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The effects of negativity on the political landscape at the state level

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ABSTRACT

The attention paid to immigration since September 11th has become more pronounced. We maintain that the increases in attention are due to a significant critical juncture: the Republican Party Platform of 2004 and President Bush's subsequent reelection. The rhetoric has become more negative and exclusive, creating a pervasive immigrant narrative. What are the ramifications, if any, of this shift in discourse from such central political figures for immigrants? Attempts to change immigration policy, despite the rhetoric, have not materialized nationally. President Bush recognized the limitations of 'going public' and, instead, took his immigration policy proposals to state legislatures, wherein ideological preferences are more closely aligned, despite differences in party. We have contributed to the discussion by examining the effects of negative rhetoric on the political landscape at the state level during the G.W. Bush Administration. We question whether negative immigration narratives in presidential rhetoric shape policies relating to immigration at the state level? We provide results that suggest presidential rhetoric can increase negative-effects legislation in states, limiting immigrant participation in civic life.

INTRODUCTION

The discussion of immigration policy in presidential rhetoric went from relative obscurity to a major agenda item for President George W. Bush after September 11, 2001. This catastrophic event altered the conversation about immigration, particularly with regard to the tone of policy discussions. We think the increases in attention and the negative narratives engendered a significant critical juncture in American politics: the *Republican Party Platform of 2004* and President Bush's subsequent reelection. We maintain that these political phenomena are the culmination of a series of actions that strategically led to merging immigration policy, particularly terrorism and illegality, together in the same policy conversation.[i] For instance, the *2000 Republican Party Platform*'s language is positive towards immigration, particularly immigration that has occurred in the past. The platform makes a point of discussing how important immigrants have been for the U.S., civic life, and the political landscape.

The *2004 Republican Party Platform*, however, begins right away with a discussion of how immigration policy is now about connecting border security, terrorism, and immigration as a cohesive solution to an imminent threat from outsiders. The platform calls for institutional and procedural changes to immigration policy, changes that define many immigrants as criminals and terrorists. In fact, the 2004 platform has its own section about border security and the Administration's response and efforts to keep out 'illegals' who might harm 'our' way of life, whether that be through terrorism, taking jobs from Americans, or punishing those that help immigrants get across the border illegally (Peters & Woolley, 2013).

The change in language and tone is indicative of where the policy conversation has gone since 9/11. Presidential rhetoric has increasingly become negative when discussing immigration, creating a pervasive negative immigrant narrative in political discourse (Arthur & Woods, 2013).

For instance, the first time President Bush mentions immigration (February 2001) is in reference to a visit to Mexico and the positive relationship he wants to establish. Bush's first policy discussion of immigration (May 2001), however, is in the form of a letter to Congressional Leaders wherein he wants to extend a timeline for immigrants to obtain legal status while remaining in the U.S. Before September 11, 2001, he says,

> "Immigration is not a problem to be solved. It is a sign of a confident and successful nation. And people who seek to make America their home should be met in that spirit by representatives of our Government. New Arrivals should be greeted not with suspicion and resentment but with openness and courtesy."

What are the ramifications, if any, of this shift in discourse from such a central political figure as the president, the leader of a major political party and former governor of Texas, a border state? Bush attempts to change immigration policy, despite the attention and rhetoric, did not materialize at the national level in any substantive policy. It was clear from the beginning of his presidency that congressional fears of 'amnesty' for 'illegals' would eradicate any comprehensive immigration reform plan, thwarted by both the Democrats and Republicans. President Bush recognized his limited 'going public' influence with Congress and, instead, took his immigration policy proposals to 'local' constituencies (Kernell, 2007; Cohen, 2010; Eshbaugh-Soha & Peake, 2006). Having just won a presidential election, there is little doubt that he thought he could utilize his political capital at the local and district level, wherein ideological preferences are more closely aligned, to accomplish immigration policy reform (Eshbaugh-Soha & Peake, 2006).

