercept	-11.4546	4.1208	0.0065	-19.6333to -3.2759	
Gov’s % of Vote	0.2385	0.0518	<0.0001	0.1356to 0.3414	
Presidential Election Year	-2.2760	1.3207	0.0880	-4.8973to 0.3453	
Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation	-1.5982	0.8452	0.0616	-3.2758to 0.0794	
Unemployment Rate ^a	-0.0959	0.3079	0.7560	-0.7070to 0.5151	
% Change in Income	-0.2345	0.1779	0.1905	-0.5876to 0.1186	
Straight Party Vote Option	2.5710	0.9158	0.0060	0.7534to 4.3886	
Days in Legislative Session	0.0091	0.0072	0.2071	-0.0051to 0.0234	
% of Seats Term Limited	0.0531	0.0619	0.3929	-0.0697to 0.1760	
Voter Turnout (Compared to last election)	0.1186	0.0506	0.0211	0.0182to 0.2190	
Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	584.204	9	64.912	3.72	0.0005
About regression	1693.316	97	17.457		
Total	2277.520	106			

^a When the *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate* replaces the *Actual Unemployment Rate Prior to the Election* in the same model, the test results are virtually unchanged. Adjusted R² is unchanged, the statistically significant variables remain the same, and their coefficients are virtually unchanged.

Figure 5-18. The Coefficients Associated with the Governor’s Popularity and the Straight Party Vote Option during “On” Gubernatorial Election Years

n	93			
R²	0.24			
Adjusted R²	0.15			
SE	4.4131			

Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient
Intercept	-11.3594	5.4005	0.0385	-22.1028 to -0.6160
Gov’s Job Approval Rating	0.0287	0.0517	0.5800	-0.0741 to 0.1315
Gov’s % of Vote	0.1981	0.0735	0.0086	0.0518 to 0.3444
Presidential Election Year	-2.0501	1.5651	0.1939	-5.1636 to 1.0635
Gov/Pres Share Political Party Affiliation	-1.6113	0.9975	0.1101	-3.5956 to 0.3729
Unemployment Rate^a	-0.0528	0.4372	0.9041	-0.9225 to 0.8169
% Change in Income	-0.2373	0.2009	0.2410	-0.6370 to 0.1624
Straight Party Vote Option	2.7647	1.0662	0.0113	0.6436 to 4.8857
Days in Legislative Session	0.0093	0.0080	0.2512	-0.0067 to 0.0253
% of Seats Term Limited	0.0575	0.0671	0.3940	-0.0760 to 0.1910
Voter Turnout (Compared to last election)	0.0979	0.0605	0.1094	-0.0224 to 0.2181

Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	516.735	10	51.674	2.65	0.0074
About regression	1596.990	82	19.475		
Total	2113.726	92			

^a When the *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate* replaces the *Actual Unemployment Rate Prior to the Election* in the same model, the results are virtually identical.

Figure 5-19. The Predicated Effect of Gubernatorial Coattails combined with the Straight Party Vote Option during “On” Gubernatorial Election Years

n	52
R²	0.32
Adjusted R²	0.11
SE	4.7783

Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient	
Intercept	-12.0297	7.0925	0.0978	-26.3756to 2.3162	
Gov’s % of Vote	0.2643	0.1124	0.0238	0.0370to 0.4916	
President’s Approval Rating	0.0026	0.0726	0.9718	-0.1443to 0.1494	
Senate Candidate’s % of Vote	0.0098	0.0517	0.8499	-0.0947to 0.1144	
Gov’s Job Approval Rating	-0.0070	0.0745	0.9253	-0.1578to 0.1437	
Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation	-2.0527	1.4480	0.1643	-4.9816to 0.8762	
% Change in Unemployment Rate^a	0.3453	0.7098	0.6294	-1.0904to 1.7810	
% Change in Income	-0.5062	0.3954	0.2080	-1.3059to 0.2935	
Straight Party Vote Option	3.5182	1.7359	0.0496	0.0069to 7.0294	
Days in Legislative Session	0.0036	0.0128	0.7814	-0.0224to 0.0295	
% of Seats Term Limited	0.0598	0.1124	0.5978	-0.1676to 0.2871	
Voter Turnout (Compared to last election)	0.0320	0.0957	0.7398	-0.1616to 0.2256	
Presidential Election Year	-1.8011	2.7930	0.5228	-7.4505to 3.8483	
Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	411.300	12	34.275	1.50	0.1654
About regression	890.469	39	22.833		
Total	1301.769	51			

^a When the *Actual Unemployment Rate Prior to the Election* is used in the same model as a replacement for the *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate*, the results are virtually identical.

