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Explaining U.S. Congressional Voting Variations in the ITO (1948) and WTO (1994) Ratification Processes

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ABSTRACT

This study explores why the U.S. Congress refused to ratify the International Trade Organization (ITO) in 1948 but approved the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1994 despite similar circumstances: Democratic presidential leadership, Democratic majority in Congress and pro-trade party platform. Using a paired comparative case study and a structured process tracing, this study demonstrates that the interaction between individual ideology and district-level economic exposure better explains cross-party defections and divergent outcomes across the two cases. Ideological divergence weakened party cohesion in both periods, but constituency economic vulnerability—particularly in import-sensitive or recession-affected regions— was important factor in shaping opposition to trade liberalization.

Keywords: *Two Level game, Trade liberalization Politics, Congressional Politics, Trade Institutions, Ratification.*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan mengapa Kongres Amerika Serikat menolak untuk meratifikasi International Trade Organization (ITO) di 1948 dan sebaliknya menyetujui diratifikasinya World Trade Organization (WTO) di tahun 1994, meskipun didalam kedua kasus tersebut memiliki kesamaan situasi; Presiden dari Partai Demokrat, Partai Demoktrat menjadi mayoritas di Kongres Amerika Serikat serta arah kebijakan partai Demokrat yang dicantumkan dalam platform partai mendorong liberalisasi perdagangan internasional. Dengan menggunakan desain studi dua kasus komparatif dan pendekatan process tracing, penelitian ini memperlihatkan bahwa interaksi antara ideologi personal dan situasi ekonomi pada level distrik lebih dapat menjelaskan pembelotan dan hasil yang berbeda diantara dua kasus tersebut. Perbedaan ideologi antar anggota dalam satu partai, melemahkan kesatuan partai di kedua waktu, namun kelemahan ekonomi konstituen - terutama di wilayah yang sensitif terhadap impor atau wilayah yang terkena resesi - menjadi faktor penting yang membangun penolakan terhadap liberalisasi perdangangan.

Kata Kunci: Two-Level Game; *Politik Liberalisasi Perdagangan, Politik Kongres, Institusi Perdagangan, Ratifikasi.*

Introduction

In mature democratic nations such as the United States, political parties articulate their values and ideological commitments annually through party platforms, which serve as guidelines for the political stances of party members. Consequently, political ideology is expected to play an essential role in the decision-making of members of Congress. Therefore, Democratic Party representatives are expected to follow Democratic guidelines or positions, while Republicans are expected to act in accordance with Republican Party values. Members of Congress are aware of the political benefits that could accrue to them if they vote in line with their party, such as party support for their future proposals. Conversely, voting against party preferences carries risks, as the President or Congressional leadership could punish defectors by withholding government funding or blocking future projects from their districts.

At the same time, members of Congress are elected by their constituents and depend on their support for election and reelection. As representatives, members of Congress must take their

constituents' opinions and the potential impact of legislation on their districts into account when deciding their voting positions. These dynamics shape the relationship between voting behavior in Congress and voter preferences at home.

Individually and collectively, members of Congress play a crucial role in decision-making. Congressional decisions to draft, debate, approve, or reject legislation have significant domestic and international consequences for individuals and groups across the country. Global trade, in particular, affects society at every level: it can benefit local economies but can also be detrimental to them; it may boost national economic growth but also can contribute to trade imbalances; and at the global level, trade can be used as a tool of foreign policy to strengthen or weaken relationships between states.

Congressional decision-making is therefore complex. Members must balance policy control, in which parties seek to secure passage of their preferred agendas, and majority control, in which parties aim to maintain electoral majorities. Prioritizing policy control may force members to take positions unpopular with their constituents, jeopardizing majority control in future elections. Conversely, prioritizing constituent interests over party goals may weaken party cohesion and undermine the party's ability to pursue a unified partisan legislative agenda.

In making decisions, members of Congress weigh party ideology, personal beliefs, constituent preferences, and pressures from party leaders, the president, fellow party members, interest groups, and donors. The most reliable way for political scientists to assess the extent to which members favor party ideology, constituent interests, or other influences is through roll-call votes. By comparing party platforms with roll-call outcomes, it is possible to identify when members adhere to or deviate from their party positions.

This paper examines the domestic aspect of U.S. international trade policy, focusing on Congressional responses to the creation of major trade institutions. While in 1948-1950 Congress declined to ratify the International Trade Organization (ITO), Congress supported the ratification of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1994. It raises a key question: Why did the U.S. Congress respond differently to the ITO (1948–49) and WTO (1994) ratification efforts despite similar institutional and partisan conditions?

The paper begins with a brief literature review of Congressional decision-making behavior, followed by a discussion of the research methodology and case selection. This is followed by a qualitative analysis of the two issues. The study concludes that Congressional decisions regarding the ratification of trade organizations were shaped less by ideological alignment and more by the economic interests of legislators' constituencies in their electoral districts.

Literature Review

There are multiple primary streams of research into congressional decision-making, but scholars are increasingly emphasizing that legislative behavior differs significantly between inward-oriented domestic initiatives and outward-oriented foreign policies. Domestic measures, such as welfare, taxation, and infrastructure, tend to spark broad distributive politics, consistent party agendas, and geographically diverse political interests. Outward-oriented policies—such as trade agreements, membership in international organizations, war authorizations, and sanctions—expose legislators to global economic forces, executive diplomacy, localized industrial pressures, and transnational interest groups. Because decisions regarding the International Trade Organization (ITO) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) involve outward-facing economic commitments, situating these cases within this dual framework helps clarify how different theoretical strands apply.

One foundational perspective emphasizes re-election incentives. David Mayhew emphasizes Congressional voting behavior from a strict reelection perspective. According to Mayhew, Congressional parties could assist members in achieving their electoral objectives, but they did not

pursue policy programs or pressure members to vote with them.[1] While Kingdon agrees with Mayhew's reasoning regarding reelection, he believes that reelection is only one of the multiple goals that Congress members have; therefore, other goals, such as the desire for increased national influence and implementation of sound public policy, also influence their voting behavior.[2] These dynamics influence both inward and outward policy decisions; however, outward policy is filtered by district-specific exposure to global markets or involvement in global affairs. Recent study shows that globalization has increased constituency pressures: exposure to import competition, such as the "China shock," substantially encourages districts and their representatives to protectionism.[3] This finding reinforces earlier evidence, including Ardanaz, Murillo, and Pinto's argument that members of Congress from import-competing regions oppose trade liberalization regardless of their ideology or educational background.[4] Mansfield and Mutz likewise show that local attachment and sociotropic anxiety influence trade attitudes.[5] Similar constituency logics apply to foreign security policy. Parallel research outside the trade domain by Kriner and Shen (2010) also reveal that representatives from districts with high wartime casualty burdens are more likely to oppose foreign deployments, illustrating that constituency effects shape both economic and non-economic foreign policy, though along different demographic and economic dimensions.[6]

A second major tradition is the spatial model of congressional voting. Spatial voting logic holds that legislators vote for outcomes closest to their policy ideal points. There are two distinct categories of spatial voting: ideological model and policy dimension theory. McCormick and Black illustrate the ideological one, on how internalized worldviews shape treaty voting; while Miller and Stokes demonstrate that legislators categorize proposals along coherent policy dimensions.[7] Contemporary ideological measures (e.g., DW-NOMINATE and later ideal-point refinements) show that ideology has become more polarized and increasingly predictive across issue areas.[8] In economic foreign policy, ideological divides map onto differences between free-market liberalism and protectionist nationalism. Meanwhile, ideological orientations in non-economic foreign policy take the form of contrasts between internationalism and restraint, multilateralism and unilateralism, or hawkish and dovish worldviews. Joshua Kertzer's work on resolve, for example, demonstrates that individuals—and political elites—interpret international commitments through psychological and ideological predispositions rather than purely material calculations.[9] These models underscore that ideology is not merely partisan identity; it is a stable lens through which outward-oriented policies are interpreted. The present study draws from this spatial tradition by examining whether ideological ideal points better predict congressional behavior on ITO/WTO than party platforms.