We examine the effects of the negative discourse on the political landscape at the state level and maintain that the changes in the immigration policy behavior of state legislatures can be measured as a reaction to the rhetoric of President G.W. Bush. Given the dramatic increases in legislative action at the state level and the lack of reform at the federal level, we sought an

answer to whether the negative immigrant narrative in presidential rhetoric has created negative effects for immigrants in state legislative actions (NCSL, 2013). Since 2005 states have increased their 'immigration' activities from 300 proposed bills to 1,305 in 2008. More specifically, we argue that the negative presidential rhetoric has substantively influenced the political landscape for immigrants and immigration policy in the United States. This analysis allows us to understand how the negativity surrounding immigration, from a political elite, shapes the policies in state legislation.

Therefore, this study, using multi-method analyses, ascertains the effect and the extent to which the president's use of negative immigration narratives shape the frequency of negative effects immigration legislation at the state level. We begin the article by discussing the pertinent literature on framing and issue definition in presidential rhetoric and how it is important for changing the political outcomes. We then move to explaining the political narratives that President Bush used to discuss immigration and how acting as an entrepreneur enabled him to promote a consistent message wherein negative narratives define immigration policy (Eshbaugh-Soha, 2006). Next, we consider the statistical model used to determine the effects of the presidential rhetoric on state legislation. We then interpret the substantive effects with a discussion of their implications.

PRESIDENTIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Policy-makers look for indicators of a problem, usually in the sense of the national mood, and then interpret them so that a call for action is warranted (Kingdon, 1995). The indicators, however, that call for action usually involve a crises such as 9/11. There can exist a unique time when all necessary political elements come together at critical times to open a policy window that offers a solution to a problem, regardless of whether the solution is seeking a problem or

vise versa, while the political atmosphere provides a ripe environment for policy change (Kingdon, 1995; Cohen, March, & Olsen, 1972). The crisis-like element allows for defining the problem in a way that accompanies the situation, namely that changes to immigration will help combat terrorism.[ii] As evidenced from approval ratings near 90%, the Administration's policy actions regarding 'terrorism' enabled the public to see President Bush as an effective and strong leader in control of combating terrorism and keeping America safe from its 'enemies' (Maggio, 2007). The terrorist attacks of 9/11 and Congress' deference to President Bush provided an opportunity to connect numerous public policies such as education, employment, healthcare, law enforcement, and voting, to the notion of terrorism by using language that positioned immigration and immigrants as a threat to an American equilibrium; it framed immigrants dichotomously in an "us" verses "them" construct (Feldman & Stenner, 1997; Lavine, Lodge, & Freitas, 2005; Jackson & Esses, 2000; Dovidio & Esses, 2001).

Wanting the same deference in domestic policy, President Bush primes his local audiences by positioning his strong status and perception alongside immigration, which is connected to other policies such as education, employment, healthcare, law enforcement, and voting by state legislatures (Druckman & Holmes, 2004). Connecting immigration to terrorism provides a cognitive shortcut for the audience and allows them to trust President Bush's immigration perspective. It is interesting to note that, against conventional research findings[iii], President Bush uses the most negative immigration frames when his approval ratings are the highest, the time when he needed to be the least negative — no campaign or midterm election (Arthur & Woods, 2013). Bush's average approval rating for 2001 was an unprecedented 74% and the 72% of his immigration rhetoric was negative, the politically strongest time in his presidency. Moreover, 69% of his immigration rhetoric was negative the year after winning a

second term, a year of substantial political capital (Light, 1999). Comparatively, you can look at President Clinton's immigration rhetoric after winning the 1996 election and after the 1998 midterm election. During his campaign in 1996, the negative rhetoric topped 70%. However, after 1998 the negativity drops to around 8% (Arthur & Woods, 2013). President Bush, however, utilized his popularity with the public during the months after 9/11 and his second presidential election victory to bring credence to his leadership of immigration policy.