Figure 5-20. A Simultaneous Assessment of Gubernatorial, Senatorial and Presidential Coattails.

n	19
R²	0.64
Adjusted R²	0.27
SE	2.9743

Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient
Intercept	-11.4729	9.8417	0.2737	-33.7363to 10.7905
Senate Candidate's % of Vote	0.0239	0.0870	0.7896	-0.1728to 0.2206
Gov's % of Vote	0.2096	0.1199	0.1143	-0.0616to 0.4807
Presidential Nominee's % of Vote	-0.0248	0.1334	0.8569	-0.3265to 0.2770
Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation	-2.3592	1.7783	0.2173	-6.3819to 1.6635
Unemployment Rate ^a	-0.5729	0.7714	0.4766	-2.3178to 1.1720
% Change in Income	-0.3811	0.2632	0.1815	-0.9764to 0.2142
Straight Party Vote Option	4.0464	2.0207	0.0762	-0.5248to 8.6177
Legislative Salary	0.0002	0.0001	0.1561	-0.0001to 0.0005
Turnover	0.1380	0.1083	0.2346	-0.1070to 0.3830

Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	139.987	9	15.554	1.76	0.2066
About regression	79.618	9	8.846		
Total	219.604	18			

^a When the *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate* replaces the *Actual Unemployment Rate Prior to the Election* in the same model, the results are practically unchanged.

Figure 5-21. An Examination of the Coefficients Associated with the Governor’s Percent of the Vote Garnered and the Straight Party Vote Option

n	68
R ²	0.37
Adjusted R ²	0.23
SE	4.1440

Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient
Intercept	-13.4253	4.4933	0.0042	-22.4301 to -4.4204
Senate Candidate’s % of Vote	0.0058	0.0370	0.8755	-0.0684 to 0.0800
Gov’s % of Vote	0.2725	0.0653	0.0001	0.1417 to 0.4034
Presidential Election Year	-1.3480	1.6814	0.4262	-4.7177 to 2.0217
Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation	-2.1238	1.0734	0.0529	-4.2750 to 0.0274
% Change in Unemployment Rate	0.2299	0.4066	0.5740	-0.5848 to 1.0447
% Change in Income	-0.3729	0.2113	0.0831	-0.7964 to 0.0505
Straight Party Vote Option	2.8760	1.1952	0.0195	0.4807 to 5.2713
Days in Legislative Session	-0.0031	0.0121	0.8012	-0.0274 to 0.0212
% of Seats Term Limited	0.0464	0.0912	0.6134	-0.1365 to 0.2292
Voter Turnout (Compared to last election)	0.0682	0.0668	0.3117	-0.0657 to 0.2021
Legislative Salary	0.0000	0.0000	0.3752	0.0000 to 0.0001
Turnover	0.0279	0.0427	0.5169	-0.0578 to 0.1136

Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	545.455	12	45.455	2.65	0.0072
About regression	944.481	55	17.172		
Total	1489.936	67			

Figure 5-22. The Coefficients Associated with the Governor’s Popularity and State Political Party Expenditures during “On” Gubernatorial Election Years.

Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient
Intercept	-11.3060	10.4450	0.2898	-32.8634to 10.2514
Senate Candidate’s % of Vote	0.0511	0.0646	0.4367	-0.0822to 0.1844
Gov’s % of Vote	0.2604	0.1183	0.0376	0.0162to 0.5046
Presidential Election Year	-0.7411	3.1810	0.8178	-7.3063to 5.8241
Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation	-3.9194	1.8472	0.0444	-7.7318to -0.1070
Unemployment Rate ^a	-0.4041	1.0268	0.6974	-2.5233to 1.7152
% Change in Income	-0.7491	0.5739	0.2042	-1.9336to 0.4354
Straight Party Vote Option	3.0404	1.9644	0.1348	-1.0139to 7.0946
Days in Legislative Session	0.0031	0.0175	0.8609	-0.0329to 0.0391
% of Seats Term Limited	0.0506	0.1303	0.7010	-0.2183to 0.3196
Voter Turnout (Compared to last election)	0.0387	0.1350	0.7766	-0.2399to 0.3174
Legislative Salary	0.0000	0.0001	0.9425	-0.0001to 0.0001
Turnover	0.0121	0.0800	0.8812	-0.1530to 0.1772
Funds Expended by Gov’s Party	0.0000	0.0000	0.3142	0.0000to 0.0000
Funds Expended by Opposition Party	0.0000	0.0000	0.0551	0.0000to 0.0000

Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	529.286	14	37.806	1.63	0.1420
About regression	557.016	24	23.209		
Total	1086.302	38			

^aWhen the *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate* replaces the *Actual Unemployment Rate in the State Prior to the Election* in the same model, the results are virtually identical.