Party-centered explanations further contribute to our understanding of congressional behavior. Rohde's Conditional Party Government theory argues that party leaders exert influence when their members share similar preferences, while Cox and McCubbins depict the majority party as a

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[1] Mayhew, David R. 1974. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
[2] Kingdon, John W. 1989. *Congressmen's Voting Decisions 3rd ed.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
[3] Autor, David, Dorn, David, Hanson, Gordon and Majlesi, Kaveh. 2020. "Importing Political Polarization? The Electoral Consequences of Rising Trade Exposure," *American Economic Review* 110(10):3139–83.
[4] Ardanaz, Martin, Murillo, M. Victoria, and Pinto, Pablo M. 2013. "Sensitivity to Issue Framing on Trade Policy Preferences: Evidence from a Survey Experiment." *International Organization* 67(2): 411–437.
[5] Mansfield, Edward D., and Mutz, Diana C. 2009. "Support for Free Trade: Self-Interest, Sociotropic Politics, and Out-Group Anxiety." *International Organization* 63(03): 425– 457.
[6] Kriner, Douglas and Shen, Francis. 2010. *The Casualty Gap*: *The Causes and Consequences of American Wartime Inequalities.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[7] McCormick, James, M. and Black, Michael. 1983. "Ideology and Senate Voting on the Panama Treaty," *Legislative Study Quarterly* 8 (February); Miller, Wakken E., and Stokes, Donald E. 1963. "Constituency influence in Congress." *American Political Science Review*.
[8] Bafumi, Andrew and Herron, Michael. 2010. "Leapfrog Representation and Extremism," *American Political Science Review* 104(3): 519-542; Jeffrey B. Lewis et al., 2023. *Voteview: Congressional Roll-Call Voting*. https://voteview.com/.
[9] Kertzer, Joshua. 2018. *Resolve in International Politics.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

"legislative cartel" capable of agenda control.[10] Yet scholars of foreign policy observe that outward-oriented issues—especially trade and war—regularly produce cross-party coalitions and substantial intraparty dissent**.** Hiscox documents persistent ideological heterogeneity within both major parties on trade throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, and Drutman argues that American parties until the 1990s functioned more like four ideological blocs than two cohesive units.[11] Research also shows that congressional polarization has reshaped foreign-policy behavior. Binder's work on legislative gridlock highlights how partisan conflict constrains Congress's ability to act collectively even when national interests are at stake.[12] These trends reinforce that outward-oriented policies—trade, alliances, war powers—are no longer insulated from domestic polarization, leading to increased cross-party defection and unstable coalitions. This pattern appears clearly in both the ITO and WTO episodes: despite formal platform support (1948, 1992), large numbers of Democrats and Republicans defected from party positions. Thus, party control helps structure debate but does not determine outcomes in outward-facing policy**,** particularly those with locally concentrated economic effects.

Institutional theories highlight the importance of separation of powers, veto players, and delegation. Early work by Lohmann and O'Halloran shows that divided government enables Congress to reshape international agreements, increasing the risk of ratification failure.[13] Mansfield, Milner, and Pevehouse further demonstrate that additional veto players slow and complicate trade agreements.[14] These insights remain influential, but more recent research clarifies how institutional context interacts with contemporary political polarization. Howell and Pevehouse find that Congress more actively checks presidential war powers under opposition control.[15] In foreign economic policy, Weingast, Goldstein, and Bailey argue that the stability of American trade liberalization arises from institutional arrangements—especially the delegation of trade authority to the executive—that insulate trade policy from protectionist pressures and create durable, pro-liberalization coalitions. Their analysis shows that delegation reshapes congressional incentives by reducing the political costs of liberalization and strengthening export-oriented constituencies, making Congress more likely to support multilateral trade commitments when these institutional mechanisms are in place.[16] These studies help explain why institutional environments matter but cannot alone account for divergent outcomes in the ITO and WTO cases: both occurred under Democratic unified government, yet their fates differed sharply, implying that member-level preferences outweighed institutional opportunity**.**

Interest group and lobbying theories offer an additional layer. Classic treatments by Olson explain how concentrated industries overcome collective action problems, while Grossman and Helpman formalize how contributions can exchange for policy favors.[17] Mitra identifies limits to such

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[10] Rohde, David W. 1991. *Parties and Leaders in Postreform House.* Chicago: Chicago University Press: Cox, Garry and McCubbins, Matthew. 2007. *Legislative Leviathan: Party Government in the House.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[11] Hiscox, Michael J. 1999. "The Magic Bullet? The RTAA, Institutional Reform, and Trade Liberalization". *International Organizations* 54(4):669-698; Drutman, Lee, 2020. *Breaking the Two-Party Doom-Loop: the case For Multiparty Democracy in America.* New York: Oxford University Press.

[12] Binder, Sarah A. 2003. *Stalemate: Causes and Consequences of Legislative Gridlock.* Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

[13] Lohmann, Susanne, and O'Halloran, Sharyn. 1994. "Divided Government and U.S. Trade Policy: Theory and Evidence." *International Organization* 48(4): 595–632.

[14] Mansfield, Edward D., Milner, Helen V. and Pevehouse, Jon C. 2007. "Vetoing Co-operation: The Impact of Veto Players on Preferential Trading Arrangements." *British Journal of Political Science* 37(3):403–32.

[15] Howell, William and Pevehouse, Jon. 2007. *While Dangers Gather*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

[16] Weingast, Barry R., Goldstein, Judith S., and Bailey, Michael A. 1997. "The Institutional Roots of American Trade Policy: Politics, Coalitions, and International Trade," *World Politics* 49: 309-338.

[17] Olson, Mancur. 1965. *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press; Grossman, Gene M., and Helpman, Elhanan. 1996. "Electoral Competition and Interest Politics." *The Review of Economic Studies* 63(2):265-286.

influence when opposing industries counter-lobby, and Bombardini shows that large firms disproportionately drive lobbying coalitions.[18] These findings affirm that interest-group influence is a defining feature of outward-oriented policymaking, though the mechanisms differ between trade and security domains**.** The present study incorporates these insights indirectly by examining district-level economic structures that shape the pressure environment surrounding legislators.

Taken together, contemporary scholarship shows that congressional decision-making on outward-facing policy—both economic and security-related—is shaped by a complex interaction of ideology, constituency structure, party organization, institutional constraints, and interest-group influence. Yet most existing work focuses either on sector-level tariff votes**,** preferential trade agreements, or war powers, rather than on the foundational decisions surrounding membership in global economic institutions**.** Few studies directly compare congressional reactions to two structurally similar trade organizations across different historical periods. By examining Congress's treatment of the ITO and WTO, this study applies modern theories of foreign economic and foreign security behavior to a historical comparison that reveals the enduring importance of ideological worldviews and constituency economic exposure. Even when party platforms and institutional conditions appear favorable, it is these individual-level forces—rather than partisan or executive alignment—that ultimately explain congressional voting behavior on outward-oriented economic policy.

Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

This study will focus on Congressional decision-making regarding international trade policies. In 1949, the Democratic Party Trifecta in the United States failed to secure ratification of the International Trade Organization. In contrast, in 1994, the same Democratic Trifecta secured ratification of the World Trade Organization in Congress. The differences between the outcomes generate a research query. Why did Congress react differently to the ratification of two similar free trade organizations, the ITO in 1948 and the WTO in 1994? This research will examine two competing yet interconnected theories of Congressional voting in order to provide a possible answer to the query. Congressional voting on trade policy reflects both ideological commitments and district-level economic interests. These two frameworks generate distinct but complementary expectations about how legislators behave when confronted with multilateral trade institutions.

The Ideological Model

The ideological model posits that members of Congress possess stable policy preferences and vote according to an internalized set of values and beliefs about the world. Thus, when a legislator's personal ideological position aligns closely with their party's platform, they are more likely to support the party's preferred policy.[19] Under conditions of ideological convergence, members of a party that endorses free trade (such as the Democratic Party in its 1948 platform) would be expected to support the establishment of a free trade organization. Conversely, members of a party that favors tariff protection (as the Republican Party did in its 1940, 1944, and 1948 platforms) would be expected to oppose such institutions. Based on this theoretical expectation, the study proposes the following hypothesis:

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[18] Mitra, Devashish. 1999. "Endogenous Lobby Formation and Endogenous Protection: A Long-Run Model of Trade Policy Determination." *American Economic Review* 89 (5): 1116–1134**;** Bombardini, Matilde. 2008. "Firm Heterogeneity and Lobby Participation." *Journal of International Economics* 75(2).

[19] McCormick and Black. "Ideology and Senate Voting on the Panama Treaty.";
González, P., Passarelli, F., and Puy, M.S., 2021. "A theory on party discipline and vote switching by legislators." *European Journal of Political Economy* 66.

H1. Members of Congress whose ideological positions align closely with their party's platform are more likely to support their party's position on the establishment of free trade organizations.

If this hypothesis holds, parties with high internal ideological coherence should exhibit more substantial support for their official Congressional position on the creation of free trade institutions. On the other hand, when a party's members display significant ideological divergence, they are more likely to deviate from the party's stated position on the establishment of free trade organizations.

The Constituency Theory

The constituency theory posits that members of Congress weigh the expense and benefit of their votes in terms of how legislation will affect their constituents. International trade policies—such as the establishment of free trade organizations—have uneven economic effects across states and districts, producing both beneficiaries and losers of trade liberalization.[20] As a result, constituent perceptions of the risks and opportunities associated with increased liberalism (such as the perception that the establishment of free trade organizations reduces state protection and expands trade liberalization) are likely to influence legislators' voting decisions.

