

Norman Schofield · Gonzalo Caballero · Daniel Kselman *Editors*

Advances in Political Economy

Institutions, Modelling and Empirical Analysis

This book presents latest research in the field of Political Economy, dealing with the integration of economics and politics and the way institutions affect social decisions. The focus is on innovative topics such as an institutional analysis based on case studies; the influence of activists on political decisions; new techniques for analyzing elections, involving game theory and empirical methods.

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ing likelihood of convergence to the electoral mean. By using simulation, we verified that electoral mean gives an LNE in 2007 elections. We also found another LNE with all parties except DTP aligned close to the electoral mean and DTP located in the southwest of the ideological space. We argue that the electoral strength of AKP pulls the equilibrium point to the right of electoral mean on the religion axis. The initial position of all parties except DTP and AKP are to the left of the equilibrium. The initial positions of parties except DTP on the nationalism axis got closer to each other compared to 2002 elections. DTP takes a position that is to the south of the equilibrium point. None of the parties except DTP diverge from the electoral mean on this axis in the equilibrium.

Appendix 1: Survey Questions

The analysis of 2007 elections in this paper is based on World Values Survey (WVS).¹² The survey was conducted between January and March 2007, that is three—six months before the 2007 elections. The questions used in our analysis are the following:

Vote Choice

If there were a national election tomorrow, for which party on this list would you vote?

Secularism

- (1) How strongly do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree Nor Disagree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree
 - (a) Politicians who do not believe in God are unfit for public office.
 - (b) It would be better for Turkey if more people with strong religious beliefs held public office.
- (2) For each of the following, indicate how important it is in your life. Would you say it is Very important, Rather important, Not very important, Not at all important? Religion

¹²World Values Survey 1981–2008 official aggregate v.20090901 (2009). World Values Survey Association (www.worldvaluessurvey.org). Aggregate File Producer: ASEP/JDS, Madrid.

Nationalism

- (1) How proud are you to be Turkish? Very Proud, Quite Proud, Not Very Proud, Not At All Proud
- (2) People have different views about themselves and how they relate to the world. Using this card, would you tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about how you see yourself? I see myself as part of the Turkish nation. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

Demographic Characteristics

- (1) Age: Can you tell me your year of birth, please? This means you are ... years old.
- (2) Education: What is the highest educational level that you have attained? 1—No Formal Education, 9—University Level Education—With Degree
- (3) Language: What language do you normally speak at home?
- (4) Socio-economic Status: People sometimes describe themselves as belonging to the working class, the middle class, or the upper or lower class. Would you describe yourself as belonging to the: 1 Upper class, 2 Upper middle class, 3 Lower middle class, 4 Working class, 5 Lower class?

Appendix 2: Factor Loadings

Table 6 Factor loadings

n = 588	Religion	Nationalism
Politicians' belief in god	0.738	0.092
People with strong beliefs in public office	0.748	0.064
Religion important in life	0.478	0.246
Proud of nationality	0.071	0.656
Part of the nation	0.106	0.405
Variance	0.270	0.133
Cumulative Variance	0.270	0.403

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Do Competitive Districts Necessarily Produce Centrist Politicians?

James Adams, Thomas L. Brunell, Bernard Grofman, and Samuel Merrill III

1 Evaluating Conventional Wisdom About the Effects of District Composition on Party Convergence Among the Members of the U.S. Congress

We have come a long way from the simplistic portrait of two-party plurality competition resulting in tweedledum-tweedledee politics that is commonly attributed

We are indebted to Keith Poole for making available to us Poole-Rosenthal DW-NOMINATE data for the House for the period of interest, and to Dan Butler for helpful comments on a previous version of the manuscript. We also owe special thanks to Clark Bensen of POLIDATA who routinely provides us with high quality aggregate election data. We are indebted to Clover Behrend-Gethard and Sue Ludeman for bibliographic assistance. The listing of authors is alphabetical. Work on this project by the third-named author was supported by SSHRCC research grant #410-2007-2153 (co-PIs Stanley Winer and J. Stephen Ferris) and by the Jack W. Peltason (Bren Foundation) Chair, University of California, Irvine.

