SA-1 Supplemental Materials for "Mass versus Donor Attitudes on the Importance of Supreme Court Nominations"

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This supplemental appendix presents additional information on the survey procedures, as well as additional analyses referenced in the main paper.

SA-1.1 Description of survey and weighting procedures

Complete details about the survey are provided in Barber et al. (2025); we draw upon that paper in this section.

Both target sampling frames for this paper—donors and the general public—involve U.S. adult residents in one of the 50 states or Washington, DC who have a valid postal address. Because the Federal Election Commission (FEC) only requires postal addresses for donors' contact information, all sampled individuals were contacted via a personalized letter that provided a URL for the entry page of the survey's website. Each letter contained a unique code and pin and offered a $1 charitable contribution, upon completion of the survey, to the respondent's choice of one of the American Cancer Society, American Red Cross, or United Way. After entering their unique password and code, respondents were provided with information about the survey's purpose and asked for consent before proceeding. Special care was taken to ensure the privacy of the respondents. Their names and addresses were quickly separated from the larger dataset and the data that matches this information to the respondents' unique code is kept in an external drive in a locked on-campus file cabinet, consistent with IRB procedures.

The invitation letters were mailed in late November 2019; for 50% of non-respondents, a follow-up postcard was mailed in late January 2020. The sampling lists were provided by the data vendor TargetSmart. Each federal election cycle, TargetSmart creates a database

of validated donors from the FEC data. Among these validated FEC donors, 69,062 who contributed in the 2017-18 election cycle were randomly selected. The response rate for donors was 10.6%, producing a sample size of 7,335. One purpose of such a large sample of donors was to analyze different donor-types, including by education and amount donated. The parallel survey of the general population involved randomly sampling 44,007 individuals from TargetSmart's general consumer file. Consistent with prior mixed-mode surveys with an initial postal mail invitation (e.g., Broockman and Malhotra 2020), this response rate was approximately 2.4%, creating a sample of 1,038 respondents.[1]

The original Barber et al. (2025) survey also includes a third sample of affluent individuals. Although not a focus of this paper, we present results below involving this comparison set in Supplemental Table SA-3; in no one other analysis in the supplemental appendix or text is this sample included. Affluent individuals are defined as those who make over $150,000 a year or have a net worth of at least one million dollars. TargetSmart randomly sampled 40,005 individuals from their consumer database who are classified as affluent by these criteria; the response rate for this group was 3.5%.

Despite the low response rates, the demographic characteristics of the respondents and non-respondents were typically well-balanced, including by income, wealth, gender, income, and age; an exception to this was party identification, with fewer Republicans than Democrats responding. To account for this imbalance, we use survey weights described in Barber et al. (2025). Accordingly, the following description of weighting paraphrases their Supplemental Appendix B.

For the general population sample, the weights are based on the most recent American Community Survey (ACS), using standard demographic targets. For the donor sample, there is not an equivalent to the ACS on which to construct the demographic targets. However, post-stratification weights can still be constructed to correct for non-response and ensure

[1]Less than 2% of the general population sample is a validated donor.

representativeness of the respondent sample to the broader FEC donor population. As noted above, TargetSmart randomly sampled 69,062 FEC donors from the full FEC donor file, and they also provided voter file information on the target sample. Because the donor sampling frame is a random sample of the total population of FEC donors, individual-level weights are based on the demographics of this sampling frame.

Table SA-1 (which is also reported in Barber et al. 2025) compares the demographics of the 7,335 donors who completed the survey to full sampling frame of 69,062 donors who received the invitation letter. As the table highlights, the most notable response bias is from partisanship. Regardless of whether it is measured with official party registration or instead imputed from demographics and precinct voting behavior, Democrats were more likely to respond to the survey invitation.

Two types of post-stratification weights were created, one based on the inverse of the propensity score and one using iterative raking. The former were created by modeling a logistic regression of the probability a donor in the sampling frame completed the survey. In this model, the predictors are a set of indicator variables that represent each response category for every demographic variable in Table SA-1. The weights equal the inverse of the predicted probabilities, renormalized such that the number of completed surveys equals the sum of the inverse weights.

The iterative raking weights are also based on the sampling frame distribution in Table SA-1, but in this case the procedure adjusts the weights iteratively/one-at-a-time until the sample distribution matches the distribution of the sampling frame. For instance, a weight is generated for a variable such as gender (with "gender missing" included as a category) so that the weighted sample matches the gender distribution of the sampling frame. Subsequently, a new weight is generated by making the gender-weighted sample match the age distribution in the sampling frame, and then that new weight is used when making the age-gender-reweighted sample match the distribution of registered Democrats, and so forth. The process