Dynamic policy change, however, is predicated on an entrepreneur who utilizes the opportunity to frame the policy issue in a way that allows for change to occur (Baumgartner & Jones, 1993). The president's entrepreneurial actions provide him with the most potential to threaten the policy image held by the extant political landscape (Sheingate, 2003). Because of the nature of Bush's position, his use of the bully pulpit, and the attention paid to his rhetoric as well as his travel schedule, President Bush utilized his strong public perception to create opportunity in other areas by priming the political environment that most closely assented to his political ideology (Cohen, 2010; Sheingate, 2003; Wood, 2007). For instance, President Bush was given nearly complete deference in foreign policy, by Congress and the public, because of how he was seen handling the terrorist attacks. Together, these aspects are able to influence the ideas state legislatures have regarding how to deal with immigration.

H1:
There will be a significant increase in the passage of negative effects legislation the more often the president uses negative immigration rhetoric.

H2:
In those states that President Bush garnered a high vote share in the 2004 Presidential Election, there will be a significant increase in the passage of negative effects legislation.

H3:
President Bush's approval rating will predict a significant increase in the passage of negative effects legislation.

The entrepreneurial president constructs a narrative of immigrants and immigration policy with the hopes of having the audience assent to the entrepreneur's immigration policy image as constructed through rhetorical cognitive shortcuts (Eshbaugh-Soha, 2006, 2005). This way, the major actors can understand the consequences from the corresponding policy implications for each rhetorically constructed reality and begin to understand immigration policy as the entrepreneur describes it. In other words, keeping out 'illegal' immigrants is tantamount to keeping out 'terrorists' (Golash-Boza, 2012, 2012, 2009).

The entrepreneur is most effective when the narrative framework resonates with the audience. This process allows for the framer to find a connection, through policy core beliefs, to the deep core beliefs of those involved—transcending the standard party-line ideology. Connecting immigrants and immigration policy to the deep core beliefs of various constituents provides more ammunition for the president to convince his audience that his narrative of immigration policy provides the most accurate description of how immigrants relate to the American political landscape and civic life (Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 1993; Sheingate, 2003).

Essentially, President Bush's rhetoric regarding terrorism has inextricably linked immigration policy together. From previous speeches, President Bush was not as concerned with immigration policy prior to 9/11 as he was after the attack; he was certainly not overly negative regarding immigrants and immigration. For instance, he mentioned immigration 19 times before 9/11, with no indication that terrorism and immigration were connected. After 9/11, he mentions immigration and terrorism together as policy as early as September 25, 2001 (Arthur & Woods, 2013; Peters & Woolley, 2013). Moreover, he proposes the largest bureaucratic reorganization since the *Department of Defense*, as early as October 8, 2001, which places the *Department of*

Immigration and Naturalization Services under the new agency, *The Department of Homeland Security* (Canes-Wrone, 2006). This new reorganization changed the mission statement of the agency to one of terrorism management, mitigation, and prevention.

Evidenced from the changes in administrative governance and the tone of the policy discussion, the political rhetoric indicates an attempt to limit immigrant participation in American life, foster a fear of those 'not American,' and treat immigrants as a threat to an idealized equilibrium (Woods & Arthur, 2013; Golash-Boza, 2009; Segovia & Defever, 2010). September 11th creates the perfect policy window for the president to shift attention, with notions of fear and exclusiveness, from a salient topic such as terrorism onto an unrelated policy such as immigration (Kingdon, 1995).

Associating immigration and immigrants with 'unAmerican' activities more closely resonates with those states wherein President Bush's electoral vote-share was high. President Bush capitalized on the sentiments of the political environment of these states by taking his message to the places where he thought he could influence the political landscape the most (Cohen, 2010). It is clearly important for the president to take his message to the constituency that is most receptive of his message that links immigration to national security, namely, the states that are more likely to enact negative effects immigration legislation (Arthur & Woods, 2013; Eshbaugh-Soha, 2010; Golash-Boza, 2012, 2012, 2009).

In fact, we maintain that the political party ideology of the aforementioned state legislatures will not significantly influence the probability of negative effects immigration legislation becoming law. In the political environment wherein President Bush takes his message, members of either major party should be more responsive to the president's negative narratives regarding immigration. More interestingly, however, is the fact that President Bush

choose to take his message to these states, particularly states that have high proportions of opposing party members.