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47 to Downs (1957).¹ Two key modifications are the recognition that (1) paralleling
 48 Downsian pressures for party convergence, there are strong competing incentives
 49 for party divergence; and, (2) that the existence of multiple legislative constituencies
 50 in which competition occurs affects the standard Downsian logic.

51 For example, we now recognize the theoretical potential for divergence due to
 52 politicians' sincere policy motivations,² candidate nomination rules,³ party activists,
 53 voters' partisan loyalties, the threat of abstention due to alienation, and a host of
 54 other factors.⁴ Theoretical research also suggests that the consequences of multi-
 55 constituency competition for party convergence are expected to be larger (a) the
 56 more diverse the locations of the median voter across different districts, (b) the
 57 greater the extent to which candidates/elected officials have the leeway to modify
 58 their policy platforms/legislative behavior to accommodate the median voter in their
 59 own district,⁵ and (c) the greater the difference in variance in the support bases
 60 of the two parties.⁶ Neo-Downsian models of the type pioneered by Adams and
 61 Merrill (2003), Butler (2009), Miller and Schofield (2003) demonstrate that, under
 62 certain empirically plausible circumstances, candidates maximize support in general
 63 elections not by appeal to the median voter position but by mobilizing their own
 64 partisan supporters (i.e., what we think of as the party's "base").

65 There is also extensive empirical support for party divergence in two party com-
 66 petition in the United States, including work on the ideological differences between
 67 Senators of the same state from rival parties (e.g., Poole and Rosenthal 1984; Grof-
 68 man et al. 1990), work that tests hypotheses about the extent to which primary vot-
 69 ing rules affects party divergence (Gerber and Morton 1998; Grofman and Brunell
 70 2001), and a body of work dating back as least as far as Froman (1963) looking at
 71 the degree to which newly elected members of congress resemble their predecessors
 72 in voting behavior and at the degree to which members of Congress are responsive
 73 to the ideology of their constituents. For example, Schmidt et al. (1996) test the hy-
 74 pothesis that candidates derive electoral benefits in general elections from appealing
 75 on policy grounds to their partisan constituencies. In a study of U.S. Senate elec-
 76 tions from 1962–1990, they conclude that incumbent Senators were more likely to
 77 win reelection when their voting records coincided with their state party's platform
 78

79
 80 ¹Downs' own (1957) views of party convergence are, however, far less simplistic than often
 81 painted, see, e.g., Grofman (2004).

82 ²See e.g., Wittman (1983); Groseclose (2001).

83 ³Gerber and Morton (1998); Burden (2001, 2004); Grofman and Brunell (2001); Owen and Grof-
 84 man (2006); Adams and Merrill (2008).

85 ⁴See Grofman (2004) for a recent review of the theoretical literature on party divergence in plural-
 86 ity elections.

87 ⁵Winer et al. (2008); see also Snyder (1994).

88 ⁶Grofman et al. (1999) report analyses suggesting that the policy preferences of state-level Demo-
 89 cratic partisan constituencies are substantially more heterogeneous than are the policy prefer-
 90 ences of state-level Republican constituencies, and that this difference is not an artifact of the
 91 fact that Democratic partisans from the South hold substantially more conservative views than do
 92 Democrats from the rest of the country.

93 than when their voting records reflected the median state voter's position, and, fur-
 94 thermore, that senators who appealed to their state party constituencies were more
 95 likely to run for reelection.⁷

96 Griffin (2006) argues that district competitiveness promotes responsiveness. Grif-
 97 fin's analysis, however, does not address our main question of how the policy differ-
 98 ential between Democratic and Republican office-holders in similar districts varies
 99 between competitive districts on the one hand and uncompetitive ones on the other.
 100 What Griffin shows, instead, is that the average ideology of representatives (rather
 101 than the differential between parties) varies *across districts* as the median voter ide-
 102 ology varies, and that this relation is more pronounced among generally moderate
 103 districts than among uncompetitive districts.⁸ Griffin, however, does not compare
 104 Democratic positions with Republican positions in similar districts.