As districts differ in their economic structure, they experience trade liberalization in distinct ways. Some districts depend heavily on import-sensitive industries such as textiles, steel, or agriculture, while others benefit from export markets or service-sector growth. Members of Congress are therefore expected to incorporate the specific economic interests of their districts into their decision-making process. Based on this theoretical perspective, the study advances the following hypothesis:

H2. Member of Congress representing districts with high import sensitivity or economically vulnerable industries are more likely to oppose the establishment of international free trade organizations, regardless of their party's official platforms.

If this hypothesis is correct, Congressional voting behavior can be explained by examining the economic fundamentals of legislators' districts. Representatives from districts that benefit from free trade—such as competitive export-oriented or service-based economies—would be more likely to support the establishment of free trade organizations. In contrast, those representing districts harmed or threatened by trade liberalization would be more likely to oppose the establishment of such organizations.

To evaluate these two hypotheses, this study compares the written party platforms, Congressional voting behavior on the two trade organization proposals, and district-level economic characteristics. Special attention is given to partisan dissenters (each party's dissenting ballots). When a party supports free trade organizations as stated in its platform, the analysis focuses on members who defect from this position and examines the economic structure of their districts. Conversely, if a party supports protectionist positions, the analysis centers on members who break from that stance to vote in favor of liberal trade policies.

Methodology and Limitation of Research

This study employs a paired comparative case study, comparing the failed ratification of the International Trade Organization (ITO) in 1949 and the successful ratification of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1994.[21] Although the cases occurred 45 years apart, they share striking

[20] Kingdon, John W. 1989. *Congressmen's Voting Decisions 3rd ed*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
[21] George, A. L., and Bennett, A. 2005. *Case studies and theory development in the social sciences*. MIT Press.

similarities: each involved a Democratic Party president, a Democratic Party Congressional majority in both houses, and a multilateral trade institution aligned with the Democratic Party's platform. This makes the cases well-suited for a most-similar system design (MSSD) that isolates causal factors explaining divergent outcomes.[22] To test the two hypotheses, the study uses a structured, process-tracing approach.[23] The analysis is structured in that both cases are examined using identical theory-driven questions regarding ideology, party cohesion, constituency pressure, and congressional action. On the other hand, the analysis exclusively incorporates material relevant to the two proposed mechanisms: ideology and constituency interest.

This research has a limitation that should be regarded as a caveat. This study is experiencing challenges due to data imbalances. In contrast to the WTO, the ratification process of the ITO did not advance to a voting phase, thus making the roll-call statistics for the 1948 ITO case study inaccessible. As a result, conducting quantitative evaluations on the two cases presents methodological difficulties. As a result, the ITO study primarily relies on qualitative historical analysis rather than quantitative metrics. Although this research could not statistically establish a causal relationship due to the imbalanced data, it is still plausible to conduct hypothesis testing through the application of process tracing methodology, given the contextual circumstances.

To operationalize ideology, this study employs a variety of indicators. First, ADA Congressional Voting Scores (range from 0 to 100) are utilized to identify individual-level ideological preferences of every Congress member Scores close to 0 indicate a conservative ideology, while scores close to 100 indicate a liberal ideology. Second, party platform-member alignment is assessed through a qualitative comparison of platform statements and individual Congress members' voting behavior. Constituency economic interests, on the other hand, are measured through industrial mapping in the United States, which identifies districts with economic structures that are either benefited or harmed by free trade policies. The outcome variable—whether legislators favor or oppose the ratification of free trade agreements—is determined by recorded roll-call votes in the House and Senate.

Data Sources

Data for this study are drawn from multiple credible sources. Party ideology and platform positions are obtained from the American Presidency Project, which provides complete archival records of Democratic and Republican Party platforms. Individual-level ideological indicators are taken from Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) Congressional Voting Scores, which offer annual ideological ratings for each member of Congress regardless of party. The Score measures the liberal quotient (LQ) or ideological leanings of every member of Congress. Scores close to 0 indicate a conservative ideology, while scores close to 100 indicate a liberal ideology. Legislative behavior is measured using roll-call voting data from the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate, which record members' votes on the ratification of the ITO and WTO.

Constituency economic characteristics are derived from U.S. industrial and economic mapping, including data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), and the U.S. International Trade Commission (USITC), which identify the distribution of import-sensitive, export-oriented, and trade-affected industries across states and districts. Together, these sources enable a systematic analysis of ideological alignment, constituency interests, and legislative outcomes across both case studies.

Analytical Strategy

[22] Hague, R. and Harrop, M. 2004. *Comparative government and politics 6th ed*. England: Palgrave Macmillan.
[23] Bennett, Andrew and Checkel, Jeffrey T. (eds.). 2015. *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytic Tool.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

This study analyzes Congressional behavior by tracing how ideology and constituency economic interests shaped decisions in the 1949 ITO and 1994 WTO ratification episodes. Each case is examined to identify ideological patterns within parties, economic pressures in members' districts, and how these factors influenced legislative actions such as delays, defections, or support. The findings from each case are then compared to determine why similar institutional conditions produced different outcomes. This comparative logic shows that ideological divergence predicts which members defect from party positions, while constituency interests explain the direction of those defections and the overall legislative outcome. Through this strategy, the study systematically evaluates both hypotheses and explains why Congress opposed the ITO but supported the WTO.

a. Contextual Explanation of Two Ratification Processes

I. The Domestic Failure of ITO Ratification (1949)

In 1930, under Republican President Herbert Hoover and Republican control of both chambers, the United States Congress enacted the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act, increasing tariffs by up to 50 percent to protect domestic industries. The policy triggered retaliatory measures from trading partners, deepened the global economic collapse, and prolonged the Great Depression.[24] When Franklin D. Roosevelt, a Democratic president, entered office in 1933 with unified Democratic control of Congress, his administration sought to reverse the effects of protectionism. After considerable debate, Congress passed the Reciprocal Trade Agreement Act (RTAA) of 1934, granting the executive branch authority to negotiate tariff reductions without requiring full congressional approval.[25] The RTAA became the cornerstone of U.S. trade policy throughout the 1930s and World War II.

As World War II ended, the United States and its allies, especially the United Kingdom, sought to prevent a return to protectionism. After extensive negotiation, 56 nations signed the Havana Charter in 1948, which created a comprehensive framework for international trade cooperation, including rules against discriminatory practices, provisions for market opening, and the establishment of the International Trade Organization (ITO). President Harry S. Truman (Democratic) strongly supported U.S. participation, emphasizing that acceptance of the Charter would foster global economic stability, expand international trade, and promote lasting peace. His presidential statement on the Signing of the Charter of the International Trade Organization stated the goals of the Charter:[26]

> "The Charter for the International Trade Organization is a code of fair dealing in international trade. Member nations agree to work out mutually beneficial employment policies and ways of promoting economic development. The Charter provides for limitations upon cartels and defines the proper scope of intergovernmental commodity agreements. It establishes standards for the conduct of international trade … Acceptance of the Charter, in the spirit in which it has been framed, will stimulate the expansion of international trade upon which world prosperity depends. By supporting the growth of a prosperous international trade, this code of fair dealing will contribute greatly to our efforts for a just and lasting peace."

During the 80th Congress (1947-1948), the United States had a divided government, with the Republican Party controlling both chambers and strongly supporting protectionist trade policy. As a

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[24] Schatz, Arthur W. 1970. "The Anglo-American Trade Agreement and Cordell Hulls Search for Peace 1936-1938." *The Journal of American History* 57(1).
[25] Jungsoo, Kim. 2006. "Institutional Persistence and Change of the U.S Trade Policy Regime." *Journal of International and Area Studies* 12(2):17-34.
[26] Truman, Harry. 1948. *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States.*

result, Republicans opposed the ratification effort. Anticipating Democratic gains in the 1948 elections, Truman postponed submission of the Charter.

After the Democratic Party successfully won both chambers in 1948. Truman had confidence in the political landscape, and he then formally submitted the ITO Charter to Congress on April 28, 1949, for formal ratification. However, the Democrat-led Congress did not progress the idea, despite public presidential backing and endorsement from the 1948 Democratic Party platform, which stated:[27]

> "We pledge ourselves to restore the Reciprocal Trade Agreements program formulated in 1934 by Secretary of State Cordell Hull and operated successfully for 14 years—until crippled by the Republican 80th Congress. Further, we strongly endorse our country's adherence to the International Trade Organization."