	Sampling Frame	Respondents
Sample Size	69,062	7,335
Age (Quartiles)		
< 53	18.8%	15.6%
53-63	20.1%	18.9%
64-73	19.3%	23.8%
73-100	21.5%	22.9%
Missing	20.3%	18.8%
Registered Democrat		
Yes	28.8%	36.8%
No	71.2%	63.2%
Registered Republican		
Yes	18.8%	12.4%
No	81.1%	87.6%
Imputed Partisanship (Quartiles)–see caption for details		
< 5	26.1%	18.1%
5-66	23.8%	17.9%
67-97	20.5%	23.1%
98+	29.5%	40.9%
Gender		
Male	54.2%	56.1%
Female	37.1%	36.0%
Missing	8.7%	7.9%
Race: Black?		
Yes	4.7%	3.9%
No	95.3%	96.1%
Wealth		
< $100k	14.9%	13.9%
$100k – $199k	12.1%	12.3%
$200k - $499k	10.9%	12.3%
$500k - $999k	11.3%	12.1%
$1 mil – $2.5 mil	13.8%	15.4%
$2.5 mil +	19.2%	18.2%
Missing	17.8%	15.8%
Voted in 2016 general?		
Yes	94.2%	97.2%
No	5.8%	2.8%
Voted in 2016 primary?		
Yes	26.4%	30.3%
No	73.6%	69.7%
Voted in 2018 general?		
Yes	91.9%	97.0%
No	8.1%	3.0%
Number of Contributions		
0	4.3%	2.6%
1	16.6%	16.0%
2	11.2%	11.5%
3	8.2%	8.0%
4	6.5%	6.8%
5-9	19.4%	20.6%
10-19	15.4%	16.6%
20-49	13.1%	12.7%
50+	5.2%	5.2%

Table SA-1: Verified donor respondents and sampling frame compared. Imputed partisanship depicts the probability that person supports the Democratic Party, based on an ensemble method classifier model.

continues to iterate over all the marginal distributions until the weights are relatively stable.

The inverse propensity and iterative raking weights correlate at 0.99, suggesting that the substantive results do not depend on weighting algorithm. As noted in the paper, we report results using the inverse propensity score method. From a substantive standpoint, the main impact of either weight is to decrease the relative influence of Democratic versus Republican donor respondents given the differential response rates of these partisans.

SA-1.2 Survey items

This subsection presents the full question wording for each survey item analyzed in the paper.

Priorities and judicial appointments (original item)

Consider the following list of issues and policies. Among them, which THREE are the most important to you in terms of choosing whether to support a Senate candidate? Select up to three issues. (Order randomized)

- Climate change and the environment
- Federal judicial appointments, including appointments to the Supreme Court
- Government assistance to the poor
- Gun policy
- Health care
- Immigration
- National debt/deficit
- Social security
- Taxes
- Trade and tariff policy

Presidents and nominee views (original item)

Thinking now about the US courts and the selection of judges. Should US presidents consider nominees' views on specific issues before appointing them to the Supreme Court?

- Yes
- No

Presidents and nominee diversity (original item)

Before appointing someone to the Supreme Court, should presidents consider a nominee's race, gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation?

- Yes
- No

Gorsuch and Kavanaugh (CES wording)

Over the past two years, Congress voted on many issues. If you were in Congress would you have voted FOR or AGAINST each of the following?

Appoint Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court of the United States?

- For
- Against

Appoint Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court of the United States?

- For
- Against

SA-1.3 Donor prioritization of the courts, with controls

Table SA-2 examines donor prioritization of judicial appointments with controls for income, net worth and demographic factors. Three models are presented: (1) pooled across parties, (2) Republicans only, and (3) Democrats only. As in the main text, the data is from the donor and general population samples.

The demographic variables are defined as follows based on self-reports from the survey data; because some respondents opted out of completing certain demographic questions, the numbers of observations for these analyses are slightly lower than those without the demographic controls.

	Pooled	Republicans	Democrats
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Donor	0.175***	0.196***	0.164***
	(0.024)	(0.042)	(0.027)
Education	0.012	0.017	0.012
	(0.009)	(0.012)	(0.013)
Female	0.008	−0.001	0.019
	(0.019)	(0.039)	(0.020)
Income	0.001	0.001	−0.001
	(0.004)	(0.007)	(0.004)
Net Worth	0.064**	0.043	0.073**
	(0.026)	(0.043)	(0.029)
Age	0.0002	0.004***	−0.001*
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Religious Importance	0.037*	0.096***	−0.057**
	(0.020)	(0.030)	(0.023)
Black	−0.063	0.238	−0.073**
	(0.041)	(0.227)	(0.037)
Latino	−0.015	0.045	−0.052
	(0.048)	(0.105)	(0.047)
High Political Interest	0.083***	0.066*	0.096**
	(0.031)	(0.039)	(0.043)
Constant	−0.048	−0.260**	0.031
	(0.066)	(0.103)	(0.088)
R^2	0.08	0.14	0.07
Observations	6,807	1,712	5,095
Note:			*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table SA-2: Donor prioritization of judicial appointments, with demographic controls. Models include inverse propensity weights and robust standard errors.

- **Education** is coded from one to six, with each value representing one of the following categories:
  - Did not graduate from high school
  - High school graduate
  - Some college, but no degree
  - 2-year college degree
  - 4-year college degree
  - Postgraduate degree (Masters, MD, JD, PhD, etc.)
- **Female** is a binary variable for respondents' self-reported gender (two for female, or one for male).

