The Hierarchical Structure of Running for Office
8th District 1998
Geography

- Watertown
- Belmont
- Cambridge
- Somerville
- Chelsea
- Boston
8th District 1998 Candidates

- Mike Capuano (Somerville mayor) (19,439)
- Ray Flynn (former Boston Mayor) (14,829)
- George Bachrach (former state sen.) (12,166)
- John O’Connor (rich husband) (11,035)
- Marjorie Claprood (former state rep & radio personality) (10,358)
- Chris Gabrieli (rich guy) (5,732)
- Chris Yancy (Boston city council) (4,460)
- Susan Tracy (former state Sen.) (2,855)
- Tom Keane (Boston city council) (2,150)
- Alex Rodriguez (1,799)
8th District 1998
Schematic of support

Bachrach
Belmont
Watertown
Cambridge
Somerville
Boston
Chelsea
Flynn
Yancy

O’Connor?
Claprood?
Gabrieli?
Rodriguez?
Strategic Choice and Political Careers

\[ E(\alpha_i) = P_i U_i - C_i \]

\[ E(\alpha_j) = P_j U_j - C_j \]
Some important considerations

• Variations in variable values
  – across time
  – cross-sectionally

• Factors that affect the calculus of progressive ambition
Factors that Affect the Calculus of Progressive Ambition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>$B_L$ vs. $B_H$</th>
<th>$P_L$ vs. $P_H$</th>
<th>$C_L$ vs. $C_H$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-Scope of legislative authority</td>
<td>-National forces</td>
<td>-Opportunities foregone</td>
</tr>
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<td>-Political and policy resources within the institution</td>
<td>-Party identification in the districts</td>
<td>-Number and quality of challengers</td>
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<td>-Pay and perquisites</td>
<td>-Redistricting</td>
<td>-Fund-raising efficiency</td>
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<td>-Springboard effects</td>
<td>-Scandal</td>
<td>-Efficiency of translating money and volunteer time into votes</td>
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## Pay and Perquisites (some examples)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Stipend</th>
<th>Travel allowance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alabama</strong></td>
<td>$10/day (C)</td>
<td>$2,280/month plus $50/day for three days during each week that the legislature actually meets during any session</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Georgia</strong></td>
<td>$16,200/year</td>
<td>$128/day, set by the legislature.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Massachusetts</strong></td>
<td>$50,122.80/year</td>
<td>From $10/day-$100/day, depending on distance from State House, set by the legislature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Hampshire</strong></td>
<td>$200/two-year term</td>
<td>No per diem is paid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rhode Island</strong></td>
<td>$11,236/year</td>
<td>No per diem is paid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>West Virginia</strong></td>
<td>$15,000/year</td>
<td>$115/day during session, set by compensation commission. $150/Day for attendance during interim.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
National tides

![Graph showing midterm losses in House and Senate from 1950 to 2002. The graph indicates periods of significant losses in both chambers, with peaks in 1974, 1978, and 1996.]
Why the midterm loss?

• Surge and decline effect
• Strategic voters
• Strategic politicians

*And where did it go?
Surge and decline effect

Good Dem. Pres’l Year

Midterm

Good Rep. Pres’l Year

Midterm
Strategic voters

Pres’l election year

Midterm w/ Dem. pres. & Cong.

D  Dd  Dr  Rd  Rr

D  d  r  R
Strategic Candidates

d_{house} = -29.0 + 1343d_{RDI_q1}

R^2 = .71

d_{senate} = -3.7 + 134d_{RDI}

R^2 = .16
Incumbent-protection gerrymandering
Limit to incumbent protection

• By removing parts of the district from an incumbent in which s/he has developed an “incumbency advantage,” an incumbent can be hurt, even if added parts of the district share the incumbent’s partisanship.
Incumbents, challengers, and open seat candidates

- Incumbents
  - Incumbency advantage
- Challengers
  - Challenger quality
- Open seat candidates
  - The free-for-all
Incumbency advantage: The Picture
Incumbency advantage

- Why does it exist?
  - Franking, etc.
  - Constituency service
  - Redistricting
  - Smarter candidates