Hearings were held, but no momentum for a vote emerged. The bill was blocked in 1949 and early 1950 due to both parties' filibustering it. Truman reaffirmed his commitment in his 1950 State of the Union speech, emphasizing the ITO's role in averting a recurrence of the global trade instability that contributed to the Great Depression. In his 1950 Annual Message to Congress on the State of the Union, he stated:[28]

> "World prosperity also requires that we do all we can to expand world trade. As a major step in this direction, we should promptly join the International Trade Organization. The purpose of this organization, which the United States has been fore most in creating, is to establish a code of fair practice, and an international authority for adjusting differences in international commercial relations. It is an effort to prevent the kind of anarchy and irresponsibility in world trade which did so much to bring about the world depression of the 1930's."

Nevertheless, congressional hesitation persisted. Faced with prolonged inaction, Truman ultimately withdrew the Charter and turned to strengthening the RTAA framework. This decision allowed the executive to continue shaping trade policy through GATT negotiations without requiring Congressional ratification of a new international institution.

II. The Establishment of the World Trade Organization

Beginning in the 1970s, the United States faced growing trade deficits and intensified competition from Europe and Asia, the rise of Japan, and the Asian Tigers. Rising concerns over market access, intellectual property protection, and trade imbalances prompted Congress to call for a stronger response. The Trade Act of 1974 reflected this shift by granting the President "fast-track" authority for trade negotiations—allowing Congress only to approve or reject agreements without amendment—as well as empowering the executive to respond to unfair foreign trade practices using Section 301. The 1974 Trade Law itself has two significant aspects: first, the shifting perspective of United States political actors on international trade from free trade to fair trade, and second, the self-proclaimed capacity to determine domestic injury and act accordingly.

Table 1. The United States Trade Balance 1970-2021

[27] Democratic Party. 1948. *Democratic Party Platform 1948.*
[28] Truman, Harry. 1950. *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States.*

Year	Balance in Billions of US$	Percentage of GDP	Year	Balance in Billions of US$	Percentage of GDP
1970	$3.95B	0.37%	1996	$-96.38B	-1.19%
1971	$0.62B	0.05%	1997	$-101.97B	-1.19%
1972	$-3.37B	-0.26%	1998	$-162.71B	-1.80%
1973	$4.11B	0.29%	1999	$-259.55B	-2.69%
1974	$-0.82B	-0.05%	2000	$-381.07B	-3.72%
1975	$15.98B	0.95%	2001	$-376.75B	-3.56%
1976	$-1.63B	-0.09%	2002	$-439.75B	-4.02%
1977	$-23.09B	-1.11%	2003	$-521.96B	-4.56%
1978	$-25.37B	-1.08%	2004	$-634.14B	-5.19%
1979	$-22.55B	-0.86%	2005	$-739.90B	-5.67%
1980	$-13.06B	-0.46%	2006	$-786.45B	-5.69%
1981	$-12.52B	-0.39%	2007	$-735.93B	-5.08%
1982	$-19.97B	-0.60%	2008	$-740.87B	-5.02%
1983	$-51.64B	-1.42%	2009	$-419.15B	-2.90%
1984	$-102.73B	-2.54%	2010	$-532.31B	-3.54%
1985	$-114.02B	-2.63%	2011	$-579.62B	-3.72%
1986	$-131.87B	-2.88%	2012	$-551.62B	-3.39%
1987	$-144.77B	-2.98%	2013	$-479.39B	-2.85%
1988	$-109.39B	-2.09%	2014	$-510.04B	-2.91%
1989	$-86.74B	-1.54%	2015	$-526.20B	-2.89%
1990	$-77.85B	-1.31%	2016	$-506.25B	-2.71%
1991	$-28.61B	-0.46%	2017	$-536.73B	-2.76%
1992	$-34.74B	-0.53%	2018	$-593.08B	-2.89%
1993	$-65.17B	-0.95%	2019	$-578.79B	-2.71%
1994	$-92.49B	-1.27%	2020	$-627.50B	-2.98%
1995	$-89.76B	-1.17%	2021	$-861.71B	-3.70%

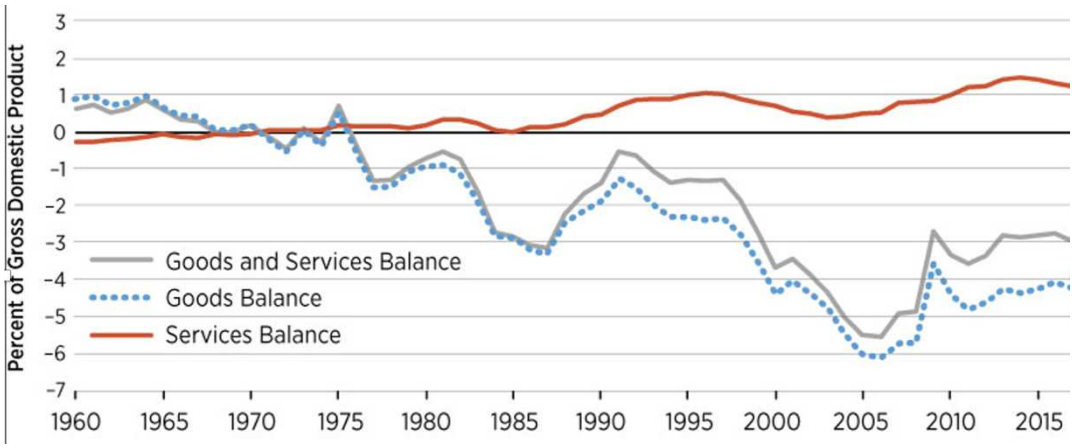
Source: The Bureau of Economic Analysis

As a result of expanding congressional pressure to reduce the nation's trade imbalance, President Ronald Reagan (Republican) was compelled to modify his trade policy. Ambassador William

Brock, then of the United States Trade Representative, previously stated that the executive trade policy centered on free trade based on mutually accepted trade relations; however, White House Chief of Staff Donald T. Regan revised the White House trade policy, stating that fair trade is a necessary condition for free trade.[29]

Increasing Executive awareness of "fair trade" alters the notion of international trade fairness. For example, the United States demanded an 'equal' share of overseas markets for its industries on the basis of reciprocity. In an "unfair" international trade climate, the rising demand for fairness is driven not only by the trade deficit in commodities but also by projected increases and losses in industrial sectors' goods and services revenue (Marchetti and Mavroidis, 2011).[30]

Graph 1. United States Goods and Services Trade Balance



Source: The Bureau of Economic Analysis

Throughout the 1980s, U.S. trade debates increasingly centered on fairness, reciprocity, and the protection of technological and service-sector competitiveness. U.S. domestic industries played significant roles in shaping policy during this period. The Coalition of Services Industries (CSI) emerged in 1982 to promote service-sector liberalization and influence U.S. trade policy. Its engagement expanded as service exports became central to the U.S. economic strategy.

Simultaneously, industries dependent on strong intellectual property protection—such as pharmaceuticals, chemical companies, and technology firms—became increasingly organized. The Intellectual Property Committee (IPC), led by senior figures from Pfizer, Edmund T. Pratt[31] and other major firms, played a critical role in shaping U.S. negotiating priorities during the Uruguay Round. Their influence grew through advisory committees such as the Services Policy Advisory Committee (SPAC) and the Advisory Committee for Trade Negotiations (ACTN).

Concerns about inadequate intellectual property protection abroad further intensified domestic pressure. The U.S. International Trade Commission estimated that pharmaceutical companies faced hundreds of millions of dollars in losses due to weak international patent enforcement. These economic concerns pushed the United States to advocate for stronger global intellectual property rules.

The Uruguay Round negotiations culminated in the 1994 Final Act, signed in Marrakesh, which established the World Trade Organization (WTO). The WTO introduced innovative frameworks

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[29] Niskanen, William A. 1988. *Reaganomics: An Insider's Account of the Policies and the People*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

[30] Marchetti, Juan A., and Mavroidis, Petros C. 2011. "The Genesis of the GATS (General Agreement on Trade in Services." *The European Journal of International Law* 22(3).

[31] Lowenfeld, Andreas. 2008. *International Economic Law 2nd ed.* New York: Oxford University Press.

governing goods (GATT), services (GATS), intellectual property (TRIPS), dispute settlement mechanisms, trade policy reviews, and plurilateral agreements.[32] Following the conclusion of the negotiations, Congress approved U.S. accession to the WTO on December 1, 1994.

Case Analysis

This research analysis begins by testing the first hypothesis, which posits that members whose ideological positions align with their party's platform are more likely to support the party's stance on the establishment of free trade organizations. The expectation is that Democratic party members, whose 1948 platform explicitly endorsed the creation of the International Trade Organization, would support the ITO, while Republicans, whose platform leaned strongly toward protectionism, would oppose it. As shown in Table 2, this expectation aligns with historical evidence. Although the 1948 Republican Party platform did not explicitly mention the ITO, the Republican-controlled Ways and Means Committee quickly passed a resolution rejecting the Charter's commitments, stating that the executive's signature on the ITO would not be considered as the United States' commitment to accept any provisions of the International Trade Organization's charter,[33] demonstrating clear partisan opposition to the proposal.