- **Income**. Respondents were asked to place their family's annual income in one of ten categories:
  - Less than $50,000 (1)
  - $50,000 - $99,999 (2)
  - $100,000 - $124,999 (3)
  - $125,000 - $149,999 (4)
  - $150,000 - $249,999 (5)
  - $250,000 - $299,999 (6)
  - $300,000 - $349,999 (7)
  - $350,000 - $399,999 (8)
  - $400,000 - $500,000 (9)
  - More than $500,000 (10)
  - (They could also answer "prefer not to say.")
- **Net worth** reflects whether a respondent estimated their household's net worth to be:
  - "Less than $1 million" (1) or,
  - "More than $1 million" (2).
- **Age** is a continuous measure of age.
- **Religious importance**. Respondents were asked "How important is religion in your life?" If they answered "Very important," the variable Religious Importance is coded as one, otherwise zero.
- **Black** and **Latino** are binary variables reflecting a respondent's self-identified race or ethnicity.
- **High political interest**. Respondents were asked "Would you say you follow what's going on in politics and public affairs...?" Respondents who answered "Most of the time" to the question were coded as a one for the control High Political Interest, otherwise zero.

Table SA-2 shows that donor prioritization of the courts is highly robust to the added controls. The findings from these regressions closely mirror those presented in Table 1B. That is, donors of both parties are significantly more likely to say judicial appointments are among their top three issues when considering a Senate candidate, compared to the mass

public, even after controlling for multiple demographic and political factors. In the full sample, donors are 17.5 percentage points more likely to rank judicial appointments as a top priority. The donor-public gap remains quite large when subset to either Republicans (19.6 percentage points) or Democrats (16.4 percentage points).

SA-1.4 Donor prioritization of the courts, compared to the affluent

Table SA-3 compares the importance of judicial appointments among donors, the mass public, and the affluent. As described above in Section SA-1.1, the **?** survey also included an affluent sample, which requires an individual to have at least $150,000 in annual income or a net worth of at least $1 million. As noted earlier, this sample was constructed from 40,005 randomly selected individuals whom TargetSmart estimates to have this level of affluence in their consumer database. (By design, no individual was sampled twice for any of the three samples of donors, the general population, or affluent.) The response rate was 3.5%, producing a sample of 1,409 respondents.

	Pooled	Republicans	Democrats
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Donor	0.234***	0.281***	0.210***
	(0.019)	(0.032)	(0.024)
Affluent	0.034	0.027	0.038
	(0.023)	(0.037)	(0.030)
Constant	0.184***	0.192***	0.179***
	(0.018)	(0.029)	(0.023)
R^2	0.05	0.08	0.04
Observations	8,928	2,527	6,401
Note:			*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table SA-3: Donor prioritization of judicial appointments, compared to the affluent. Models include inverse propensity weights and robust standard errors.

As with Table SA-2, Table SA-3 includes three models, one pooling across party and then one each broken down by party. Once again, donors of both parties are substantially more likely to prioritize the courts compared to the mass public, even compared to affluent respondents. Indeed, across all three models, affluent respondents are statistically no more

likely as the mass public to prioritize judicial appointments, while significantly less likely than donors to do so. In all, these findings demonstrate a persistent gap in the prioritization of judicial appointments for donors versus other constituency groups.

SA-1.5 Donor prioritization, among highly educated respondents

Tables SA-4 and SA-5 examine whether increased prioritization of judicial appointments among donors stems from higher average levels of education. To conduct this analysis, we first subset to respondents who indicated that they hold a graduate degree. This allows us to focus on differences in prioritization solely among highly educated respondents. The results from this analysis are presented in Table SA-4. While this sub-setting reduces the number of respondents in the sample substantially ($n = 4,416$ without controls and $n = 3,911$ with controls), the donor-public gap nevertheless persists. Model (1) in Table SA-4 indicates that, compared to the highly educated general population baseline, highly educated donors are 21.9 percentage points more likely to place judicial appointments as one of their top three issues. Model (2) in Table SA-4 adds the full battery of demographic controls used in Table SA-2 (other than education, which is constant among respondents with a graduate degree). Compared to Model (1), the coefficient on Donor in Model (2) is somewhat smaller (indicating a donor-public gap of 16.8 percentage points), but remains both substantively and statistically significant.

We next analyze whether the donor-public gap could be explained by donors having greater knowledge of the law and the judicial system, compared to the mass public. Our survey presented respondents with an open-ended question asking, "What is your post graduate degree or degrees?" We conducted simple string matches in the responses to find individuals with graduate degrees related to related to law, criminal justice, or political science. This includes, for example, respondents with a Juris Doctor (JD), Masters in Criminal Justice, or PhD in Political Science.

Table SA-5 presents two regression models that include only such respondents. As with

	(1)	(2)
Donor	0.219***	0.168***
	(0.033)	(0.038)
Republican	0.079***	0.094***
	(0.027)	(0.029)
Gender		0.020
		(0.022)
Income		0.001
		(0.005)
Net worth		0.056**
		(0.029)
Age		0.001
		(0.001)
Religious importance		−0.024
		(0.028)
Black		0.024
		(0.072)
Latino		−0.047
		(0.054)
Political interest		0.157***
		(0.033)
Constant	0.200***	−0.108
	(0.032)	(0.071)
R^2	0.05	0.07
Observations	4,416	3,911
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Table SA-4: Donor prioritization of judicial appointments, among respondents with graduate degrees. Models include inverse propensity weights and robust standard errors.

