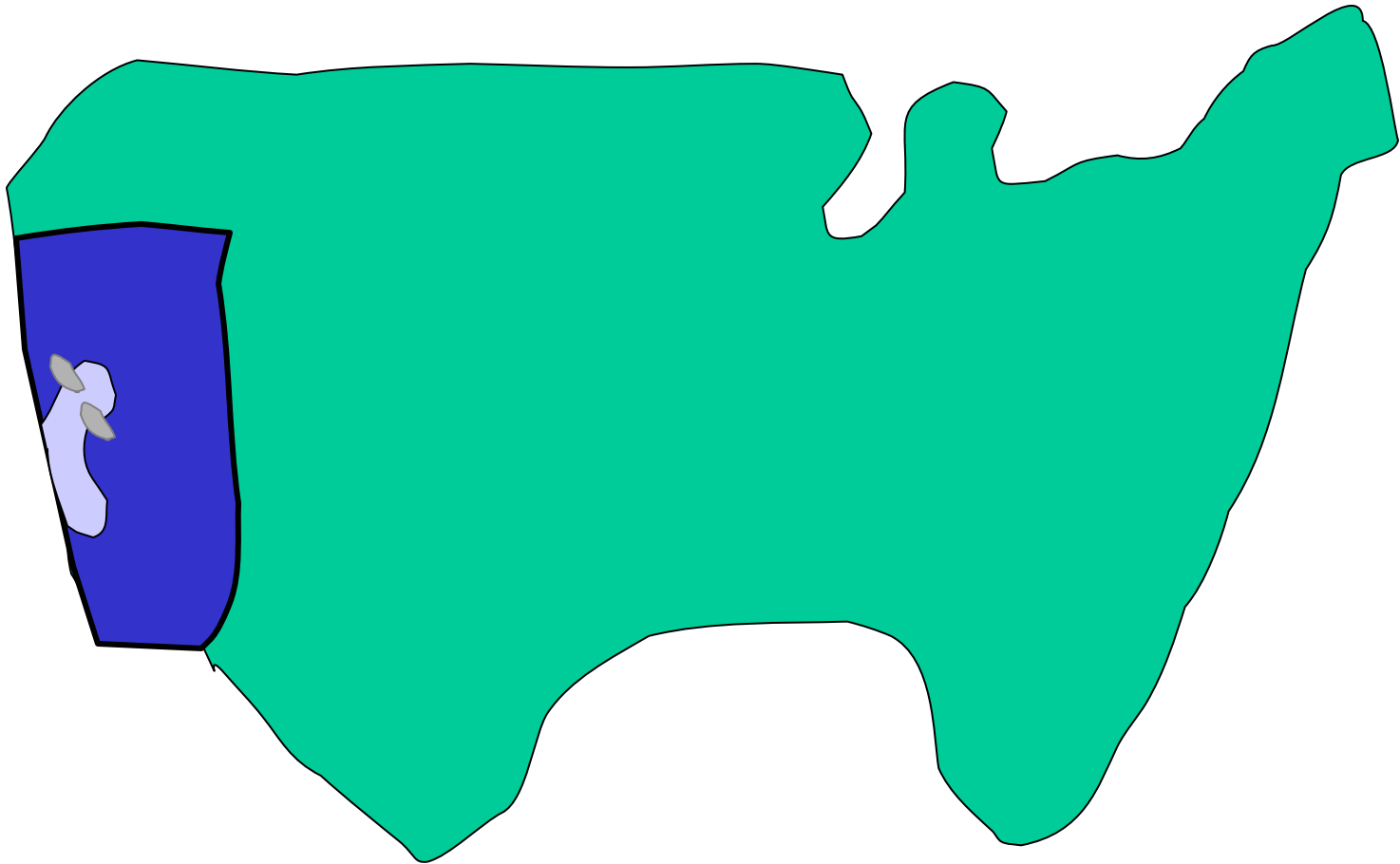


# Congressional Candidates

17.251

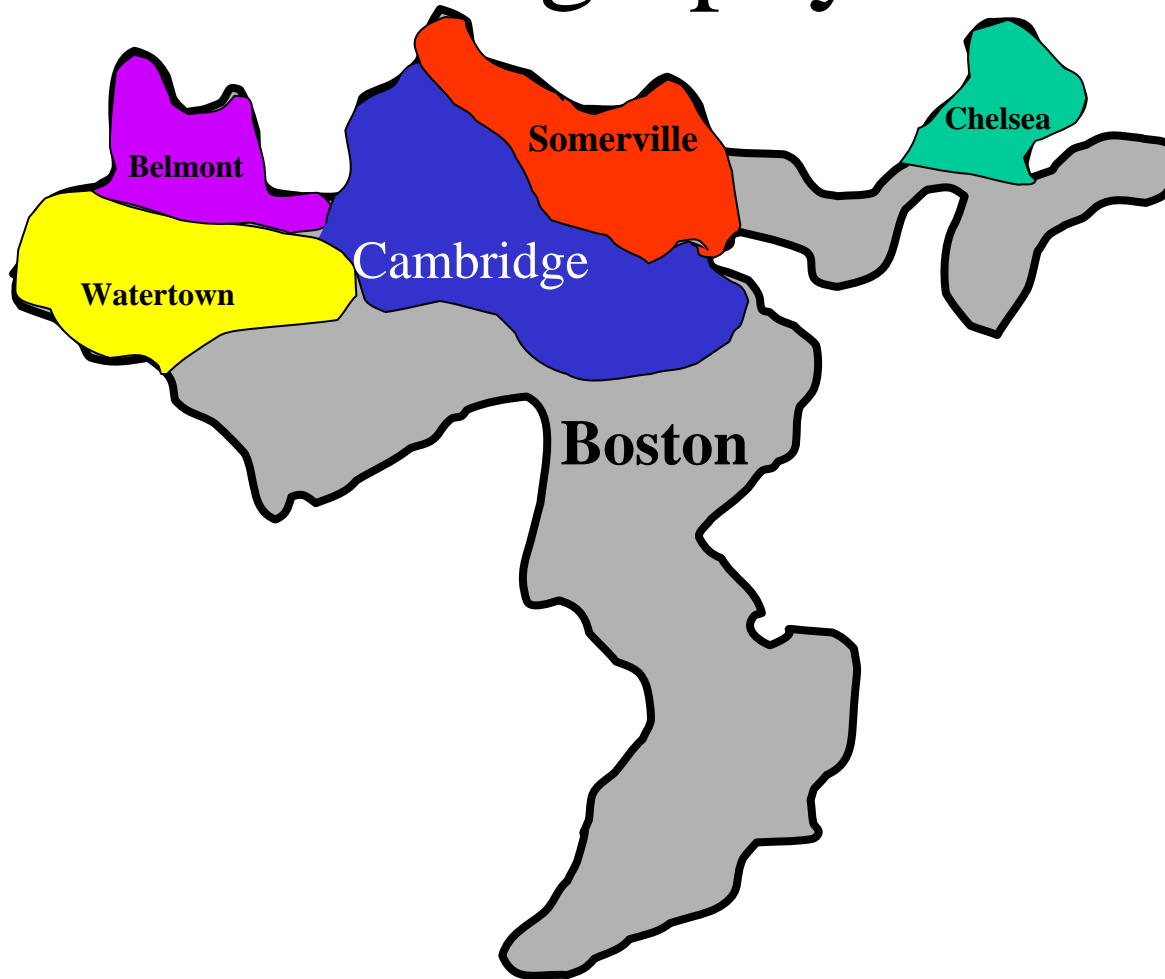
Fall 2008

# The Hierarchical Structure of Running for Office



# 8th District 1998

## Geography



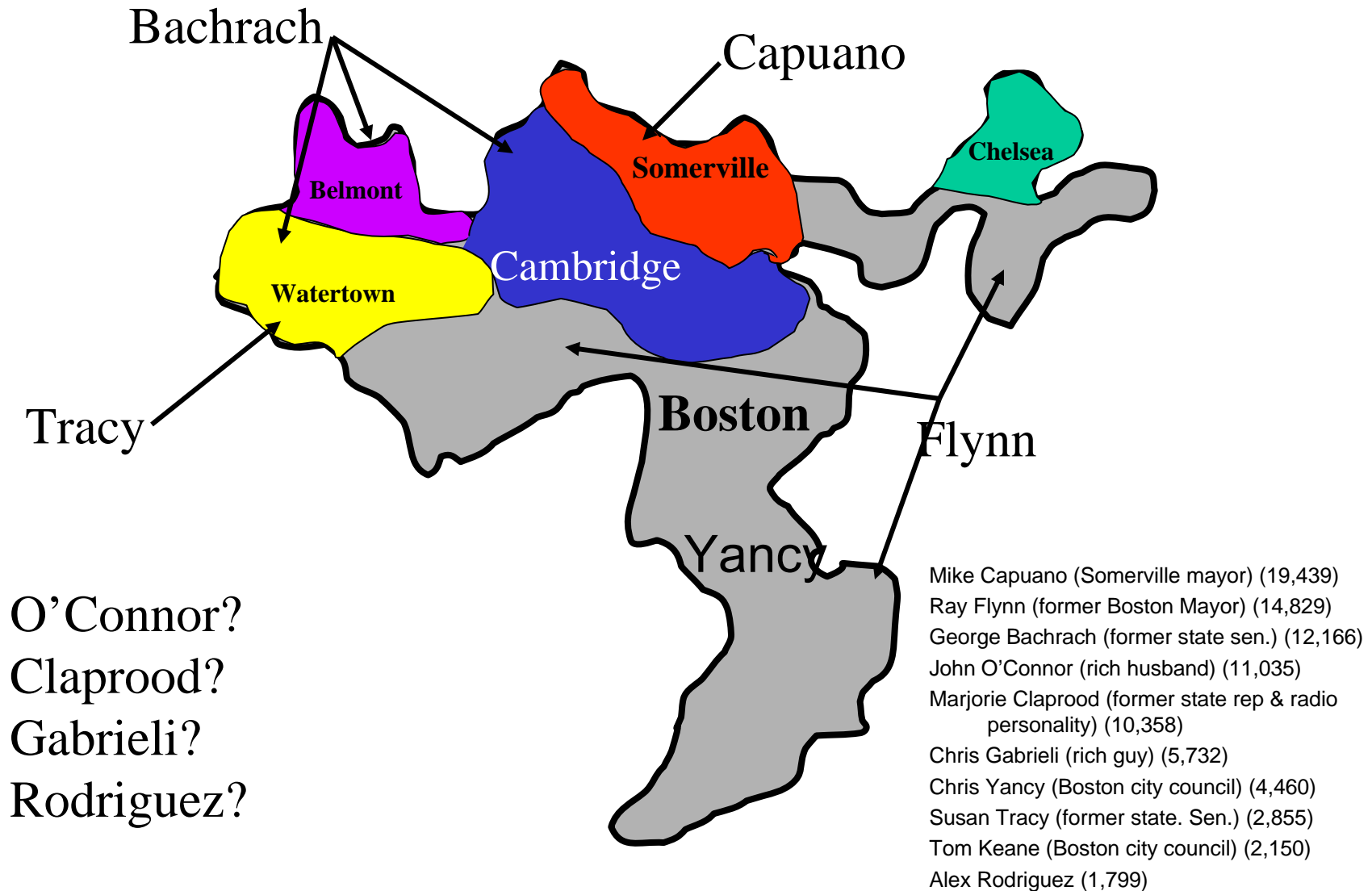
# 8<sup>th</sup> District 1998

## 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 Claprod (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)

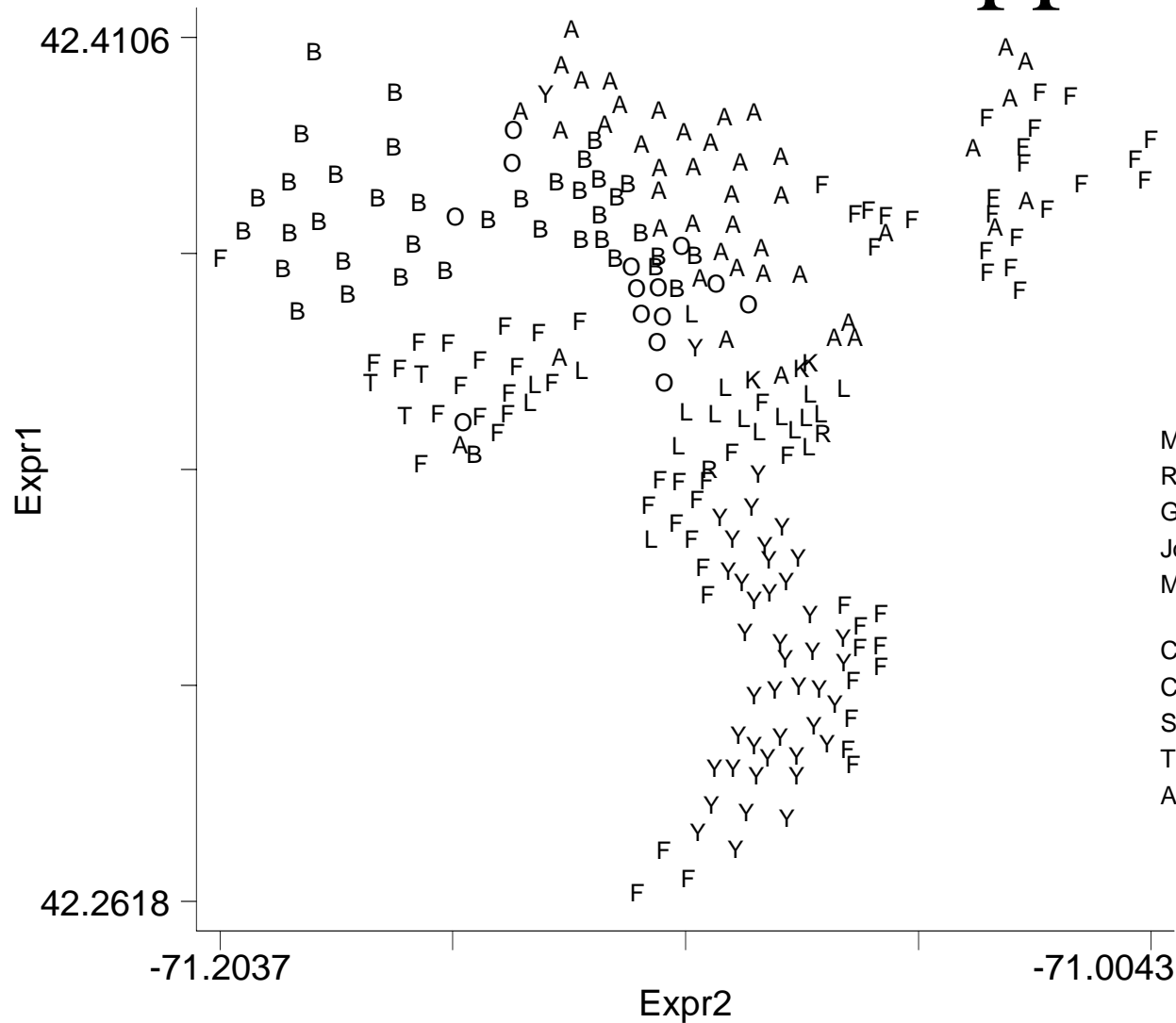
# 8th District 1998

## Schematic of support



O'Connor?  
 Claprood?  
 Gabrieli?  
 Rodriguez?

# 8th District 1998 District Support



- 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)
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# Strategic Choice and Political Careers

$$E(a_i) = P_i U_i - C_i$$

$$E(a_j) = P_j U_j - C_j$$

# 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

$B_L$ vs. $B_H$	$P_L$ vs. $P_H$	$C_L$ vs. $C_H$
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Scope of legislative authority</li> <li>-Political and policy resources within the institution</li> <li>-Pay and perquisites</li> <li>-Springboard effects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-National forces</li> <li>-Party identification in the districts</li> <li>-Redistricting</li> <li>-Scandal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Opportunities foregone</li> <li>-Number and quality of challengers</li> <li>-Fund-raising efficiency</li> <li>-Efficiency of translating money and volunteer time into votes</li> </ul>