However, after President Harry Truman submitted the ITO Charter for Congressional approval and ratification in 1949, neither party pushed the measure forward. Both Democrats and Republicans prolonged debate, effectively filibustering the bill and allowing it to stall until the end of the first session of the 81st Congress (19 October 1949) and throughout the first half of the second session of the 81st Congress. President Truman, frustrated by resistance within his own party, eventually withdrew the proposal. He retracted the ratification measure and negotiated with Congress a more flexible Reciprocal Trade Agreement Act (RTAA).[34] This sequence of events reveals the mechanism predicted by the ideological model. Despite unified Democratic control, ideological heterogeneity within the Democratic caucus weakened party cohesion and prevented the party from advancing its own platform commitment.

To assess these further, ideological patterns are examined using ADA voting records. These scores, presented in Table 3, show substantial ideological variance within both parties in 1949 and 1994. In 1949, the Democratic caucus was divided between liberal New Deal members and conservative Southern Democrats, the latter of whom were significantly out of step with the party's pro-trade platform. Scores near the conservative end (0-24) are standard among Democrats, suggesting a lack of ideological coherence. This divergence provides a clear explanation for why the Democratic majority failed to act: members whose ideological preferences deviated from the party's stated support for the ITO refused to advance the Charter. Thus, the 1949 case demonstrates how ideological fragmentation—consistent with H1—can prevent a party from delivering unified legislative action even when it holds an institutional majority.

[32] Downes, Gerard. 2011. "The Utilisation of Agenda-Setting Power in the Multilateral Trading System's Evolution From 'Negative' To 'Positive' Integration." *Revista Castellano-Manchega de Ciencias sociales* 12:65-80.
[33] Irwin, Douglas A. 2017. "*Clashing over Commerce. A History of US Trade Policy"* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, pp.501.
[34] Lowenfeld, *International Economic Law.*

Table 2. Party Platforms and Voting on the Establishment of Free Trade Organizations

Date	International Trade Policy	President	Senate Composition	House Composition	Notes and Additional Information
1948	ITO signing by the Executive	Harry S. Truman (Democrat)	Democrat 45, Republican 51	Democrat 186, Republican 242	**Divided Government, with the Republicans in control of both Chambers of Congress**, the Truman administration chose not to submit the charter to Congress until after the 1948 election, which they hoped would return the Democrats to power and significantly improve the chance of getting the ITO approved.
April 1949	President Truman submitted ITO for Congress approval		Democrat 53, Republican 43	Democrat 259, Republican 168	**Democratic Party 1948 Platform:** We pledge ourselves to restore the Reciprocal Trade Agreements program, formulated in 1934 by Secretary of State Cordell Hull and successfully operated for 14 years—until crippled by the Republican 80th Congress. **Further, we strongly endorse our country's adherence to the International Trade Organization** (1948 Democrat Party Platform**).** **Republican Party Platform 1948:** Within the prudent limits of our own economic welfare, we shall cooperate, on a basis of self-help and mutual aid, to assist other peace-loving nations to restore their financial independence and the human rights and fundamental freedoms for which we fought two wars and upon which dependable peace must build. We shall insist on businesslike and efficient administration of all foreign aid.

					We shall nourish these Pan-American agreements in the new spirit of co-operation which implements the Monroe Doctrine. (1948 Republican Party Platform) **Congress Situation:** Unified Democrat Trifecta, Democratic Party held 55.2% of Senate voting share and 60.4% of House of Representatives voting share. **However, the majority power in Congress did not produce Voting or ratification.**
1950	President Truman retracted the ratification process and decided not to send the ITO for further congressional approval		Democrat 53, Republican 43	Democrat 259, Republican 168	Hearing did not produce voting. Despite the Unified Democrat Trifecta, President Truman did not have confidence that Democratic Congressmen would vote for the creation of the International Trade Organization (ITO). At the same time, he was sure that Republican Congressmen would object because of the then-Republican Party Platform.
1994	Ratification of the WTO	Bill Clinton (Democrat)	Democrat 55, Republican 45	Democrat 256, Republican 177	**The Democratic Party 1992 Platform:** The United States cannot be strong abroad if it is weak at home. Restoring America's global economic leadership must become a central element of our national security policies. The strength of nations, once defined in military terms, is now measured also by the skills of their workers, the imagination of their managers, and the power of their technologies. Either we develop and pursue a national plan to restore our economy through a partnership of government, labor, and business, or we slip behind the nations competing with us and growing. At stake are American jobs, our standard of living, and the quality of life for ourselves and our children. Our government must work to expand trade while insisting that global trade is fair. It

					must fight to uphold American interests—promoting exports, expanding trade in agricultural and other products, opening markets in major product and service sectors with our principal competitors, and achieving reciprocal access. Multilateral trade agreements can advance our economic interests by expanding the global economy (1992 Democratic Party Platform). **The Republican Party 1992 Platform:** We are tough free traders, battling to sweep away barriers to our exports. We are waging the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations to secure worldwide tariff reductions, the elimination of subsidies, and protection of American intellectual property rights. We are fighting to reduce farm subsidies in the European Community and to break up their government-industry collusion in the production of civil aircraft. We firmly endorse President Bush's policy of supporting the Republic of China on Taiwan in international trade and in its accession to GATT. Significant market access gains have been made with Japan, with American manufacturing exports tripling since 1985. Throughout the world, we enforced greater compliance with U.S. trade rights. And we are making every effort to bring home a Uruguay Round agreement that is not only good for America, but great for tomorrow's entrepreneurs everywhere. (1992 Republican Party Platform) **Congress Situation:** Unified Democrat Trifecta; however, the roll call for ratifying the WTO showed that both the Democratic Party and the Republican Party split. More than 20% Senators from both parties objected the WTO ratification. While in the House of Representatives, the number

					was higher. The number of defectors was above 30% for both Republicans and Democrats.

Source: Republican Party Platforms, Democratic Party Platforms, Senate, and House of Representatives roll calls. Compiled by the author.

Table 3. American for Democratic Action (ADA) House of Representatives Voting Score for the years 1949 and 1994

Score	Democratic Party				Republican Party			
	House		Senate		House		Senate	
	1949	1994	1949	1994	1949	1994	1949	1994
100	40	28	8	4				
75-99	110	109	11	37	1		2	2
50-74	42	73	16	14	6	3	4	4
25-49	41	35	11	1	14	24	6	8
0-24	24	9	7		148	145	30	30
Total Number	257	254	53	56	169	172	42	44

Source: American for Democratic Action

Compared with the 1994 WTO ratification, a similar pattern of ideological divergence emerges. Table 4 shows that both the Democratic and Republican platforms endorsed the WTO. Yet, more than 20 percent of Senators and more than 30 percent of House members from each party voted against ratification. This again reflects the mechanism anticipated by H1: ideological divergence within parties reduces the likelihood that members will follow the party platform. ADA scores in 1994 confirm this. Both parties retained substantial ideological diversity, and members in the conservative ideological range were disproportionately represented among defectors. These patterns align closely with the expectations of the ideological model and reinforce the conclusion that ideological variation within parties is a consistent predictor of defection in both periods.

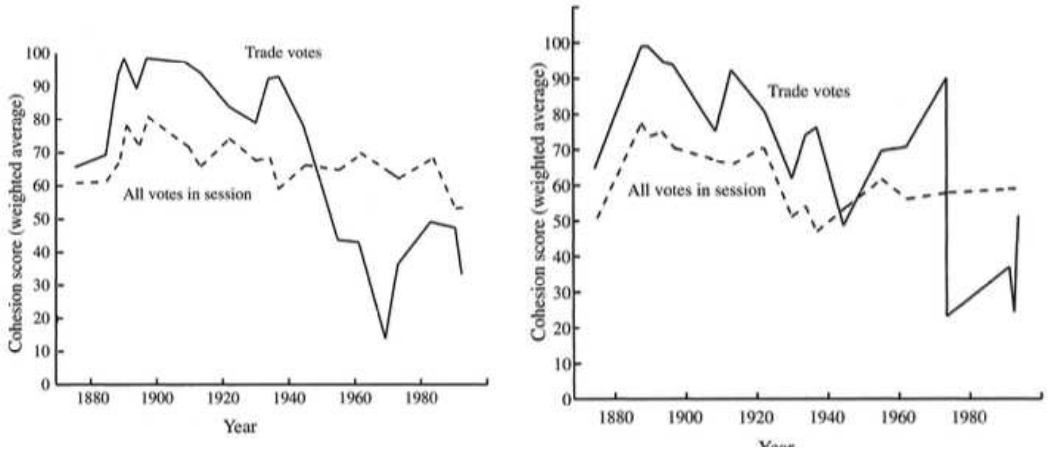
Table 4. Congressional Voting on WTO Ratification

	Number of Seats	Yay	Nay	Percentage of Voting Yay	Percentage of Voting Nay
Senate					
Democratic	55	41	14	74.5%	25.5%
Republican	45	35	10	77.7%	22.3%
House of Representatives					
Democratic	256	167	89	65.3%	34.7%
Republican	177	121	56	68.4%	31.6%

Source: Senate vote number 329 and House of Representatives roll call 507 on Bill Number H. R. 5110.