105 In this essay we show that theoretically expected patterns of candidate position-
 106 ing are reflected in the empirical record of the ideological locations of those individ-
 107 uals who become members of Congress. In particular, we look at the implications of
 108 presidential voting patterns at the district/state level—which we view as a surrogate
 109 for district/state ideology—for the degree of ideological similarity among Demo-
 110 cratic and Republican officeholders, as reflected in their legislative voting records.
 111 We analyze data for the U.S. House and Senate over the period 1956–2004. We take
 112 support levels for Democratic presidential nominees as our measure of the under-
 113 lying ideological predisposition in the district, and we use the first dimension of
 114 DW-NOMINATE scores as our measure of the policy positions taken by officehold-
 115 ers. Our focus is empirical and descriptive rather than theoretical (although, as we
 116 discuss below, our findings have important implications for theory-based models of
 117 candidate competition).⁹

118 Exactly as expected, we find that representatives from opposite parties who
 119 are elected from districts of similar ideology display sharply different legislative
 120 voting records, such that, for any given level of Democratic presidential support,
 121 Democrats elected from such districts are, on average, considerably more liberal
 122 than Republicans elected from such districts. Moreover, we also find the expected
 123 constituency-specific effects that pull office holders toward the views of their own
 124 constituency, so that the greater the support for Democratic presidential nominees
 125

126
 127 ⁷In a study of postwar presidential elections, however, Kenny and Lotfinia (2005) report mixed
 128 results, i.e. they report that in some sets of analyses the presidential nominees who were closer to
 129 their party's ideological position fared better in general elections, while other sets of analyses sug-
 130 gest that the nominees who were closer to the median voter appeared to be electorally advantaged.

131 ⁸In particular, Griffin finds that the slope over districts relating average representative ideology
 132 to (normalized) presidential vote is steeper for competitive (moderate) districts than for lop-sided
 133 districts. He further finds that within districts legislators are more likely to adjust to changing voter
 134 ideology over time in competitive rather than uncompetitive districts.

135 ⁹Our evidence does not speak to a current lively debate over issue ownership and dialogue in
 136 political campaigns, which revolves around whether rival candidates emphasize the same policy
 137 issue areas, not whether the candidates take similar positions on these issues (see, e.g., Sigelman
 138 and Buell 2004; Petrocik 1996; Kaplan et al. 2006).

139 in the district, the more liberal are both Democratic and Republican officeholders
140 from such districts.

141 We look more closely at the degree of ideological similarity among officehold-
142 ers of the two parties as a function of presidential voting in the district. We also
143 consider differences found across different time periods and offer evidence from
144 both Houses of Congress. In particular, rather than looking at each party separately,
145 we look at whether the degree of closeness/competitiveness in the underlying par-
146 tisan characteristics of a district lead to differences in the ideological *gap* between
147 representatives of the two different parties elected from districts of that type.

148 Our primary purpose is to investigate the theoretical expectations derived from
149 the modeling of Adams et al. (2005), Butler (2009), and Adams et al. (2010), that
150 policy convergence between vote-seeking Democratic and Republican candidates
151 need not be maximized in districts with balanced partisan compositions, i.e., where
152 there are approximately equal proportions of Democratic and Republican partisans.
153 Indeed, Adams et al. (2010), who account for voters' partisan loyalties and absten-
154 tion due to alienation, advance the opposite argument, that, *ceteris paribus*, districts
155 with balanced partisan compositions will motivate maximal policy *divergence* be-
156 tween Democratic and Republican candidates. Figure 1 in Adams et al. (2010) de-
157 picts the expected pattern, i.e., ideological divergence is greatest when partisans are
158 equally balanced. Although the arguments of Adams et al. and Butler¹⁰ apply to
159 the degree of policy divergence between rival candidates (one of whom must lose),
160 while our analyses consider only winning candidates, these authors' arguments im-
161 ply that when comparing the ideological positions of winning candidates from dif-
162 ferent parties, these differences should be at least as large in competitive districts as
163 in non-competitive districts.

164 We focus on winners because we recognize that idiosyncratic factors may drive
165 the locations of the candidate of the minority party in uncompetitive seats, and our
166 interest is about how different from the location of the median voter a candidate
167 can be and still be able to win the district. We treat idiosyncratic candidate charac-
168 teristics and incumbency advantages as effectively washing out when we compare
169 the set of Democratic and Republican winners from districts with the same ideolog-
170 ical characteristics (as inferred from presidential election outcomes). Under these
171 assumptions, we evaluate the hypothesis that the difference in policy positioning
172 between Democratic and Republican *winners* should be at least as large in districts
173 where the presidential outcome is competitive as in districts where the presidential
174 outcome is non-competitive.