It is too rudimentary to categorize the Democrats and Republicans from these states as tantamount to a simplistic comparison between 'liberal' and 'conservative' on immigration policy. Their ideology should not be thought of merely as Democrats supporting Democratic Presidents and Republicans supporting Republican presidents (Shor & McCarty, 2011). The ideology, rather, must be seen as more of a spectrum that varies considerably from state to state (Shor, Berry, & McCarty, 2010). The political ideology from many 'Democrats' in state legislatures from the South and the West will closely align with President Bush's agenda because anti-terrorism policy is salient and popular despite party ideology. In other words, there is a significant difference between state Democrats in Massachusetts and state Democrats in Texas or West Virginia.

H4:
Partisan party ideology is not a significant predictor in the difference in the frequency of legislation that detrimentally impacts immigrants in southern or western state legislatures.

H5:
Partisan party ideology is not a significant predictor in whether or not southern governors support legislation that detrimentally impacts immigrants in the south.

H6:
The number of individual Democrats or Republicans in Southern or Western State Legislatures is not a significant predictor in the difference in the frequency of legislation that detrimentally impacts immigrants.

NEGATIVE IMMIGRATION NARRATIVES

We argue that the defined problem for the immigration conversation is more of an expressive argument, one that supersedes the rational and instrumental, particularly when one considers the positive economical and cultural additions to society immigrants bring (Rochefort & Cobb, 1994; Golash-Boza, 2012). Moreover, many of the terrorists involved in 9/11

immigrated to the U.S. legally. The president discussed immigration within an expressive framework to appeal to the sentiments of his constituencies. In fact, the rhetoric is increasingly framed within negative narratives about legal status, crime, and terrorism, despite the fact that the opposite is often true (NCSL; Segovia & Defever, 2010; Esses, Dovidio, & Hodson 2002 ; Arthur & Woods, 2013).

We determined that there are three ubiquitous negative immigration frames that President G.W. Bush used in constructing the narrative of immigration policy (See Figure 1). This constructed narrative typology was ascertained from presidential speeches (2005-2008) regarding immigration (Woods & Arthur, 2013). It consists of a political narrative, which is intended to provide a framework for the audience to perceive the issue of immigration policy. The rhetorical frames are lenses by which constituents build support. In other words, the narratives or story-lines used to discuss immigration policy matter for those that are exposed to the rhetoric (Polletta & Ho, 2006). There are keywords or phrases used that have the power to conjure-up larger issues that are important to the audience (Polletta & Ho, 2006). These are intentional and designed to appeal to other constituencies with the hopes of attaching the issue of immigration to other issues of importance such as illegality, criminality, and terrorism (See Table 1).

[Figure 1 about here]

The first narrative is ascertained from statements regarding the legal status of immigrants. The 'illegality' frame constructs a dichotomous perception of immigration and immigrants, creating a 'unAmerican' or 'outsider' image of immigrants. This calls into question their legitimate standing in the U.S., which then questions their access to 'our' civic life (Golash-Boza, 2009). The second narrative associates immigrants and immigration with crime. This

narrative frames immigrants as the impetus for the increases in drug usage, violent crimes, or property theft throughout communities. The 'criminality' frame engenders a consciousness of immigrants as deleterious to communities and perpetrators of American-disequilibrium. The third narrative associates immigrants with terrorists and immigration with the notion of terrorist-related border security. This framework connects public sentiment regarding the necessity for safety with an image of immigrants as untrustworthy and a threat to national security (Golash-Boza, 2012, 2009).[iv]

[Table 1 about here]

EMPIRICAL DESIGN

We performed an analysis of the impact of the negative immigration rhetoric of President G.W. Bush on policies in state legislation. We selected these years of the Bush Administration for multiple reasons: (1) the *Republican Party Platform of 2004*, (2) President Bush's subsequent reelection, (3) the increase in negative immigration narratives in presidential rhetoric, (4) the dramatic increase in proposed immigration legislation in state legislatures. We used the aforementioned information to ascertain answers to a few pressing questions relating to immigration rhetoric and how it shapes the political landscape at the state level. This analysis aided in ascertaining how the use of presidential immigration rhetoric facilitated in the transformation of the political discussions surrounding immigration.