In fact, intraparty differences over trade policy have existed since the 19th century, long before the Congress ratified the ITO and the WTO. According to Michael J. Hiscox, the growing diversity of each party's primary constituency has always influenced party cohesion.[35] According to Lee Drutman, until political realignment in the 1990s, the American party system at all levels of government was biparty in structure but four-party in practice.[36] What Drutman meant is that there were Conservative voters in both Republican and Democratic parties, as well as liberal voters in both parties. Therefore, the regional party strength (at least until 1994) became less influential in determining congressional voting behavior. Hiscox and Drutman's arguments align with the Congressional Party cohesiveness score in trade votes depicted in Graph 2.

Graph 2. Party Cohesiveness Score in Senate and House of Representatives



House of Representatives The Senate

Source: Michael J Hiscox (1999)

However, the patterns of opposition also reveal precise constituency-driven mechanisms. Historical scholarship and the economic data strongly indicate that members representing import-sensitive or economically vulnerable districts were much more likely to oppose liberalization, regardless of party platform. This becomes especially clear in the WTO case, where roll-call votes were recorded. Examining the representatives who voted “no”, as showed in Tables 5 and 6, reveals that opposition clustered in four major economic regions: agricultural states such as Montana, North Dakota, and Colorado; Rust Belt industrial states such as Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, Illinois, and Indiana; timber, fishing and resource extraction in Alaska; and the Textile Belt in the western part of United States such as North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama. This concentration of opposition shows the mechanism predicted by the constituency model: legislators in regions abundant in import-competing factors (unskilled labor, natural resources sectors and declining manufacturing) tend to resist trade agreement that threaten local economy.

[35] Hiscox, Michael J. 1999. "The Magic Bullet? The RTAA, Institutional Reform, and Trade Liberalization". *International Organizations* 54(4):669-698.

[36] Drutman, Lee, 2020. *Breaking the Two-Party Doom-Loop: the case For Multiparty Democracy in America.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Table 5. House of Representatives Objector for the Ratification of the WTO

No	Representative Name	State/Party	District	Affected Industries	Import Competition Exposure
1	Browder	Alabama (D)	Birmingham – Tuscaloosa area	steel, metal fabrication, auto parts, coal mining	HIGH
2	Cramer	Alabama (D)	Huntsville industrial corridor	aerospace, defense manufacturing, electronics	HIGH
3	Hilliard	Alabama (D)	West Birmingham urban district	steel, metal fabrication, auto parts, coal mining	HIGH
4	Condit	California (D)	Central Valley communities	fruit & vegetable farming, food processing, dairy	MEDIUM
5	Dellums	California (D)	Inner East Bay (Oakland)	port services, steel & metal, auto parts, shipping & logistics	HIGH
6	Edwards (CA)	California (D)	San Jose – Silicon Valley fringe	electronics manufacturing, semiconductors, computer assembly	HIGH
7	Hamburg	California (D)	North Coast rural district	timber, fishing, wine & agriculture	HIGH
8	Lantos	California (D)	San Francisco Peninsula	port services, high-tech manufacturing, apparel import/retail	HIGH
9	Miller (CA)	California (D)	Contra Costa industrial belt	refineries, steel, shipbuilding	HIGH
10	Stark	California (D)	East Bay suburbs (Fremont)	auto assembly, electronics, machinery	HIGH
11	Tucker	California (D)	South-Central LA	apparel & textiles, port-related manufacturing, food processing	HIGH
12	Waxman	California (D)	West Los Angeles/ Hollywood	apparel, film-related manufacturing & services, import retail	HIGH
13	Woolsey	California (D)	Marin – Sonoma	wine, timber, fishing	HIGH
14	Hastings (FL)	Florida (D)	Fort Lauderdale urban district	apparel & textiles, tourism-related manufacturing, food imports	HIGH
15	Thurman	Florida (D)	North Florida / citrus areas	citrus farming, juice processing, food processing	MEDIUM
16	Deal	Georgia (D)	North Georgia textile corridor	textiles, apparel, furniture	HIGH
17	Lewis (GA)	Georgia (D)	Atlanta urban core	food processing, transport equipment, apparel	HIGH
18	McKinney	Georgia (D)	East Atlanta suburbs	food processing, transport equipment, apparel	HIGH
19	Mink	Hawaii (D)	Neighbor Islands / rural HI	sugar, pineapple, coffee, tourism-related services	MEDIUM
20	Collins (IL)	Illinois (D)	West Chicago inner city	machinery, steel, food processing, apparel	HIGH
21	Costello	Illinois (D)	Metro East (St. Louis IL side)	steel, auto parts, chemicals	HIGH
22	Evans	Illinois (D)	Quad Cities manufacturing belt	farm machinery, metalworking	LOW
23	Gutierrez	Illinois (D)	Chicago West Side	machinery, steel, food processing, apparel	HIGH
24	Lipinski	Illinois (D)	Southwest Chicago	machinery, steel, food processing, apparel	HIGH
25	Rush	Illinois (D)	South Side Chicago	machinery, steel, food processing, apparel	HIGH
26	Glickman	Kansas (D)	Wichita (aircraft, agriculture)	aircraft manufacturing, agricultural machinery, grain processing	HIGH

27	Barlow	Kentucky (D)	Western KY textile & tobacco area	textiles, tobacco processing, furniture	HIGH
28	Fields (LA)	Louisiana (D)	Shreveport / oil corridor	oil & gas, petrochemicals, agriculture	MEDIUM
29	Hayes	Louisiana (D)	South Louisiana agriculture	rice, sugar, seafood processing	MEDIUM
30	Andrews (ME)	Maine (D)	Portland region (paper/textiles)	paper, textiles, timber	HIGH
31	Mfume	Maryland (D)	Baltimore inner city	port-related manufacturing, ship repair, steel	HIGH
32	Frank (MA)	Massachusetts (D)	South Shore suburbs	electronics, shipbuilding, textiles	HIGH
33	Moakley (MA)	Massachusetts (D)	Boston South End	printing & publishing, apparel, food processing	HIGH
34	Barcia	Michigan (D)	Saginaw – Bay City	auto parts, steel, chemicals	HIGH
35	Bonior	Michigan (D)	Macomb County (auto)	auto assembly, auto parts, steel	HIGH
36	Collins (MI)	Michigan (D)	Detroit inner city	auto assembly, auto parts, steel	HIGH
37	Conyers	Michigan (D)	Detroit urban core	auto assembly, auto parts, steel	HIGH
38	Ford (MI)	Michigan (D)	Detroit west side	auto assembly, auto parts, steel	HIGH
39	Kildee	Michigan (D)	Flint / auto region	auto assembly, auto parts, steel	HIGH
40	Stupak	Michigan (D)	Upper Peninsula	mining, paper & pulp, timber	HIGH
41	Oberstar	Minnesota (D)	Iron Range	iron ore mining, steel inputs	HIGH
42	Peterson (MN)	Minnesota (D)	Western MN agriculture	grain farming, livestock	MEDIUM
43	Sabo	Minnesota (D)	Minneapolis urban	food processing, machinery, printing	LOW
44	Montgomery	Mississippi (D)	East MS textile belt	textiles, apparel, furniture	HIGH
45	Taylor (MS)	Mississippi (D)	South MS shipbuilding	general manufacturing, local services	LOW
46	Thompson	Mississippi (D)	Delta region	general manufacturing, local services	LOW
47	Clay	Missouri (D)	St. Louis urban core	general manufacturing, local services	LOW
48	Danner	Missouri (D)	North Missouri rural	grain farming, meat processing	MEDIUM
49	Volkmer	Missouri (D)	Northeast Missouri farming	corn & soybean farming, meat processing	MEDIUM
50	Williams	Montana (D)	Statewide – ranching/mining	cattle ranching, grain farming, mining	HIGH
51	Bilbray	Nevada (D)	Las Vegas urban	food & beverage supply, construction materials	LOW
52	Swett	New Hampshire (D)	Western NH (textiles, paper)	textiles, paper & pulp	HIGH
53	Andrews	New Jersey (D)	Camden – South Jersey	chemicals, shipbuilding, food processing	HIGH
54	Pallone	New Jersey (D)	Jersey Shore communities	fishing, tourism-related manufacturing	LOW
55	Payne (NJ)	New Jersey (D)	Newark urban district	port services, chemicals, apparel	HIGH
56	Engel	New York (D)	Bronx – Westchester	apparel, port & warehousing, food processing	HIGH
57	Hinchey	New York (D)	Upstate Hudson Valley	light manufacturing, paper, agriculture	HIGH
58	Hochbrueckner	New York (D)	Long Island East End	general manufacturing, local services	LOW
59	Nadler	New York (D)	Lower Manhattan / Brooklyn	apparel, port & warehousing, food processing	HIGH
60	Owens	New York (D)	Central Brooklyn	apparel, port & warehousing, food processing	HIGH
61	Rangel	New York (D)	Harlem	apparel, port & warehousing, food processing	HIGH
62	Towns	New York (D)	Brooklyn (East New York)	apparel, port & warehousing, food processing	HIGH