# Pay and Perquisites of state legislatures (some examples)

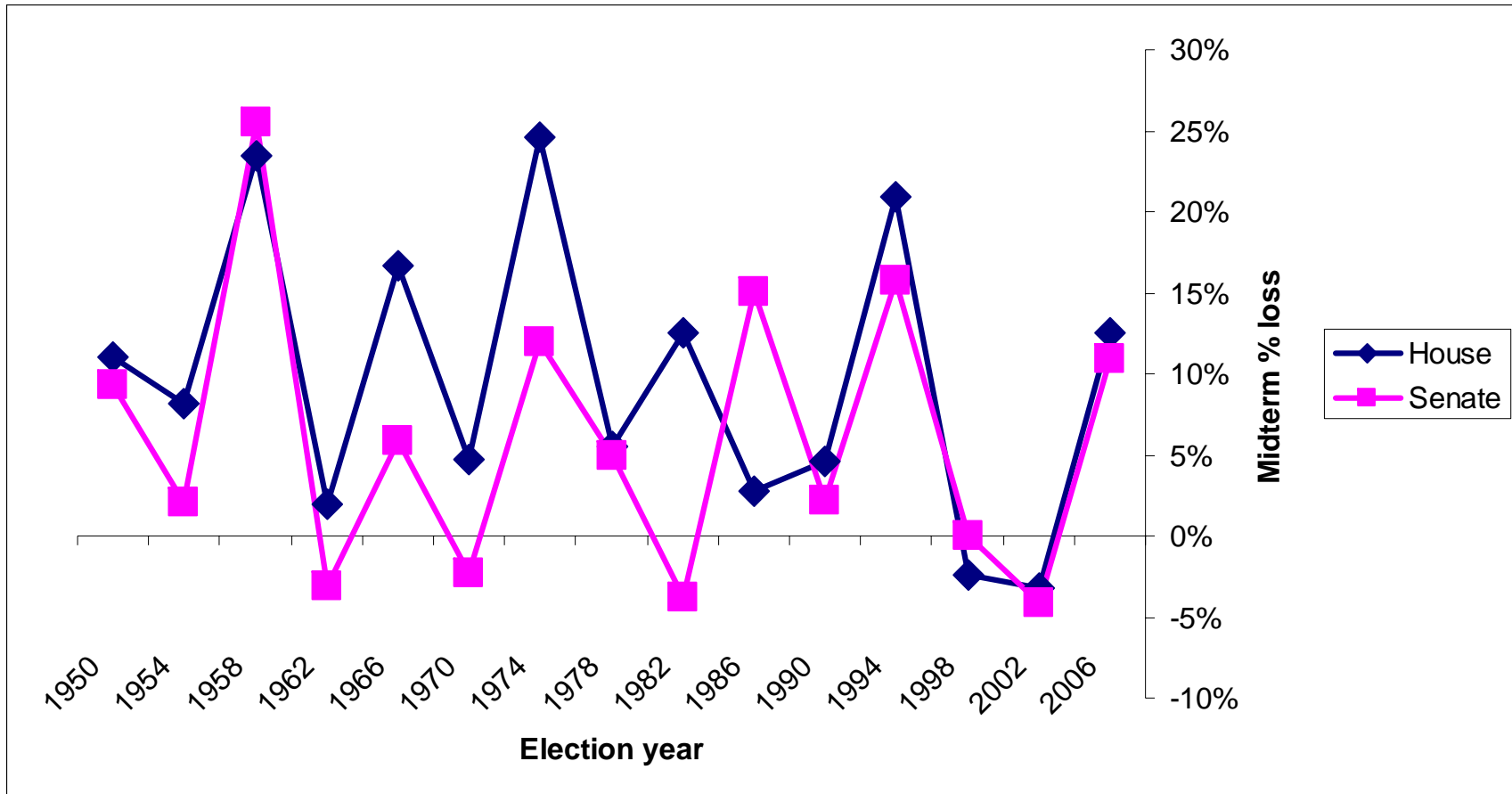
State	Stipend	Travel allowance
Alabama	\$10/day (C)	\$3850/month adjusted annually to reflect any increase in the cost of living as indicated by U.S. Dept of Labor Consumer Price Index plus \$50/day for three days during each week that the legislature actually meets during any session (U).
California	\$116,098/yr	\$170/day for each day they are in session.
Georgia	\$17,342/yr	\$173/day (U) set by the Legislative Services Committee.
Massachusetts	\$58,237.15/yr	From \$10/day-\$100/day, depending on distance from State House (V) set by the legislature.
New Hampshire	\$200/two-year term	No per diem is paid.
Rhode Island	\$13,089.44/yr	No per diem is paid.
West Virginia	\$15,000/yr	\$131/day during session (U) set by compensation commission

Source: National Conference on State Legislatures  
[http://www.ncsl.org/programs/legismgt/about/08\\_legislatorcomp.htm](http://www.ncsl.org/programs/legismgt/about/08_legislatorcomp.htm)

# Variation in state legislative capacities

Category of Legislature	Time on the Job	States	Compensation	Staff per Member
Red	80%	CA, FL, IL, MA MI, NJ, NY, OH, PA, WI	\$68,599	8.9
White	67%	AK, AL, AR, AZ, CO, CT, DE, HI, IA, KY, LA, MD MN, MO, NC, NE, OK, OR, SC, TN, TX, VA, WA	\$35,326	3.1
Blue	50%	GA, ID, IN, KS, ME, MS, MT, ND, NH, NM, NV, RI, SD, UT, VT, WV, WY	\$15,984	1.2

# National tides



# The National Tide in 2004 & 2008

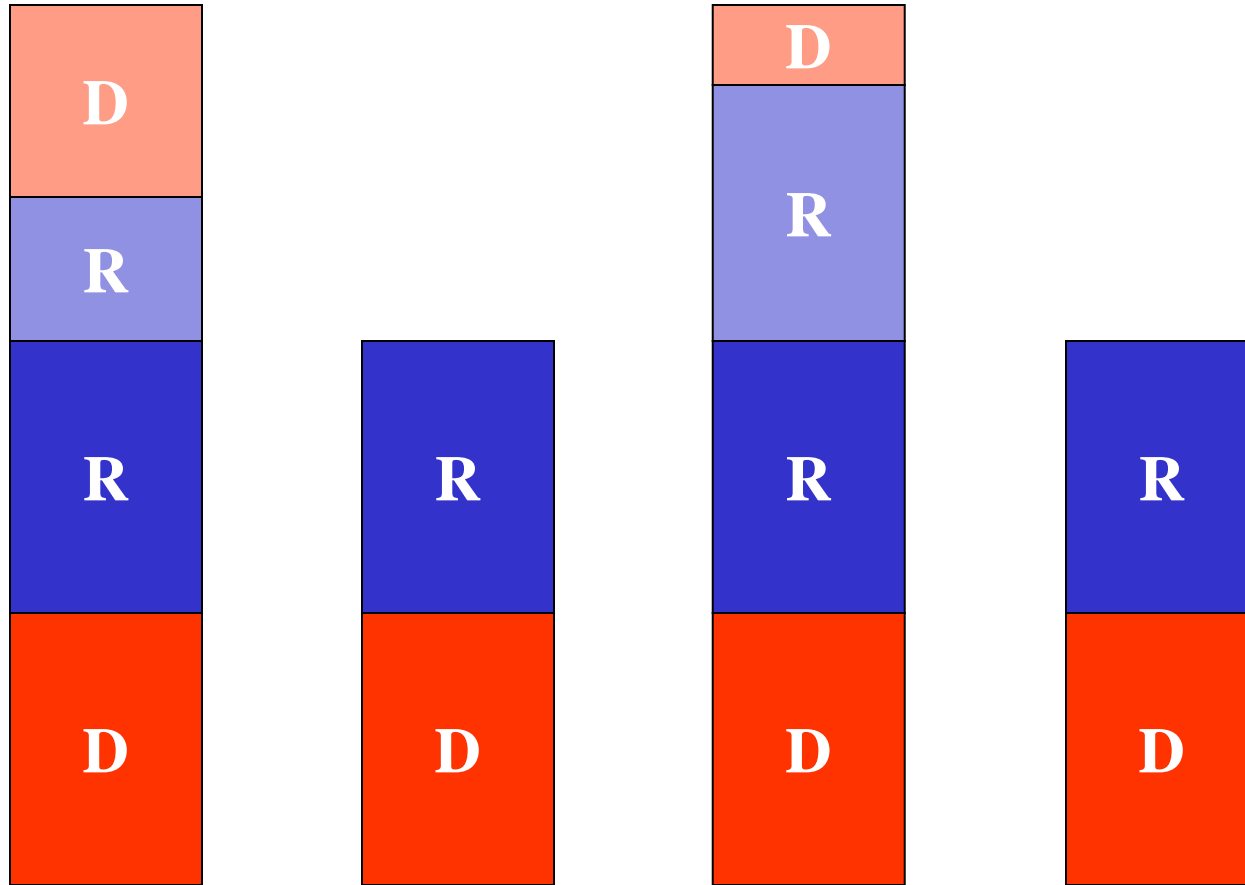
- Retiring from the Senate
  - 2004: 3R, 4D
  - 2008: 5R, 0D
- Retiring from the House
  - 2004: 11R, 7D
  - 2008: 23R, 3D