Essentially, we find the effect of the president's negative immigration rhetoric (independent variable) on state actions on immigration policy (dependent variable). We used a *Logistic Regression Analysis* to determine the probability of increased state reactions to presidential immigration rhetoric. The unit of analysis consisted of each piece of immigration legislation that was enacted into state law from 2005 through 2008 and the presidential rhetoric

was aggregated by year. Following the hypotheses, we created a model (**M1** = the effect of negative rhetoric on the enaction of state legislation) to test the aforementioned relationship. We used multiple databases to gather the data, namely the *American Presidency Project* for presidential speeches and the *National Conference of State Legislatures* (*NCSL*) for immigration legislation. The data from each source was recoded to match the model.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

We used the *American Presidency Project* to determine the presidential immigration rhetoric from January 20th, 2005 through December 31st, 2008; it is an online database of the *Public Papers of the President*. We used a detailed codebook to facilitate in the human coding and the intercoder reliability[v] of the speeches (Arthur & Woods, 2013; Barrett, 2005; Barrett, 2004; Wood, 2007; Cameron, 2000). We ascertained the negative immigration narratives from 183 presidential speeches, which gave us 637 recording units. President Bush may mention immigration multiple times during a speech and use the different narratives many times in each speech. Rather than determining one framework per speech, we treated each mention of immigration as a coding trigger and broke each speech into as many recording units as possible (Arthur & Woods, 2013). In the instances wherein he used two or more narratives per mention of immigration, we took the negative narrative that was closest to the term 'immigration' and coded it according to our rubric (Arthur & Woods, 2013). We first dichotomized every instance of the word 'immigration' as whether or not it was negative, wherein '0' identifies a lack of any negative frame and '1' when any negative frame was present.[vi]

Along with the presidential immigration rhetoric, seven variables were coded including:
- whether at least one negative narrative was present
  (1 = present; 0 = not present)
- the geographical area wherein the speech was given

(1 = Northeast; 2 = Southeast; 3 = Midwest; 4 = West; 5 = Southwest; 6 = Outside of the U.S.)
- whether the speech was given in a state that bordered Mexico
  (1 = yes; 0 = no)
- Chamber Control in State (House: 1 = Democrat; 2 = Republican) & (Senate: 1 = Democrat; 2 = Republican)
- Party Control in State Governorship
  (1 = Democrat; 2 = Republican)
- the average approval rating of the president until the negative effects legislation is enacted (expressed as a percentage = 0 % to 100%)
- the vote share the president received in the state enacting legislation (expressed as a percentage = 0 % to 100%)

DEPENDENT VARIABLES

For the dependent variable, we identified all the state actions addressing immigration policy from 2005 through 2008. In other words, we ascertain all legislation in the states that impacts immigrants or the immigration system. In order to accomplish this, we used the *National Conference of State Legislatures* (NCSL) database within their *Immigration Policy Project*. This gave us 569 state actions regarding immigration, which gave us 220 negative effects actions. We were able to search the immigration policy reports for each year to identify the pertinent state immigration legislation and code it appropriately.

The state legislation that produces negative outcomes for immigrants was determined by the legislation's intended effect. We established that legislation that differentiates immigrant participation from citizen participation by limiting immigrant participation is legislation that produces negative outcomes for immigrants. This classification would include legislation that forces immigrants to carry photo identification, restrict their work privileges, or determine their in-state tuition eligibility as well as health care benefits, bail determinations and law enforcement officer responsibilities, or voter registration restrictions.