175 In the recent theoretical models, unlike the standard Downsian model, being in
176 a potentially competitive seat does not necessarily imply that winners are closer
177 to the median voter in the district. This is because, in such competitive settings,
178 candidates have various strategic options to seek to improve their election chances,
179 such as gaining financial support from an activist and interest-group base and using
180 the money and publicity it buys to appeal to less ideologically-oriented voters (see
181

182 ¹⁰Using district-level estimates of the voter distribution, Butler (2009) explains polarization among
183 candidates in terms of the location and size of candidates' bases and proportion of swing voters.
184

185 e.g., Schofield and Miller 2007). Such an appeal can result from emphasizing one's
186 own competence or likeability, by attacking the opponent, or by appealing to one's
187 own party base and trying to further mobilize it. When candidates in a potentially
188 competitive district seek support from potential activists—who are typically more
189 polarized than the general electorate—they move *further* away from the median
190 voter in that district. Candidates can compensate for being more distant from the
191 median voter than their opponent by increasing turnout and activism¹¹ among their
192 own party faithful.

193 To gain intuition about why candidates might be most dispersed when the elec-
194 tion is most competitive, Adams et al. (2010) first consider the *least* competitive
195 election context, namely that in which all citizens in the electorate identify with the
196 same party. If, say, all citizens are Democratic partisans, then both candidates will
197 appeal on policy grounds to these partisans, since there are no others. Therefore—
198 even while courting citizens to vote and activists to contribute—margin-maximizing
199 candidates will converge to identical positions in this “perfectly” uncompetitive sce-
200 nario, and, by extension, they can be expected to converge to similar positions for
201 partisan contexts that strongly favor one party over the other.

202 By contrast, in competitive districts, each candidate is motivated to appeal in
203 large part to his/her own partisan constituency, which motivates increased diver-
204 gence of the candidates' positions. To see intuitively why this might be true, Adams
205 et al. (2010) consider another extreme situation where voters' partisan biases are
206 so strong that they invariably prefer their party's candidate to the rival party's can-
207 didate, regardless of the candidates' positions, but where partisan voters are also
208 prone to abstain from voting and/or activism, so that they participate only if they ap-
209 prove of their preferred candidate's policy position. Because, in this scenario, each
210 candidate influences decisions to participate by the members of only her own par-
211 tisan constituency—and neither candidate can attract support from the rival party's
212 partisans—each candidate is motivated to give weight to the policy preferences of
213 her own partisan constituency (along with the preferences of any independent voters
214 in the electorate), while ignoring the policy preferences of the rival party's partisan
215 constituency.¹²

216 Our empirical analyses support this expectation that candidates may be most dis-
217 persed when the election is most competitive. We find that, contrary to the intuition
218

219
220 ¹¹In competitive House elections, even if the positions of the House candidates do not greatly affect
221 actual turnout, they may affect the decision to vote in the House contest and will likely affect the
222 efforts of potential activists (cf. Schofield and Miller 2007).

223 ¹²More generally, using a conditional logit model, Adams et al. (2010) argue that the more un-
224 committed a voter's decision to vote for a candidate, the more the candidate will take the voter's
225 preferences into account (Erikson and Romero 1990, p. 1107). In a two-candidate election where
226 voters have nonzero probabilities of abstaining, the higher of the voter's probabilities of voting for
227 one or the other of the candidates must be the one nearer 0.5, and hence the voter is most marginal
228 with respect to the candidate that she is most likely to support. Given that partisan voters are more
229 likely to vote for their party's candidate than for the opposition party's candidate, candidates attach
230 greater weight to the policy preferences of the members of their own partisan constituency than to
the preferences of the members of the rival candidate's constituency.