Table SA-4, Model (1) in Table SA-5 only includes a control for Republican partisanship, while Model (2) adds our full battery of demographic controls. The sample size is naturally much smaller and likely contributes to the lower significance of the impact (p<0.10, two-tailed), although the magnitude of the effect is only slightly lower. In Model (1), we find that donors are 19.7 percentage points ($p = 0.054$) more likely to emphasize judicial appointments, compared to the general population. This decreases slightly to 14.8 percentage points ($p = 0.071$) in Model (2).

	(1)	(2)
Donor	0.197*	0.148*
	(0.102)	(0.082)
Republican	0.085	0.136**
	(0.054)	(0.055)
Gender		0.009
		(0.047)
Income		0.012
		(0.008)
Net worth		0.032
		(0.057)
Age		0.001
		(0.002)
Religious importance		−0.013
		(0.052)
Black		−0.072
		(0.099)
Latino		−0.110
		(0.119)
Political interest		0.212***
		(0.076)
Constant	0.306***	−0.061
	(0.099)	(0.154)
R^2	0.03	0.07
Observations	987	877
Note:	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Table SA-5: Donor prioritization of judicial appointments, among respondents with graduate degrees related to law, criminal justice, or political science. Models include inverse propensity weights and robust standard errors.

SA-1.6 History of donor interest in the courts

Table SA-6 examines interest in the Supreme Court among self-reported donors in the 1964 and 1966 American National Election Studies (ANES) (American National Election Studies 1964-1966). The measure of donor status comes from a question included in both surveys asking respondents whether they had financially contributed to a political campaign that year. Our outcome measure pools together items from each year of the survey that asked respondents to list things that the Court had done the respondent liked or disliked. In

the 1964 wording, the item asked whether "there is anything it [the Supreme Court] has done that you have liked or disliked?" and allowed for up to three open-ended likes and dislikes each as responses. The 1966 question format is almost identical, asking "is there anything in particular the Supreme Court has done that you have liked or disliked?" If respondents provided at least one like or dislike, they were coded as a 1, otherwise 0. In Table SA-6, we pool together responses from the 1964 and 1966 ANES to increase the number of responses available. We include a survey year binary variable (1966) in all models to account for differences between surveys.[2]

The results in Table SA-6 demonstrate that donors are substantially more likely to list a specific like or dislike of the Supreme Court. In the first column, donors are 31.5 percentage points more likely to list a like or dislike, compared to the general population. The results in the second column replicate this analysis but with the full battery of demographic controls added. We attempted to incorporate analogous controls for all variables described in Section SA-1.3. We were largely successful, but were unable to find corresponding variables for "Religious importance" and "Net worth" in both the 1964 and 1966 ANES, and "Latino" in the 1964 ANES. The available control variables were coded in line with the description laid out in Section SA-1.3, to the extent possible. For "Education," neither ANES survey included a "2-year college degree" response so the category is dropped and the scale is collapsed accordingly. The dollar amounts for the various "Income" response categories are smaller (accounting for inflation), but are substantively similar. All studies have ten "Income" response categories.

The estimates for the donor gap in column two of Table SA-6 decrease in magnitude compared to the sparser model, but continue to suggest increased interest in the Supreme Court among donors.

[2]The 1964 ANES includes a Black oversample, which we do not include because the ANES does not include the oversample when combining years into the time series. The ANES does not provide weights for 1966 and therefore these analyses are unweighted.

	1964 and 1966	
	$\geq$ 1 Like/Dislike	$\geq$ 1 Like/Dislike
Donor	0.327***	0.128***
	(0.031)	(0.030)
Republican	0.114***	0.059***
	(0.021)	(0.020)
Education		0.122***
		(0.010)
Female		−0.056***
		(0.019)
Income		0.007
		(0.004)
Age		0.002***
		(0.001)
Black		0.049
		(0.033)
High Political Interest		0.274***
		(0.022)
1966	0.088***	0.056***
	(0.019)	(0.019)
Constant	0.321***	0.012
	(0.014)	(0.058)
R^2	0.06	0.21
Observations	2,521	2,330
Note:		*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table SA-6: History of donor interest in the Supreme Court, with available demographic controls. Models include robust standard errors.

SA-1.7 Donor prioritization of the courts, by ideology

As discussed in Section 2.1, we investigated the role of ideology in explaining the prioritization gap—specifically, the differences between donors and the mass public in terms of ideology extremity, and how those differences may map onto the prioritization gap.

This analysis is necessarily a bit more complicated than our other regressions. To test the predictions outlined in Section 2.1, we create the following variables:

- **Ideological alignment indicator** is a binary variable based on the standard 7-point scale of political ideology. It is equal to 1 for Republicans who indicated that they were conservative (5-7 on the standard scale) and Democrats who indicated they were liberal (1-3). It is equal to 0 for partisans who are not aligned with their party's ideology.