63	Velazquez	New York (D)	Lower East Side / Brooklyn	apparel, port & warehousing, food processing	HIGH
64	Hefner	North Carolina (D)	Piedmont textile region	textiles, apparel, furniture	HIGH
65	Rose	North Carolina (D)	Coastal NC agriculture/textiles	textiles, tobacco, furniture	HIGH
66	Watt (NC)	North Carolina (D)	Charlotte urban	textiles, banking-related services, machinery	HIGH
67	Applegate	Ohio (D)	Industrial SE Ohio	steel, auto parts, rubber	HIGH
68	Brown (OH)	Ohio (D)	Akron / industrial suburbs	rubber & tires, machinery	HIGH
69	Kaptur	Ohio (D)	Toledo – Lake Erie	auto parts, glass, machinery	HIGH
70	Stokes	Ohio (D)	Cleveland inner city	steel, auto parts, machinery	HIGH
71	Strickland	Ohio (D)	Eastern OH mining industrial	coal mining, steel inputs	HIGH
72	Traficant	Ohio (D)	Youngstown steel valley	steel, metal fabrication	HIGH
73	DeFazio	Oregon (D)	Southwest Oregon timber	timber, wood products, paper	HIGH
74	Holden	Pennsylvania (D)	Southeast PA manufacturing belt	machinery, metal fabrication, food processing	LOW
75	Kanjorski	Pennsylvania (D)	Northeast PA (Scranton)	coal-related manufacturing, machinery	LOW
76	Klink	Pennsylvania (D)	Pittsburgh industrial suburbs	steel, metal fabrication	HIGH
77	Murphy	Pennsylvania (D)	Allegheny County suburbs	machinery, metal fabrication, food processing	LOW
78	Spratt	South Carolina (D)	Pee Dee textile region	textiles, apparel, furniture	HIGH
79	Chapman	Texas (D)	East Texas rural	timber, oil & gas services, chemicals	HIGH
80	Gonzalez	Texas (D)	San Antonio urban	military-related manufacturing, auto parts, food processing	HIGH
81	Hall (TX)	Texas (D)	Northeast Texas	timber, oil & gas services, chemicals	HIGH
82	Payne (VA)	Virginia (D)	Southeast VA urban	shipbuilding, military contracting, port services	HIGH
83	Sisisky	Virginia (D)	Southside VA textile belt	textiles, apparel, furniture	HIGH
84	Unsoeld	Washington (D)	Southwest Washington timber/ports	timber, paper, port services	HIGH
85	Mollohan	West Virginia (D)	North WV coal / manufacturing	coal mining, coal-fired power	HIGH
86	Rahall	West Virginia (D)	Southern WV coal	coal mining, coal-fired power	HIGH
87	Wise	West Virginia (D)	Central WV small industry	coal mining, light manufacturing	HIGH
88	Barca	Wisconsin (D)	Southeast WI manufacturing	machinery, auto parts, metal fabrication	HIGH
89	Obey	Wisconsin (D)	Northwoods / Wausau	paper & pulp, timber, wood products	HIGH
90	Bachus	Alabama (R)	Birmingham suburbs	steel and metal fabrication	HIGH
91	Everett	Alabama (R)	Wiregrass / Dothan	general agriculture and food processing	MEDIUM
92	Young (AK)	Alaska (R)	Statewide at-large	commercial fishing and seafood, oil and gas, timber and wood products	HIGH
93	Stump	Arizona (R)	Phoenix West Valley / Luke AFB area	aerospace and defense manufacturing, electronics manufacturing	HIGH

94	Dickey	Arkansas (R)	Central-southern AR	general agriculture and food processing, light manufacturing	MEDIUM
95	Hutchinson	Arkansas (R)	Northwest Arkansas	general agriculture and food processing, light manufacturing	MEDIUM
96	Doolittle	California (R)	Sierra foothills / Sacramento suburbs	light manufacturing, timber and wood products	HIGH
97	Dornan	California (R)	Orange County	aerospace and defense manufacturing, electronics manufacturing	HIGH
98	Gallegly	California (R)	Ventura County	general agriculture and food processing, light manufacturing	MEDIUM
99	Hunter	California (R)	San Diego	aerospace and defense manufacturing, defense-related industries	LOW
100	Moorhead	California (R)	Los Angeles / San Fernando Valley	light manufacturing	LOW
101	Pombo	California (R)	San Joaquin Valley	general agriculture and food processing	MEDIUM
102	Rohrabacher	California (R)	Orange County	electronics manufacturing, services (finance, tourism, government)	HIGH
103	Royce	California (R)	Orange County	electronics manufacturing, light manufacturing	HIGH
104	Hefley	Colorado (R)	Colorado Springs	defense-related industries	LOW
105	McInnis	Colorado (R)	Western Slope	cattle ranching, natural gas, oil and gas, timber and wood products	HIGH
106	Schaefer	Colorado (R)	Front Range suburbs	light manufacturing, resource extraction	LOW
107	Bilirakis	Florida (R)	Tampa Bay suburbs	light manufacturing, services (finance, tourism, government)	LOW
108	Diaz-Balart	Florida (R)	Miami Cuban-American	services (finance, tourism, government)	LOW
109	Mica	Florida (R)	Central Florida	aerospace and defense manufacturing	LOW
110	Ros-Lehtinen	Florida (R)	Miami coastal	services (finance, tourism, government)	LOW
111	Stearns	Florida (R)	North-central FL	general agriculture and food processing, light manufacturing	MEDIUM
112	Collins (GA)	Georgia (R)	North Georgia	furniture manufacturing, light manufacturing, textiles	HIGH
113	Kingston	Georgia (R)	Coastal GA	paper and pulp, textiles	HIGH
114	Crapo	Idaho (R)	Eastern ID	general agriculture and food processing	MEDIUM
115	Burton	Indiana (R)	Indianapolis suburbs	light manufacturing	LOW
116	Myers	Indiana (R)	Western IN	general agriculture and food processing, light manufacturing	MEDIUM
117	Lewis (KY)	Kentucky (R)	Central KY	light manufacturing, textiles	HIGH
118	Rogers	Kentucky (R)	Eastern KY	light manufacturing, timber and wood products	HIGH
119	Livingston	Louisiana (R)	New Orleans	oil and gas, shipbuilding and repair	HIGH
120	Snowe	Maine (R)	Central & coastal ME	commercial fishing and seafood, paper and pulp, shipbuilding and repair	HIGH
121	Bentley	Maryland (R)	Baltimore suburbs	light manufacturing	LOW
122	Blute	Massachusetts (R)	Central MA	light manufacturing, machinery, textiles	HIGH
123	Hancock	Missouri (R)	Rural MO	cattle ranching, general agriculture and food processing, light manufacturing	MEDIUM
124	Smith (NJ)	New Jersey (R)	Central NJ	chemicals, light manufacturing, pharmaceuticals	HIGH
125	Schiff	New Mexico (R)	Central NM	defense-related industries, electronics manufacturing	HIGH

126	Skeen	New Mexico (R)	Southeast NM	cattle ranching, general agriculture and food processing, oil and gas	MEDIUM
127	McHugh	New York (R)	North Country / Fort Drum	dairy farming, defense-related industries, paper and pulp	HIGH
128	Quinn	New York (R)	Buffalo region	machinery, steel and metal fabrication	HIGH
129	Solomon	New York (R)	Upstate NY (Albany area)	light manufacturing, services (finance, tourism, government)	LOW
130	Coble	North Carolina (R)	Central NC	apparel, furniture manufacturing, textiles	HIGH
131	Taylor (NC)	North Carolina (R)	Western NC	furniture manufacturing, light manufacturing, textiles	HIGH
132	Istook	Oklahoma (R)	Oklahoma City suburbs	light manufacturing, oil and gas, services (finance, tourism, government)	LOW
133	Largent	Oklahoma (R)	Tulsa region	aerospace and defense manufacturing, natural gas, oil and gas	LOW
134	Lucas	Oklahoma (R)	Western OK	cattle ranching, grain farming	MEDIUM
135	Inglis	South Carolina (R)	Upstate SC	apparel, textiles	HIGH
136	Ravenel	South Carolina (R)	Coastal SC	shipbuilding and repair, textiles	HIGH
137	Spence	South Carolina (R)	Midlands	defense-related industries, textiles	HIGH
138	Duncan	Tennessee (R)	Knoxville area	light manufacturing, services (finance, tourism, government)	LOW
139	Combest	Texas (R)	West Texas	cattle ranching, cotton farming, grain farming	MEDIUM
140	Johnson, Sam	Texas (R)	Dallas suburbs	electronics manufacturing, services (finance, tourism, government)	HIGH
141	Wolf	Virginia (R)	Northern VA suburbs	defense-related industries, services (finance, tourism, government)	LOW
142	Gunderson	Wisconsin (R)	Western WI	dairy farming, light manufacturing, paper and pulp	HIGH
143	Klug	Wisconsin (R)	Green Bay	machinery, paper and pulp	HIGH
144	Roth	Wisconsin (R)	Northeast WI	machinery, paper and pulp	HIGH
145	Sensenbrenner	Wisconsin (R)	Milwaukee suburbs	machinery	HIGH