231 that competitive districts should pull candidates of opposite parties closer together
 232 toward the median voter in that district, the ideological difference between the win-
 233 ners from the two parties is typically as great or greater in districts that, in presi-
 234 dential support terms, are the most competitive. *Simply put, in election contexts that*
 235 *one might think give candidates the strongest possible incentives to maximize their*
 236 *electoral support, the winning candidates tend to present the most radical policies*
 237 *relative to the center of district opinion.* Note that this finding does not imply that
 238 the most competitive districts elect the most extremist members of Congress. Rather
 239 it indicates that Democrats and Republicans elected in competitive districts are at
 240 least as polarized *relative* to each other—but not necessarily more extreme—than
 241 those elected in lopsided districts.

242 We believe empirical research on the policy extremism of candidates contesting
 243 competitive districts is relevant not only to the theoretical models of Butler (2009)
 244 and Adams et al. (2005) discussed above, but also to the more general question: Do
 245 candidates believe they maximize their support by converging towards the center of
 246 district opinion, or by presenting noncentrist positions that may be more appealing
 247 to their base and also to special interest groups?

248 As we noted above the basic Downsian model provides a strong intuition that, all
 249 other factors being equal, candidates and parties enhance their support by moving
 250 to the center of constituency opinion. However subsequent theoretical and empiri-
 251 cal research has developed several reasons why other factors are *not* equal, and
 252 may reward candidates for presenting noncentrist positions. These include motivat-
 253 ing turnout among party supporters who hold noncentrist viewpoints; energizing
 254 party activists to work on the candidate's campaign;¹³ motivating special interest
 255 groups to finance the campaign;¹⁴ and, convincing voters that the candidate is of su-
 256 perior character because her announced noncentrist positions demonstrate that she
 257 is not “pandering” to voters in the district.¹⁵ Given these theoretical considerations
 258 it is not obvious whether, in real-world elections, candidates enhance their electoral
 259 prospects by positioning themselves near the center of the district electorate, or by
 260 presenting noncentrist positions that appeal to their partisans, to party activists, and
 261 to special interest groups. The empirical findings we present below that the win-
 262 ning candidates in more competitive districts present more radical policies suggest
 263 that the candidates themselves believe there are electoral advantages to noncentrist
 264 positioning. We believe this finding is important.

265 Our analysis is also consistent with the empirical findings of Ansolabehere et al.
 266 (2001), who find little support for the claim that winners of competitive races are
 267 more ideologically centrist than members of that same party elected from safe seats.
 268 Ansolabehere et al. (2001) look at the degree of divergence between winners and
 269 losers.

270 Unlike these and most other authors, we define competition in a national (i.e.,
 271 presidential) rather than a House/Senate contest-specific way. Here, because DW-

272
 273 ¹³See, Schofield and Sened (2006).

274 ¹⁴See Baron (1994) and Moon (2004).

275 ¹⁵See Callander and Wilkie (2007).

277 NOMINATE scores are generally available for winners but not for losers, we look
 278 only at the positions of winners. But, of course, it is the winners who matter most.
 279 There are advantages and disadvantages to both approaches—i.e., defining competi-
 280 tion in a national or a contest-specific way—and they should be seen as comple-
 281 mentary. When Ansolabehere et al. (2001) and others define competition in terms
 282 of contests for House seats, they look directly at the competitiveness of the election
 283 in which a given officeholder is elected. On the other hand, any given House con-
 284 test involves idiosyncratic features such as the backgrounds and campaign skills of
 285 the two candidates (and controlling for incumbency only partly controls for these
 286 other effects). This problem is exacerbated by the fact that there are only a few data
 287 sets that contain the ideological locations of both challengers and candidates. In
 288 contrast, by using presidential level data for all districts we provide more compa-
 289 rable data on the underlying partisan predispositions of the districts and we have
 290 comparable data over a larger number of districts over a much longer time pe-
 291 riod. In addition, potential statistical problems arise if we substitute votes in the
 292 House/Senate elections themselves for the presidential vote shares. Specifically, if
 293 we regress DW-NOMINATE scores on vote shares in House/Senate elections, this
 294 regression introduces an endogeneity problem because the Democratic proportion
 295 of the vote in each election is in part dependent on the ideological positions of the
 296 Congressional candidates, which biases estimates of the regression parameters.¹⁶
 297 Thus, there are good reasons to believe that the kind of data which we analyze in
 298 this paper is informative about pressures for ideological divergence.
 299