Pure independents (respondents not leaning towards one party) are coded as NA.

- **Donor × Ideological alignment indicator** interacts donor status with **Ideological alignment indicator**. It equals 1 for donors who are ideologically consistent (that is, coded as a 1 on *Ideological alignment indicator*), and 0 otherwise.
- **Donor × (1 - Ideological alignment indicator)** interacts donor status with 1 - **Ideological alignment indicator**. Thus, it equals 1 for donors who are ideologically inconsistent (that is, coded as a 0 on *Ideological alignment indicator*), and 0 otherwise.
- **Ideological extremity** is coded from 1 to 7 and serves as a pooled measure of within-party ideological extremity for all Democrats and Republicans. For Republicans, we use the standard ideology scale: a 1 corresponds to "extremely liberal" and a 7 to "extremely conservative." For Democrats, the standard scale is inverted such that a 1 corresponds to "extremely conservative" and a 7 to "extremely liberal." Pure independents (respondents not leaning towards one political party) are coded as NA. Thus, respondents who score higher on this measure are more extreme in terms of alignment with their party, regardless of whether they are a Democrat or Republican.
- **Donor × Ideological extremity** interacts donor status with ideological extremity, such that it is equal to *Ideological extremity* for all donors and 0 for all general population respondents.

Using these measures, Table SA-7 presents four regressions that test whether the difference in prioritization between donors and the general population is related to respondents' ideological extremity. In each model, as usual, the dependent variable is whether the respondent includes judicial nominations in their top-3 priorities. First, Model (1) includes the binary measures of ideological alignment and their interaction, along with a control for whether the respondent is a Republican. The main effect on *Ideological alignment indicator* gives the predictive effect of alignment among the general population; it is not statistically significant. The coefficient on *Donor × Ideological alignment indicator* gives the additional likelihood of prioritization among aligned donors, compared to the general population. This effect is significantly positive and also greater in magnitude than the coefficient on *Donor × (1 - Ideological alignment indicator)*, which reflects the likelihood of prioritization among non-aligned donors. Specifically, the coefficients yield a gap of $0.24 - 0.14 =$ approximately 10 percentage points, which is substantively quite large and significant at p=0.03, two-tailed

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Ideological alignment indicator	0.051	0.059		
	(0.045)	(0.046)		
Donor x Ideological alignment indicator	0.244***	0.182***		
	(0.021)	(0.027)		
Donor x (1 - Ideological alignment indicator)	0.137***	0.084*		
	(0.044)	(0.043)		
Ideological extremity			0.034*	0.034**
			(0.021)	(0.016)
Donor			0.092	0.013
			(0.122)	(0.099)
Donor × Ideological extremity			0.024	0.027
			(0.022)	(0.018)
Republican	0.047**	0.046**	0.047**	0.047**
	(0.019)	(0.020)	(0.019)	(0.020)
Education		0.014		0.015
		(0.010)		(0.010)
Gender		0.014		0.011
		(0.019)		(0.019)
Income		0.001		0.002
		(0.004)		(0.004)
Net worth		0.064**		0.064**
		(0.026)		(0.026)
Age		0.0002		0.0002
		(0.001)		(0.001)
Religious importance		0.018		0.016
		(0.020)		(0.020)
Black		−0.043		−0.042
		(0.043)		(0.043)
Latino		−0.007		−0.010
		(0.049)		(0.049)
Political interest		0.080**		0.072**
		(0.032)		(0.032)
Constant	0.124***	−0.132	−0.024	−0.262**
	(0.040)	(0.093)	(0.114)	(0.132)
R^2	0.07	0.09	0.07	0.09
Observations	7,681	6,798	7,681	6,798
Note:				*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table SA-7: Donor prioritization of judicial appointments, by ideological alignment and extremity. Models include inverse propensity weights and robust standard errors.

(F(1, 7680))=4.71. Likewise, in Model (2), which adds the demographic controls, the difference in magnitude between the coefficients on the interaction terms is approximately 10 percentage points and significant at p=0.06, two-tailed (F(1, 6797))=3.67. It is arguably surprising that there is any effect for unaligned donors. However, research in public opinion suggests that individuals' preferences continue to be multidimensional, even though elite preferences have become more ordered along a single dimension of ideology, and that cross-pressured survey respondents will identify as moderate (e.g., Treier and Hillygus 2009). By this logic, we should not be surprised to find an effect for cross-pressured individuals, even though, consistent with expectations, the effect of donor prioritization is larger for ideologically aligned ones.