Figure 5-23. The Predicted Effects of Gubernatorial Coattails and State Political Party Expenditures on Legislative Seat Changes during “On” Gubernatorial Election Years

	n				
	36				
	R²	0.59			
	Adjusted R²	0.31			
	SE	4.4477			
Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient	
Intercept	5.3049	13.5151	0.6986	-22.8012to 33.4111	
Gov’s % of Vote	0.4058	0.1561	0.0167	0.0812to 0.7303	
President’s Approval Rating	-0.0453	0.0992	0.6525	-0.2517to 0.1611	
Senate Candidate’s % of Vote	0.0691	0.0629	0.2844	-0.0617to 0.2000	
Funds Expended by Gov’s Party	0.0000	0.0000	0.2864	0.0000to 0.0000	
Funds Expended by Opposition Party	.00000101	0.0000	0.0157	0.0000to 0.0000	
Gov’s Job Approval Rating	-0.2808	0.1320	0.0454	-0.5553to -0.0063	
Presidential Election Year	0.5000	3.9079	0.8994	-7.6268to 8.6268	
Gov/Pres Share Political Party Affiliation	-3.7904	1.7634	0.0434	-7.4575to -0.1233	
Unemployment Rate ^a	-2.1222	1.2340	0.1002	-4.6885to 0.4441	
% Change in Income	-1.1654	0.5036	0.0309	-2.2128to -0.1180	
Straight Party Vote Option	5.1160	2.0022	0.0184	0.9523to 9.2797	
Days in Legislative Session	0.0184	0.0166	0.2802	-0.0162to 0.0530	
% of Seats Term Limited	0.2268	0.1311	0.0983	-0.0458to 0.4995	
Voter Turnout (Compared to last election)	-0.0253	0.1604	0.8760	-0.3589to 0.3082	
Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	588.448	14	42.032	2.12	0.0575
About regression	415.417	21	19.782		
Total	1003.865	35			

^aWhen the *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate* replaces the *Actual Unemployment Rate in the State Prior to the Election* in the model, Adjusted R² is substantially reduced to 0.21. The only independent variable that is statistically significant is the *Straight Party Vote Option*, and its coefficient is reduced to 4.8193. When the *Unemployment Rate* variable is completely removed from the equation, Adjusted R² is reduced to 0.25. The *Percent of the Vote Garnered by the Incumbent Governor* remains statistically significant, but is reduced to 0.3043.

Figure 5-24. The Coefficients Associated with the Governor’s Popularity, National Level Variables, and State Political Party Expenditures during “On” Gubernatorial Election Years

Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient
Intercept	-5.6976	13.1434	0.6693	-33.1143to 21.7191
Senate Candidate’s % of Vote	0.0830	0.0806	0.3153	-0.0851to 0.2510
Gov’s % of Vote	0.2575	0.1213	0.0465	0.0044to 0.5105
President’s Approval Rating	-0.0596	0.1016	0.5639	-0.2715to 0.1523
Presidential Election Year	-1.9454	2.8869	0.5081	-7.9675to 4.0766
Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation	-3.1066	1.9980	0.1357	-7.2744to 1.0612
Unemployment Rate ^a	-1.1944	1.4064	0.4058	-4.1281to 1.7394
Straight Party Vote Option	2.8504	2.0591	0.1815	-1.4447to 7.1456
Funds Expended by Gov’s Party	0.0000	0.0000	0.4047	0.0000to 0.0000
Funds Expended by Opposition Party	0.0000	0.0000	0.0421	0.0000to 0.0000
% Change in Income	-0.8962	0.6207	0.1643	-2.1911to 0.3986
Days in Legislative Session	-0.0031	0.0188	0.8700	-0.0424to 0.0361
% of Seats Term Limited	0.1265	0.1631	0.4470	-0.2137to 0.4666
Voter Turnout (Compared to 16-year average)	0.2463	0.2915	0.4081	-0.3618to 0.8544
Legislative Salary	0.0000	0.0001	0.9132	-0.0002to 0.0002
Turnover	-0.0086	0.0932	0.9275	-0.2030to 0.1859

Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	527.171	15	35.145	1.40	0.2381
About regression	502.356	20	25.118		
Total	1029.527	35			

^aIf the variable representing the *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate* replaced the *Actual Unemployment Rate Prior to the Election* in the same model, Adjusted R² would be reduced to 0.12. The *Percent of the Vote Garnered by the Governor* remains statistically significant, and its coefficient increases to 0.2698. It would be the only statistically significant variable.