# Why the midterm loss?\*

- Surge and decline effect
- Strategic voters
- Strategic politicians

\*And where did it go?

# Surge and decline effect



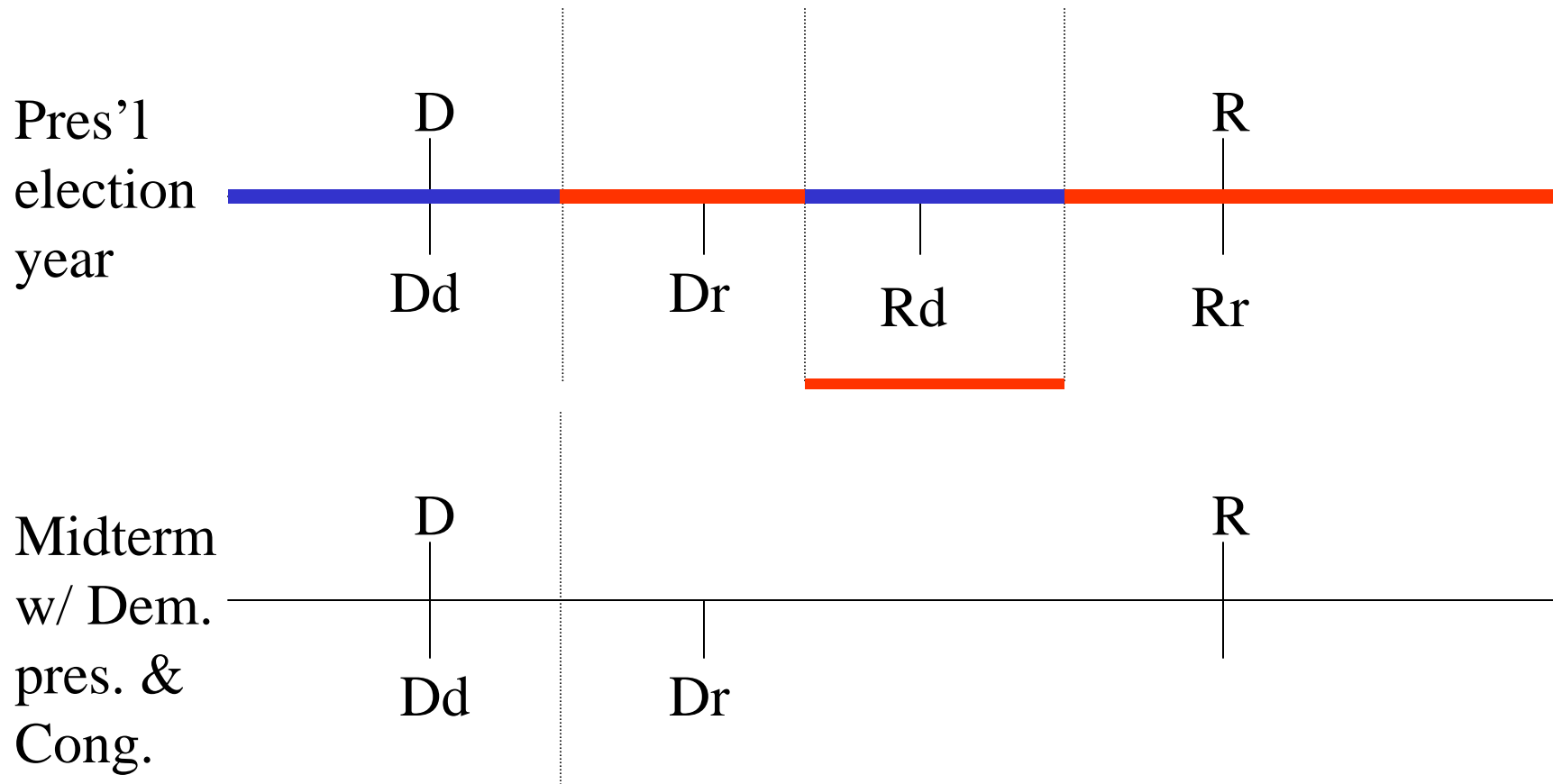
Good Dem.  
Pres'1 Year

Midterm

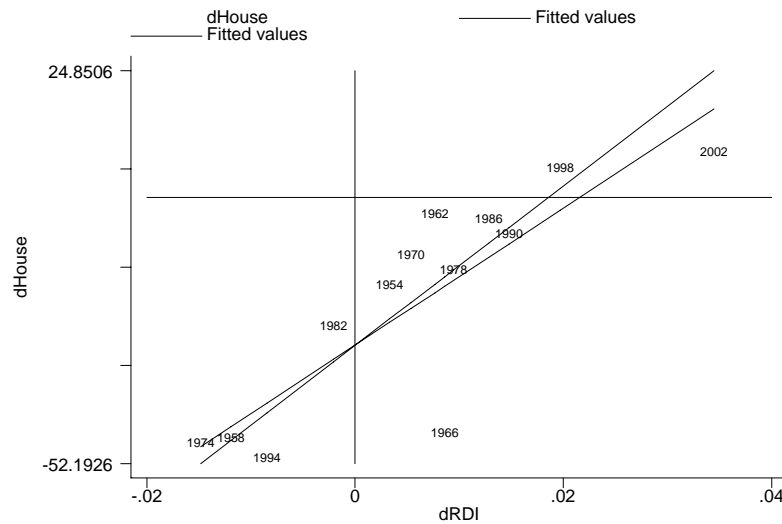
Good Rep.  
Pres'1 Year

Midterm