Moving on to the models with the continuous measure, Models (3) and (4) in Table SA-7 employ the 1-7 scale of within-party ideological extremity, which we interact with donor status. All main effects are included and as before, we present results with and without demographic controls. The coefficient on *Ideological extremity* indicates the predicted difference in prioritization as a function of ideology among the general population; it is positive and at least marginally significant in each specification, suggesting that more extreme general public respondents are more likely to prioritize appointments. The main effect for *Donor* indicates the predicted change among prioritization for the lowest value of ideological extremity; this quantity is not really of substantive interest, and the coefficient is not statistically different from zero. Finally, the *Donor* $\times$ *Ideological extremity* interaction is positive, though not statistically significant. However, this estimate is based on the entire distribution of extremity, whereas our theoretical expectation is that the prioritization gap would emerge at higher levels of donor ideological extremity. To test whether this is the case, Figure SA-1 depicts for Model (3) the marginal effect of donor status—that is, the difference in the predicted likelihood of prioritization between donors and general population respondents, across the range of ideological extremity. The figure shows clearly that once extremity reaches a level

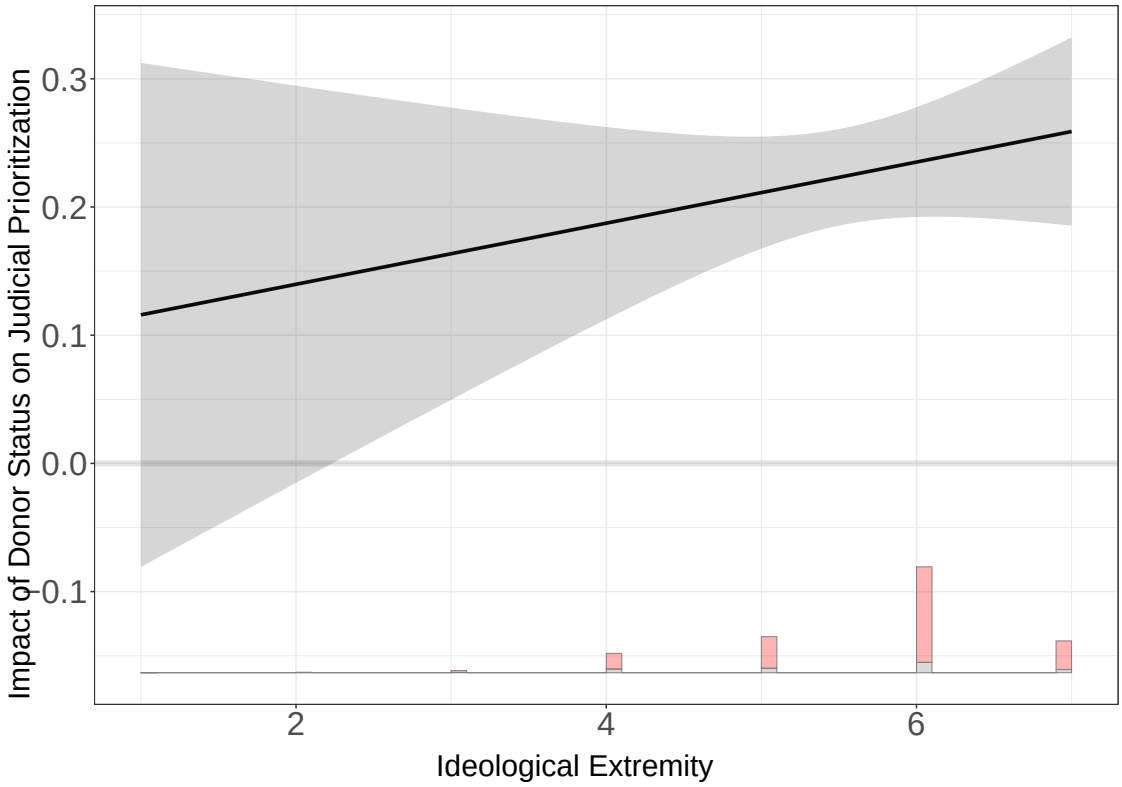

Figure SA-1: Donor-public gap in prioritization of judicial appointments, by ideological extremity. The solid black line depicts the difference in the predicted likelihood of prioritization between donors and the general population, across the range of ideological extremity; the shaded region indicates 95% confidence intervals. The bars at the bottom of the plot depict represents the distribution of ideological extremity for donors (in red) and general population respondents (in grey). The plot was created using the `interflex` R package (Hainmuller et al. 2024) proposed in Hainmueller, Mummolo, and Xu (2019).

of 3, the marginal effect is positive and significant, as predicted. (Model (4) in Table SA-7 adds the demographic controls; the results are unchanged compared to Model (3)). Recall this pattern holds if we relax the assumption of a linear interactive effect, as demonstrated by the 10 percentage point gap in Models (1) and (2) using the binary measure of alignment.

Finally, as we noted in the paper, whereas judicial nominations are inherently discrete events and not very susceptible to bipartisan compromise, research on policy bipartisanship and compromise suggests many of the issues on our priorities list are ones that are conducive to these aims, including issues on social welfare, health, law and crime, the environment, and