FINDINGS/DISCUSSION

This analysis was conducted to determine whether the immigration narratives in
presidential rhetoric influence the political environment pertaining to immigrants at the state
level. The results suggest that the effect of negative rhetoric on the actions of state legislatures is
noteworthy. We are not stating that there is a causal link between negative immigration
narratives and legislative outcomes, but rather we maintain, through our results, that there is an
impact on how states deal with immigration the more often presidents discuss immigration
negatively. For **M1**, an analysis offered us the predicted probabilities and odds ratios for a
change in the dependent variable (negative effects immigration legislation) in the 565 units of
analysis. The log likelihood and the χ^2 values were highly significant. Table 2 presents the odds
ratios, coefficients, and standard errors as well as the measures of significance for the
aforementioned regressions.

NEGATIVE RHETORIC AND NEGATIVE EFFECTS LEGISLATION (M1)

The model (**M1**) is mostly in-line with the hypotheses; the more often the president uses
negative immigration rhetoric, states are more likely to enact negative effects immigration
legislation (*NEIL*). To express this, we used the following regression:

$$\text{PR}(NEIL_{i,t} = 1 \text{ or } 0) =$$
$$\alpha + \phi N\textit{umber of Negative Immigration Narratives} + \gamma \textit{Presidential Influence}_{it} +$$
$$\gamma \textit{Legislature Party Ideology}_{i,t} + \gamma \textit{Governmental Control}_{i,t} + \beta\hat{}_1 \textit{ Hispanic}$$
$$\textit{Population Growth}_{i,t} + \beta\hat{}_2 \textit{ Unemployment}_{i,t} + \hat{e}_{i,t} \qquad \textbf{\textit{(M1)}}$$

The specification controls for the $NEIL_{it}$, wherein the $_i$ represents a dichotomous
response (1 = negative effects legislation & 0 = no negative effects) probability for each piece of
legislation that was enacted within the time period $_t$ (2005-2008). Accordingly, we regressed the
$NEIL_{it}$ on the number of negative immigration statements made by the president prior to the

enaction of legislation, a vector of different measures of presidential influence ($\hat{\beta}_1$ *Average*

Presidential Approval + $\hat{\beta}_2$ *Presidential Vote Share in each respective state*), a vector of the

political ideology of each state legislature ($\hat{\beta}_1$ *Number of House Democrats in each respective*

state + $\hat{\beta}_2$ *Number of House Republicans in each respective state*), a vector of party control in

the state legislatures ($\hat{\beta}_1$ *House/Assembly controlled by Democrats or Republicans* + $\hat{\beta}_2$ *State*

Senate controlled by Democrats or Republicans + $\hat{\beta}_3$ *Governorship controlled by Democrats* +

$\hat{\beta}_4$ *Governorships controlled by Republicans*), and two control variables — (1) a measure of

the U.S. Census population growth for Hispanics from 2000 to 2010 in each respective state (2) a

measure of the unemployment rate.

[Table 2 about here]

Pertaining to **H1**, the results suggest that framing immigration negatively enables the

president to set the agenda at the state level and, more importantly, influence the political

environment regarding immigration (Morone, 1998; Baumgartner & Jones, 1993). The

president's rhetoric plays a vital role in the definition of immigration, particularly in constructing

the narratives by which the public understands immigration and immigrants (Maggio, 2007). The

power to expand and mobilize various constituencies is engendered through President Bush's

negative rhetoric (Neustadt, 1991). As illustrated by Figure 2, the more often President Bush

mentions immigration negatively, the more likely states will enact legislation that impacts

immigrants detrimentally. In fact, each additional negative immigration narrative the president

uses increases the odds that a state will produce legislation that limits an immigrant's

participation in civic life by a factor of 1.011.

[Figure 2 about here]

With regard to **H2**[vii], there was a significant increase in the passage of negative effects legislation in the states wherein President Bush garnered a high vote share in the 2004 Presidential Election. In fact, for each percentage point increase in his vote share in each respective state, the probability that the legislature would enact negative-effects immigration legislation increased by a factor of 1.11 (See Table 2). It is interesting to note, however, that nearly 64% of all negative effects immigration legislation was enacted in states in the South or the West. President Bush used 212 total negative narratives while speaking in the South (95) and the West (117), while only using 50 negative narratives while in the Northeast (24) and the Midwest (26) (Arthur & Woods, 2013).