# Strategic voters (not to scale)

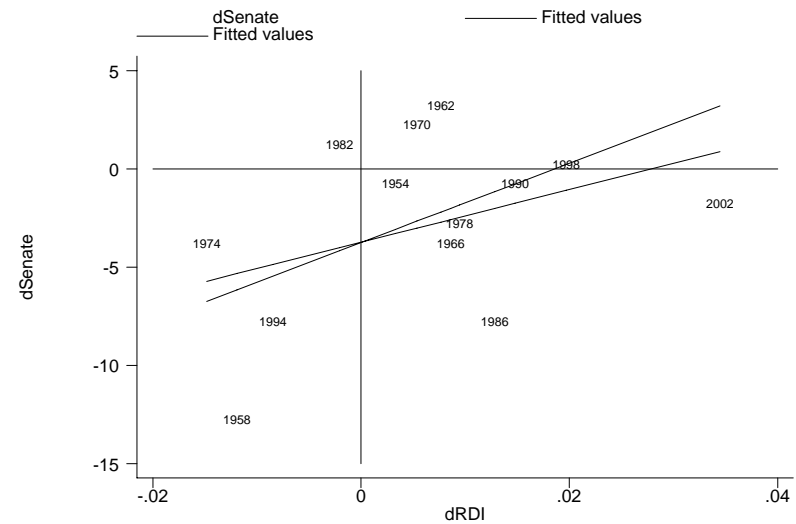


# Strategic Candidates



$$dhouse = -29.0 + 1343dRDI_{q1}$$

$$R^2 = .71$$

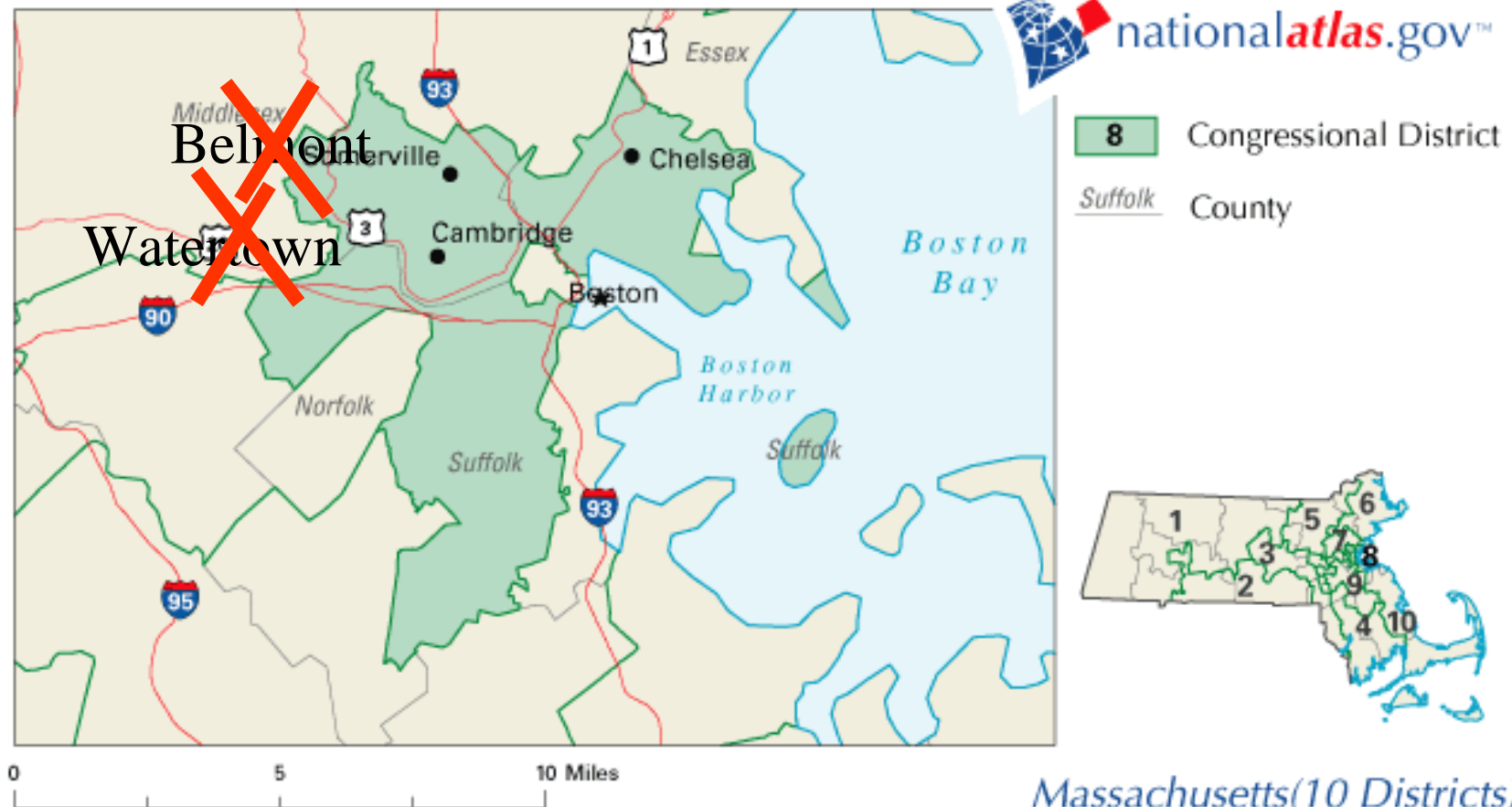


$$dsenate = -3.7 + 134dRDI$$

$$R^2 = .16$$

# Incumbent-protection gerrymandering

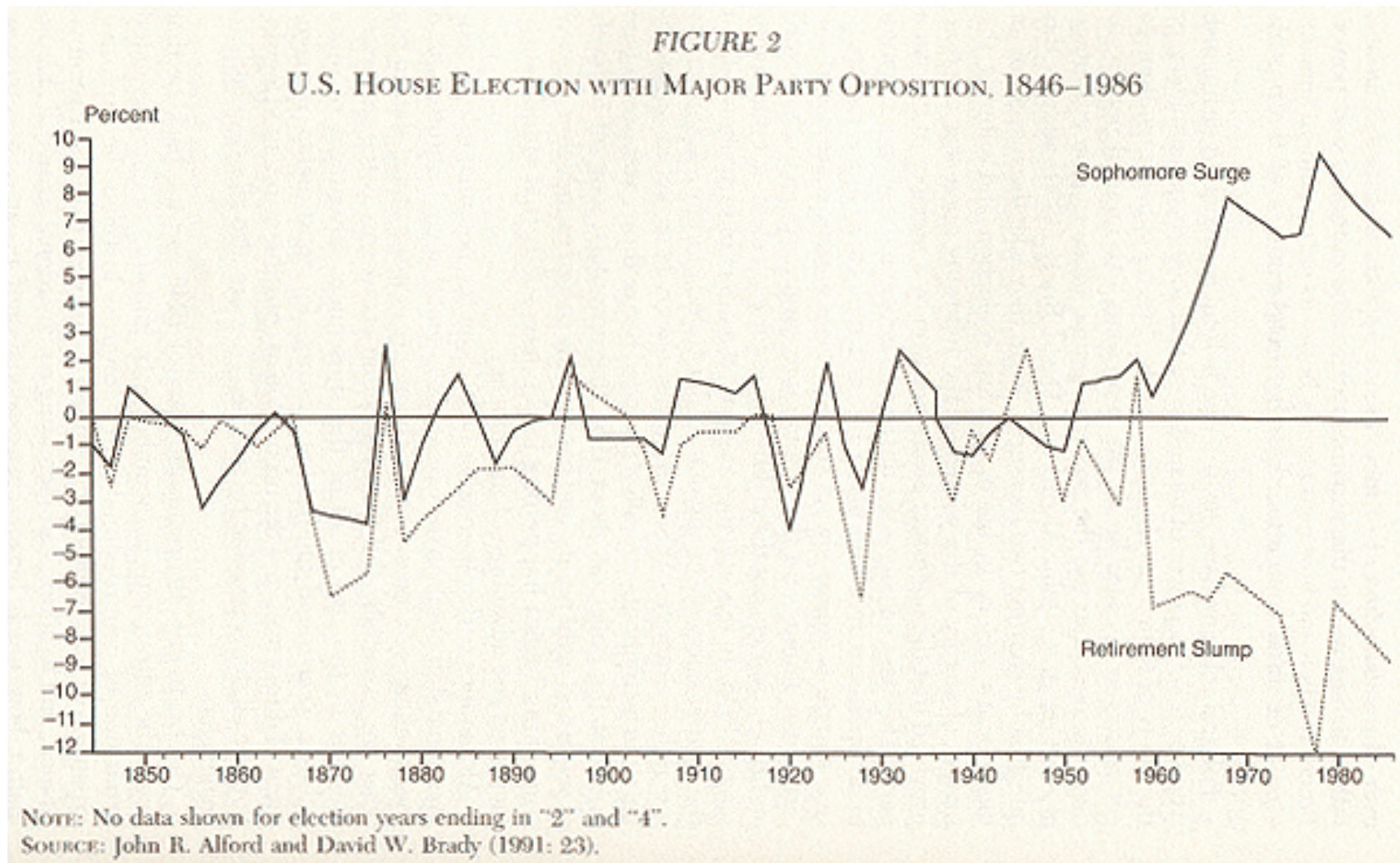