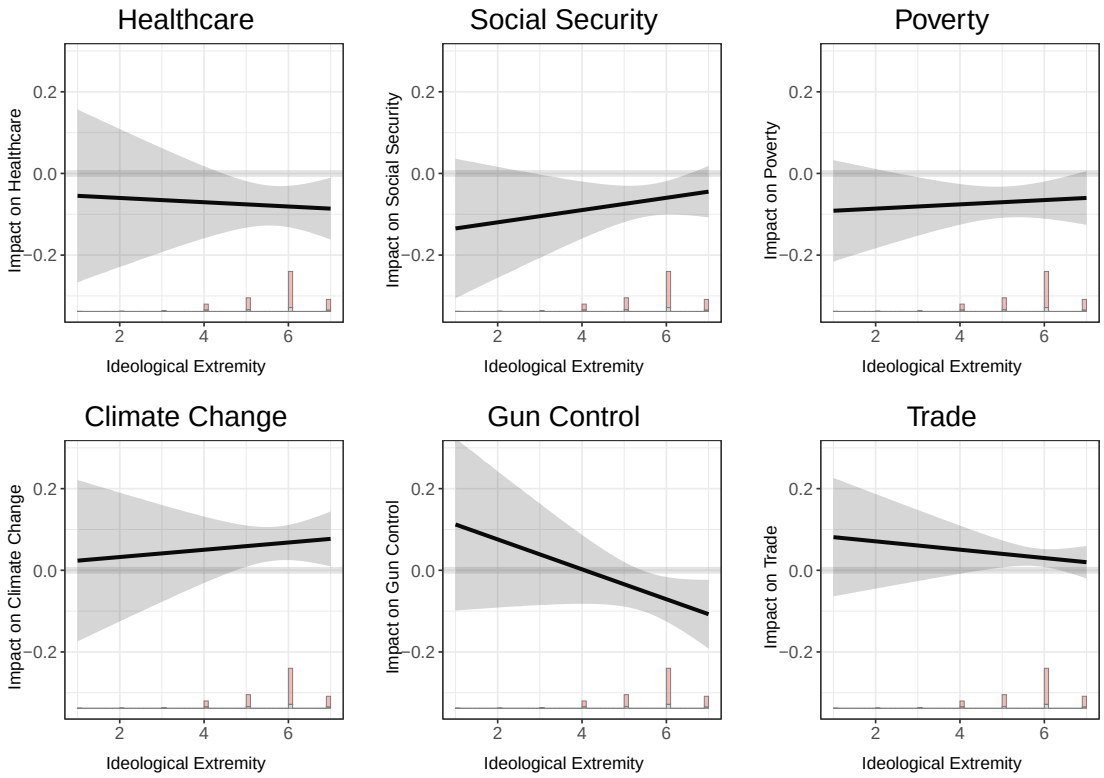

Figure SA-2: Donor-public gap in prioritization of 6 issues, by ideological extremity. The graph replicates the analysis seen in Figure SA-1, for each of 6 different issues. Except for climate change, there is no evidence of an interaction between donor status and ideological extremity; these overall null effects are in line with our theoretical expectations. Sample for all analyses: N=7,681.

trade (Harbridge-Yong 2015, Craig 2023). Thus, our theoretical expectations are that we would *not* expect a similar interactive effect between ideological extremity and prioritization in such issues. Figure SA-2 presents a "quasi-placebo test" where we replicate the analysis shown in Figure SA-1 for six other issue areas that arguably map onto those identified by **?** and **?**: health care, Social Security, poverty, climate change, gun control, and trade. (For each issue, we use the same specification as in Model (3) in Table SA-7.) Except for climate change, we do not see an interactive effect between donor status and ideological extremity, as the estimated slope is not statistically different from zero. And, even for climate change, the estimated slope is much smaller compared to what that we saw with judicial nominations

	Amount Donated	Small Donor	Amount Donated	Small Donor
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Out of state	0.062***	0.067***	0.066***	0.071***
	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.019)	(0.019)
Ln (Amount donated)	0.023***		0.029***	
	(0.005)		(0.006)	
Small donor		−0.046***		−0.062***
		(0.013)		(0.015)
Senate donor	0.021	0.024	−0.032*	−0.029*
	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.016)	(0.016)
Republican	0.090***	0.093***	0.160***	0.014
	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.058)	(0.024)
Republican × Out of state			−0.020	−0.021
			(0.043)	(0.043)
Republican × Ln(Amount donated)			−0.023**	
			(0.011)	
Republican × Small donor				0.063**
				(0.030)
Republican × Senate donor			0.195***	0.194***
			(0.036)	(0.036)
Constant	0.250***	0.389***	0.239***	0.415***
	(0.026)	(0.012)	(0.029)	(0.013)
R^2	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.02
Observations	6,825	6,825	6,825	6,825
Note:				*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table SA-8: Regression models of judicial prioritization by FEC donor-types. All analyses are of the donor sample. Models include inverse propensity weights and robust standard errors.

in Figure SA-1, and only is significant at ideological extremity levels of 6 and 7.

In summary, across multiple analyses we find considerable evidence that the ideological extremity of donors can explain a fair amount of the donor-public gap in prioritization of judicial nominations.

SA-1.8 Donor prioritization of the courts, by FEC-based donor categories

This subsection explores differences in judicial prioritization across various types of donors based on out-of-state donor status (binary), donation amount (continuous), small versus large donor status (binary), and whether a donor contributed to a Senate candidate (binary). Be-

cause we are focusing the comparison on donor-type rather than between donors and the general population, only the donor sample is analyzed. Out-of-state donors are defined as having contributed to at least one out-of-state candidate. Donation amounts are based on total contribution receipts to all entities, including candidates, PACs, and parties. The binary small donor classification captures donors who did not provide a contribution greater than $200 to any entity. Senate donors contributed to at least one Senate candidate campaign. Because of the overlap between donation amount and small donor status, we estimate separate models for these variables.