Figure 5-25. The Relationship between Gubernatorial Coattails and State Legislative Seat Changes During “On” Gubernatorial and “Off” Presidential Election Years

N	56				
R²	0.34				
Adjusted R²	0.18				
SE	4.5802				
Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient	
Intercept	-14.9785	6.5854	0.0279	-28.2505to -1.7064	
Gov’s % of Vote	0.2617	0.0796	0.0020	0.1014to 0.4221	
President’s Approval Rating	0.0360	0.0598	0.5501	-0.0846to 0.1567	
Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation	-2.0265	1.3471	0.1396	-4.7413to 0.6883	
% Change in Unemployment Rate	0.2771	0.6080	0.6507	-0.9481to 1.5024	
% Change in Income	-0.4086	0.3900	0.3005	-1.1946to 0.3773	
Straight Party Vote Option	2.9134	1.4691	0.0536	-0.0474to 5.8743	
Days in Legislative Session	-0.0031	0.0141	0.8254	-0.0315to 0.0252	
% of Seats Term Limited	0.0554	0.1005	0.5846	-0.1472to 0.2580	
Legislative Salary	0.0000	0.0001	0.4707	-0.0001to 0.0001	
Turnover	0.0222	0.0549	0.6880	-0.0884to 0.1328	
Senate Candidate’s % of Vote	0.0018	0.0452	0.9675	-0.0892to 0.0929	
Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	479.940	11	43.631	2.08	0.0427
About regression	923.055	44	20.979		
Total	1402.995	55			

Figure 5-26. The Relationship Between Institutional Instability and State Legislative Seat Changes during “On”
Gubernatorial Election Years: Who Benefits from Membership Turnover?

n	33				
R²	0.60				
Adjusted R²	0.36				
SE	4.1284				
Term	Coefficient	SE	p	95% CI of Coefficient	
Intercept	-14.2347	11.1738	0.2173	-37.5428to 9.0734	
Gov’s % of Vote	0.2561	0.1135	0.0354	0.0193to 0.4929	
% Change in Income	-0.2448	0.2793	0.3911	-0.8274to 0.3377	
Unemployment Rate ^a	1.0948	0.8778	0.2267	-0.7362to 2.9258	
Gov/Pres Share Party Affiliation	0.8608	1.8014	0.6379	-2.8967to 4.6184	
Legislature’s Approval Rating	-0.0517	0.0852	0.5509	-0.2295to 0.1261	
Senate Election Year	2.3948	1.6416	0.1601	-1.0295to 5.8190	
Presidential Election Year	1.4314	2.3941	0.5566	-3.5626to 6.4254	
Straight Party Vote Option	-1.1380	2.0141	0.5783	-5.3393to 3.0633	
% of Seats Term Limited	-0.0491	0.1174	0.6803	-0.2941to 0.1959	
Legislative Salary	0.0001	0.0001	0.0725	0.0000to 0.0002	
Turnover	-0.2642	0.0843	0.0052	-0.4400to -0.0884	
Days in Legislative Session	-0.0196	0.0188	0.3096	-0.0587to 0.0196	
Source of variation	SSq	DF	MSq	F	p
Due to regression	504.960	12	42.080	2.47	0.0357
About regression	340.875	20	17.044		
Total	845.835	32			

^aWhen the variable representing the *Percent Change in the Unemployment Rate* supplants the *Actual Unemployment Rate Prior to the Election* in the same model, Adjusted R² is reduced by 0.02 to 0.34. The *Annual Compensation or Salary paid to legislators* becomes statistically significant, and its coefficient (0.0001) suggests that for every \$10,000 paid to legislators annually, the governor’s party could gain an additional 1% of the seats in the legislature. The coefficient associated with the *Turnover* variable is reduced to -0.1970, and the *Actual Percent of the Vote Garnered by the Incumbent Governor* is no longer statistically significant. When the *Unemployment Rate* variable is completely removed from the equation, Adjusted R² is reduced to 0.34, and the *Percent of the Vote Garnered by the Incumbent Governor* is no longer statistically significant.

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