301 **2 Ideological Extremism in the U.S. House, 1956–2004, by Party** 302 **and by Democratic Presidential Vote in the District** 303

304 We begin by analyzing the relationship between candidate extremism and district
 305 competitiveness, using data for U.S. House districts over the 1956–2004 period.
 306 Taking DW-NOMINATE scores as our measure of a member’s ideology for data
 307 pooled for the House elections from 1956 through 2004,¹⁷ we have plotted member
 308

309
 310 ¹⁶In fact for an extreme case in which vote-share is completely determined by spatial factors—
 311 namely the candidates’ relative proximities to the median voter—the slope for each party would be
 312 decidedly positive rather than negative, i.e., more liberal Democratic candidate positioning would
 313 be associated with lower Democratic vote shares (and vice versa for Republicans). To see why
 314 regressing against vote shares in House districts biases toward positive slopes, consider a scenario
 315 in which the voters are uniformly distributed on the interval from -0.5 to 0.5 (the center half of
 316 the Left-Right scale from—restricted and, on average, less liberal). This leads to a positive slope
 317 when spatial position is regressed against Democratic vote-share. So endogeneity can seriously bias
 318 inferences from data that relate spatial position to Democratic vote-share in district House races.
 319 Regressions of DW-NOMINATE scores against House vote-shares that we have done give lines
 320 that are essentially flat. We take this as evidence of significant endogeneity effects (data omitted
 321 for space reasons).

321 ¹⁷As explained in the website <http://polisci.ucsd.edu/faculty/poole.htm>, the average DW-NOMI-
 322 NATE coordinate for every legislator is constrained to lie within the unit hypersphere, with $+1$

DW-NOMINATE scores against the (district-specific) normalized Democratic vote share in the district in the contemporaneous Presidential election,¹⁸ which we use as an estimate of district ideology. We label this variable the *normalized district Democratic vote proportion for president*, or *district ideology* for short.

Plots for pooled data over the period 1956–2004 are presented in Fig. 1; plots broken down by time period are shown in Fig. 2. Areas of the figure to the left of the vertical line represent Republican districts, i.e., those in which the district Democratic presidential vote was less than the national Democratic vote, while the areas to the right of it represent Democratic districts. Each curve, one for each party, represents a quadratic regression for that party, in which we regressed the representatives' DW-NOMINATE scores on the normalized district Democratic vote proportion, which we take as a measure of district ideology, and on the square of the district ideology; we also included a dummy variable for districts from the South.¹⁹ Thus for each party our specification was:

$$\text{DW-NOMINATE score}_j = b_1 + b_2[\text{District ideology}_j] + b_3[\text{District ideology}_j]^2 + b_4[\text{South}], \quad (1)$$

where

DW-NOMINATE score_{*j*} = representative *j*'s DW-NOMINATE score, based on *j*'s legislative voting record in the two years preceding the election,

District ideology_{*j*} = normalized presidential vote in *j*'s district, as defined in footnote 18,

[District ideology_{*j*}]² = the square of the normalized presidential vote in *j*'s district,

South = 1 if the district was located in the South, and zero otherwise.

interpretable as the most conservative score and -1 interpreted as the most liberal score. However, some members may have large linear terms so that for some Congresses their coordinates can be greater than $+1/-1$. In our data, there are 12 data points for which the DW-NOMINATE scores are beyond the range of -1 or 1 .

¹⁸Specifically, the normalized Democratic vote proportion for president is equal to district presidential vote share minus the national presidential vote share. For example, if a presidential candidate gets 65 percent in a district, and 60 percent nationally, then the normalized district percent is $65 - 60 = +5$ percent, reflecting the fact that the presidential candidate ran five percentage points ahead of his national average in that district. If the presidential vote share in the district is the same as the national vote, then the normalized district vote is zero percent. Centering the district vote on zero is necessary, as explained in footnote 20 below, in order for the quadratic regressions (described below) to generate informative parameter estimates. Because the mean of the national Democratic presidential vote over the period of the study (49.9 %) is almost exactly 50 percent, we may interpret the zero point of the normalized Democratic vote proportion for president as representing either the mean national presidential vote or as zero deviation from a 50–50 district.

¹⁹We define the south as Arkansas, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, and Virginia.