Table SA-8 presents four regression models; as usual, the dependent variable is whether the respondent includes judicial nominations in their top-3 priorities. Models (1) and (2) include only a control for party identification. We find a strong positive relationship between judicial prioritization and out-of-state donor status, total amount donated, large donor status, and Republican party affiliation. Out-of-state donors are approximately six to seven percentage points more likely to prioritize judicial appointments and small donors five percentage points less likely to do so. Despite the central role of Senators in judicial confirmations, Senate donors do not appear more likely to prioritize appointments relative to other donors when the parties are estimated jointly.

Models (3) and (4) in Table SA-8 add interaction terms between Republicans and the donor-types and suggest some of these effects vary significantly by party. In particular, the results on the interaction terms suggest Republican Senate donors are more likely to prioritize nominations, and that the findings on donation amount are driven primarily by Democratic donors. For instance, the coefficient on the interaction term between the small donor and Republican indicators is of a similar magnitude to, but in the opposite direction, of the main effect of the total amount donated, suggesting that the overall effect for a Republican is close to zero, and the same occurs for the small donor estimates. By comparison, the results indicate that Republican Senate donors are 19-20 percentage points more likely to prioritize

judicial appointments than Democratic Senate donors are. There is no partisan difference, however, among out-of-state donors.

Together, Table SA-8 suggests both that there is variation in which FEC donor-types prioritize judicial appointments but also that the difference in prioritization between donors and the mass public is not driven by just one type. The fact that out-of-state donors across each party are more likely than other contributors to prioritize judicial appointments is consistent with research that suggests such donors have different contribution goals than in-state ones (e.g., Barber, Canes-Wrone and Thrower 2017). At the same time, the size of this and the other differences by FEC donor-types are much smaller compared to the overall difference between donors and the mass public.

SA-1.9 Policy positions on judicial appointments

Table SA-9 provides group means, as well difference in means and associated p-values, based on the comparisons presented in Table 3 in the paper. This analysis aligns closely with the discussion included in the main text: differences in partisan preferences largely dwarf differences in (co-partisan) donor and mass public preferences. That said, there is a notable gap in intra-party preferences on the consideration of nominee demographics among Democrats.

The values were calculated from bivariate regressions with inverse propensity weighting and robust standard errors. For example, "Should consider nominee views on issues" responses were regressed on donor status among Democratic donors and members of the general public to yield the first difference of 2.1% with a p-value of 0.545.

Question	Group 1	Group 2	Group 1 Mean	Group 2 Mean	Diff. (p-value)
Should consider nominee views on issues	Dem Donors (N=5029)	Dem Public (N=525)	70%	67.9%	2.1% (0.545)
Should consider nominee views on issues	Dem Donors (N=5029)	GOP Donors (N=1705)	70%	74.1%	-4.1% (0.002)
Should consider nominee views on issues	GOP Donors (N=1705)	GOP Public (N=330)	74.1%	76.8%	-2.7% (0.422)
Should consider nominee views on issues	GOP Public (N=330)	Dem Public (N=525)	76.8%	67.9%	8.9% (0.056)
Should consider nominee demographics	Dem Donors (N=5084)	Dem Public (N=536)	35.1%	19.8%	15.3% (0)
Should consider nominee demographics	Dem Donors (N=5084)	GOP Donors (N=1703)	35.1%	12.5%	22.6% (0)
Should consider nominee demographics	GOP Donors (N=1703)	GOP Public (N=331)	12.5%	13.4%	-0.9% (0.757)
Should consider nominee demographics	GOP Public (N=331)	Dem Public (N=536)	13.4%	19.8%	-6.4% (0.09)
Support for Gorsuch	Dem Donors (N=5068)	Dem Public (N=520)	16.7%	22.7%	-6% (0.061)
Support for Gorsuch	Dem Donors (N=5068)	GOP Donors (N=1689)	16.7%	96.1%	-79.4% (0)
Support for Gorsuch	GOP Donors (N=1689)	GOP Public (N=318)	96.1%	91.5%	4.5% (0.046)
Support for Gorsuch	GOP Public (N=318)	Dem Public (N=520)	91.5%	22.7%	68.9% (0)
Support for Kavanaugh	Dem Donors (N=5111)	Dem Public (N=527)	1.8%	7.3%	-5.5% (0.021)
Support for Kavanaugh	Dem Donors (N=5111)	GOP Donors (N=1707)	1.8%	93.4%	-91.5% (0)
Support for Kavanaugh	GOP Donors (N=1707)	GOP Public (N=326)	93.4%	87.8%	5.6% (0.026)
Support for Kavanaugh	GOP Public (N=326)	Dem Public (N=527)	87.8%	7.3%	80.5% (0)

Table SA-9: Two-way comparisons from Table 3, with group means and difference in means values (and their associated p-values). All p-values are based on two-tailed tests.

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