## Congressional District 8



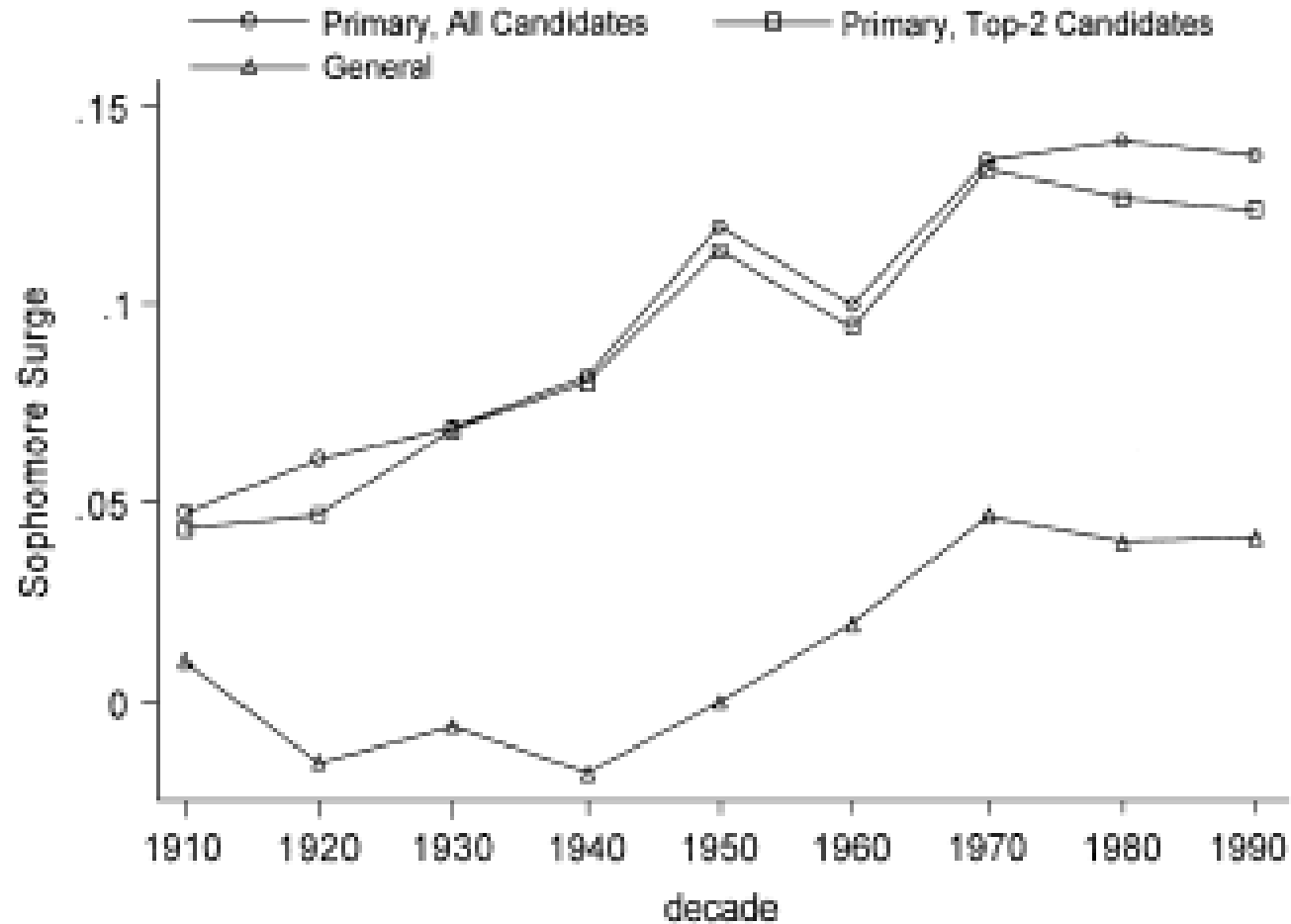
# Incumbents, challengers, and open seat candidates

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

# Incumbency advantage: The Picture



# Incumbency Advantage: Primaries

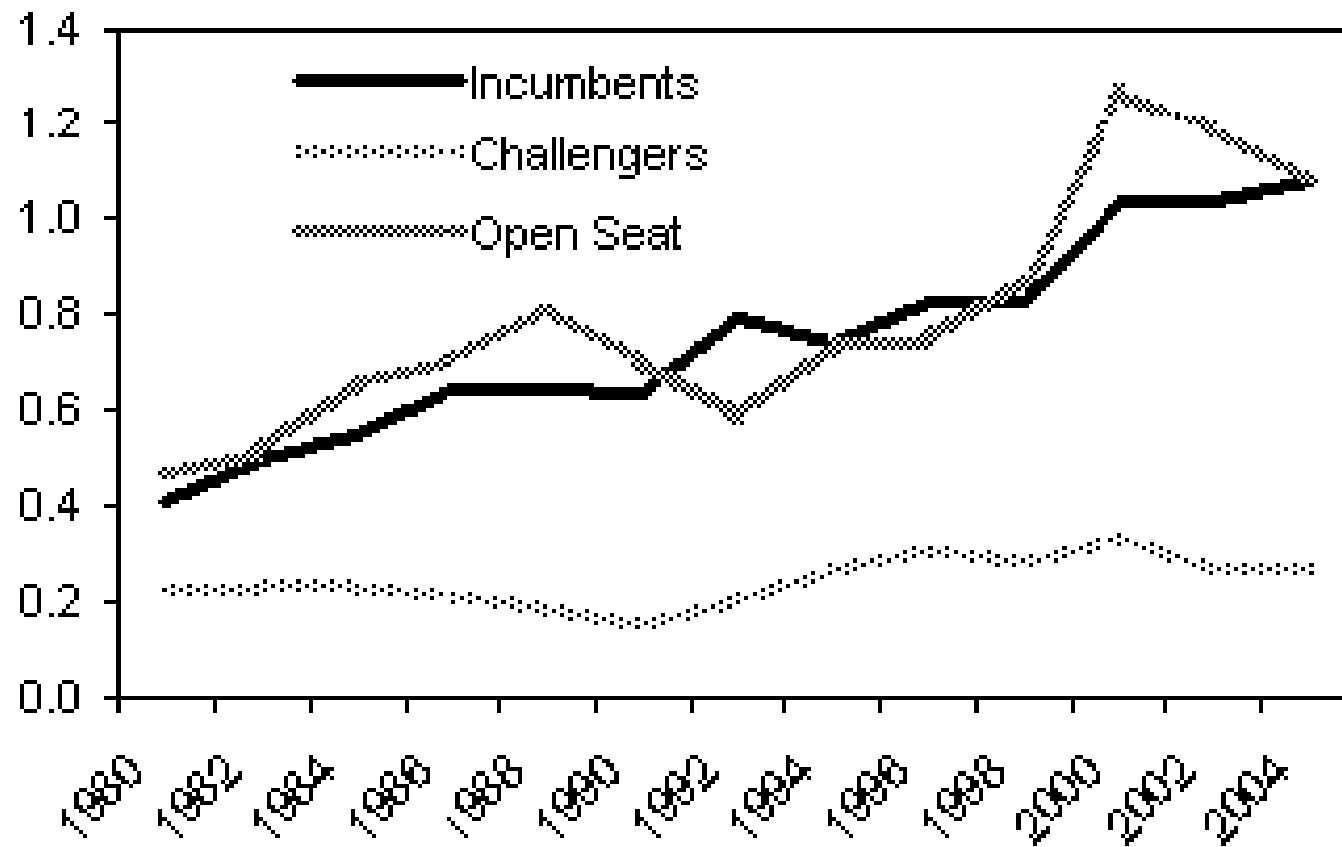


Source: Ansolabehere, et al., 2007, "The incumbency advantage in U.S. House elections, *Electoral Studies*.

# Incumbency advantage

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

# The Incumbency Spending Advantage (Update of Fig. 4.2)



# Candidate Positioning Add-on