Source: House of Representation roll call 507 on Bill Number H. R. 5110; Affected Industry data is derived from U.S. Census Bureau *County Business Patterns*, BEA *Regional Economic Accounts*, and industry concentration documented in Hiscox (2002), and Destler (2005)**;** Exposure categories are based on standard import-penetration measures using USITC DataWeb, NBER Feenstra trade data, and the methodological framework of Autor, Dorn & Hanson (2013, 2020) and Hiscox (2002).

Table 6. Senate Objector for the Ratification of the WTO

No	Senator	State/Party	Area	Affected Industries	Import Competition Exposure
1	Heflin	Alabama (D)	State	steel, manufacturing, agriculture	HIGH
2	Shelby	Alabama (D)	State	steel, automotive suppliers, agriculture	HIGH

3	Campbell	Colorado (D)	State	light manufacturing, agriculture, mining	MEDIUM
4	Wellstone	Minnesota (D)	State	steel, iron ore, machinery, agriculture	HIGH
5	Baucus	Montana (D)	State	agriculture, mining, timber	MEDIUM
6	Exon	Nebraska (D)	State	corn, beef, grains, food processing	MEDIUM
7	Bryan	Nevada (D)	State	tourism, small manufacturing	LOW
8	Reid	Nevada (D)	State	tourism, small manufacturing	LOW
9	Dorgan	North Dakota (D)	State	wheat, cattle, agriculture	MEDIUM
10	Metzenbaum	Ohio (D)	State	steel, autos, machinery, rubber	HIGH
11	Hollings	South Carolina (D)	State	textiles, apparel, manufacturing	HIGH
12	Leahy	Vermont (D)	State	dairy, electronics, machine tools	MEDIUM
13	Byrd	West Virginia (D)	State	coal, steel, heavy manufacturing	HIGH
14	Feingold	Wisconsin (D)	State	machinery, paper, dairy	HIGH
15	Stevens	Alaska (R)	State	fishing, oil, timber	HIGH
16	Brown	Colorado (R)	State	light manufacturing, agriculture	MEDIUM
17	Craig	Idaho (R)	State	agriculture, timber	MEDIUM
18	Kempthorne	Idaho (R)	State	agriculture, timber	MEDIUM
19	Burns	Montana (R)	State	cattle, wheat, timber, mining	MEDIUM
20	Smith	New Hampshire (R)	State	machinery, electronics, textiles	HIGH
21	Helms	North Carolina (R)	State	textiles, apparel, agriculture	HIGH
22	Nickles	Oklahoma (R)	State	cattle, wheat, oil & gas	MEDIUM
23	Thurmond	South Carolina (R)	State	textiles, apparel, manufacturing	HIGH
24	Jeffords	Vermont (R)	State	dairy, electronics, machine tools	MEDIUM

Source: Senate vote number 329 on Bill Number H. R. 5110; Affected Industry data is derived from U.S. Census Bureau *County Business Patterns*, BEA *Regional Economic Accounts*, and industry concentration documented in Hiscox (2002), and Destler (2005)**;** Exposure categories are based on standard import-penetration measures using USITC DataWeb, NBER Feenstra trade data, and the methodological framework of Autor, Dorn & Hanson (2013, 2020) and Hiscox (2002).

Statements by members reinforce this interpretation. For example, Ohio Democrat Marcy Kaptur and Illinois Democrat William Lipinski both grounded their opposition not in ideology but in defense of local workers, framing free trade as a threat to jobs and community welfare. William Lipinski, for instance, stated:[37]

> "They think we are protectionists, as if it were some kind of dirty word. Well, if trying to protect American jobs, the American standard of living, and American working families makes me a protectionist, then I will gladly wear that label."

Another example was New York. Although New York is commonly associated with finance and trade openness, many of its districts' primary economy were in manufacturing such as textile, apparel, light manufacturing, metal goods and printing that faced pressure from foreign import

[37] Irwin. *Clashing over Commerce. A History of US Trade Policy.*

competition. Other area of New York, such as Brooklyn (represented by Representative Owen, and Towns), Harlem (Representative Rangel), Hudson Valley (Representative Hinchey) and Lower East Side and Queens (Representative Velazquez) had large concentration of low-skill, labor intensive industries that are sensitive to trade liberalization.

These positions demonstrate that constituency economic conditions were a primary factor shaping congressional behavior. Meanwhile, members from economically competitive or export-oriented districts—particularly those in technology and aerospace sectors on the West Coast—remained firmly supportive of WTO ratification, even when their ideological scores diverged from their party's dominant position. These patterns illustrate how constituency pressures, as predicted by H2, structured the coalition for and against WTO approval.

In the earlier ITO case, a similar but more uniform constituency logic operated. Many districts in 1949 still had economically fragile manufacturing bases or agricultural sectors recovering from wartime transitions. These vulnerabilities made representatives cautious about entering a new binding trade agreement. Although no roll-call vote was taken, the reluctance of Democratic Party members to push the Charter forward suggests that exposure to the constituency contributed significantly to their hesitation.

Taken together, the evidence indicates that ideological divergence explains why many members deviated from party platforms in both 1949 and 1994, but constituency interests explain the direction and distribution of those deviations. Members who represented economically vulnerable districts tended to oppose free trade organizations, while those representing globally competitive industries tended to support them—regardless of ideology. Therefore, while H1 accounts for the pattern of intraparty defections, H2 provides the stronger explanation for why the ITO failed while the WTO succeeded. In 1949, constituency vulnerability was widespread, and ideological cohesion was low, making ratification unlikely. In 1994, economic conditions were more diverse, producing a substantial bloc of representatives whose districts benefited from liberalization, thus enabling WTO ratification despite continued ideological fragmentation.

Conclusion

This study set out to explain why Congress reacted differently to two comparable free trade organizations—the ITO in 1948 and the WTO in 1994—despite similar institutional settings and party platforms. The research objective was to determine whether the difference in outcomes can be attributed to party ideology, constituency interests, or a combination of both.

The analysis demonstrates that party platforms alone do not determine Congressional behavior on trade institution ratification. Instead, Congressional decisions are primarily shaped by legislators' ideological positions and their constituencies' economic interests. Ideological divergence within both parties weakened party cohesion, making it unlikely that members would follow platform commitments when their ideological preferences differed. However, it was constituency economic interests—particularly exposure to import competition or vulnerability during economic downturns—that provided the most consistent and powerful explanation for voting behavior. Members representing import-sensitive or recession-stricken districts were significantly more likely to oppose free trade institutions, regardless of party.

The contrasting outcomes of the ITO and WTO ratifications, therefore, reflect the interaction between individual ideology and district-level economic incentives, rather than changes in party doctrine or presidential leadership. In 1949, constituency vulnerability was widespread, and ideological cohesion was low, making support for the ITO politically risky. By 1994, the U.S. economy had diversified, producing a larger coalition of export-oriented districts whose representatives found the WTO advantageous despite continued ideological variation. The research

thus concludes that Congressional behavior on trade institutions is best understood through the combined influence of ideological alignment and constituency economic structure.

This conclusion fulfills the study's objective by identifying the key domestic factors that shape Congressional responses to international trade agreements. It highlights that the tension between national economic objectives and local economic realities fundamentally conditions congressional decision-making. Further, this study demonstrates that congressional trade politics is driven by an interaction effect rather than a single-factor explanation. In Economic realm, this enduring dynamic of ideological variance and constituency-driven mechanisms continues to influence U.S. trade politics today. Notable example was the U.S.–China Relations Act of 2000 (China PNTR), 73 out of 211 Democratic Representatives and 57 out of 221 Republican Representatives objected the ratification of the treaty. It is safe to say that constituency pressures related to the exposure to import competition, substantially encourages districts and their representatives to protectionism.

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