President Bush capitalized on the sentiments of this political environment, particularly with those in both political parties that are ideologically similar to his perspective, by taking the negative immigration message where he knew it would resonate the most (Cohen, 2010). As it pertains to hypotheses 4 through 6, we questioned whether party had anything to due with his decision. In order to ascertain whether or not the increase in negative-effects immigration legislation was due to Republican legislators toeing the party line, we performed multiple separate assessments using Shor and McCarty's (2011) replication data for their seminal work on the ideological mapping of American Legislatures. There was no indication that Shor and McCarty's (2011) data on 'ideal points' were significant predictors of negative effects legislation when considering strict dichotomies of party. However, the ideology that predicts negative effects legislation in 'Bush-friendly' states is not party specific, but rather transcends party. In fact, the Democrats in state legislatures play a major role in the enaction of negative-effects immigration legislation. For instance, when the Democrats control the State Senate, the

probability increases by a factor of 2.48. More importantly, when the governorship is occupied by a Democrat the probability increases by a factor of 2.001.

The results indicate that negative-effects immigration legislation is more likely to occur in states with Democrat Governors and Democrat controlled State Senates. This is interesting to note due to the fact that a common perception is that the Republican Party is contrary towards immigration reform and the Democratic Party is friendlier towards this policy change. Our results, however, suggest that Democrats are significantly involved in the creation of negative-effects legislation. We could speculate on why the Democrats are doing this: compromise in the bill, constituent advocacy, or even local necessity. The important point to consider, however, is that their ideology aligns more closely with the ideology of President Bush rather than the Democrats in the North.

CONCLUSIONS

Previous research has indicated that there is a change in the language and tone of political rhetoric regarding immigration since 9/11 (Woods & Arthur, 2014; Arthur & Woods, 2013; Beasley, 2006). The rhetoric has become more negative and exclusive, creating a pervasive immigrant narrative. What are the ramifications, if any, of this shift in discourse from such central political figures? We have contributed to that discussion in a more detailed capacity by examining the effects of that rhetoric on the political environment of the states. Our results indicate that the rhetoric that transpires during the political process is essential to how policies are formulated, particularly regarding such a salient and topical policy like immigration (Fontana, Nederman, & Remer, 2004). President Bush was successful in constructing the narrative framework by which to see immigration policy; the rhetorically constructed realities ('illegals' who might harm 'our' way of life, whether that be through terrorism, or crime)

significantly contribute to the conversation in state legislatures, the solutions they employ, and the alternatives they consider. Our results indicate that the language constructs a narrative or story-line that determines the political actions that follow (Hinds & Windt, 1991; Green, 1987).

Presidents have become aware of the fact that one individual speech does not do much, if anything, to persuade the political process towards their agenda (Edwards, 2003). Presidents, however, have adapted their strategies to accommodate this fact. Particularly, they have more often used their travel schedule to influence the political process; the idea is that local constituencies will more likely support their policies and microcosmically influence, incrementally, topical policies (Eshbaugh-Soha, 2010; Cohen, 2010; Eshbaugh-Soha & Peake, 2008). Scholars have suggested that presidential speeches, aggregated, create a consistent message that engenders a political environment that allows them to influence salient policies (Eshbaugh-Soha, 2006; Wood, 2007). In other words, the speeches, when aggregated, can create responses and attention that major, individual, televised speeches cannot accomplish. We have contributed to this discussion regarding presidential rhetoric as an agenda setting mechanism of power and persuasion (Neustadt, 1991). As our results indicate, President Bush was able to influence the political discourse and legislative outcomes regarding immigration by constructing a consistent immigrant narrative, one that portrays immigrants and the immigration process as foreign to American civic life.

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Figure 1.
Negative Narratives in President G.W. Bush's Immigration Rhetoric
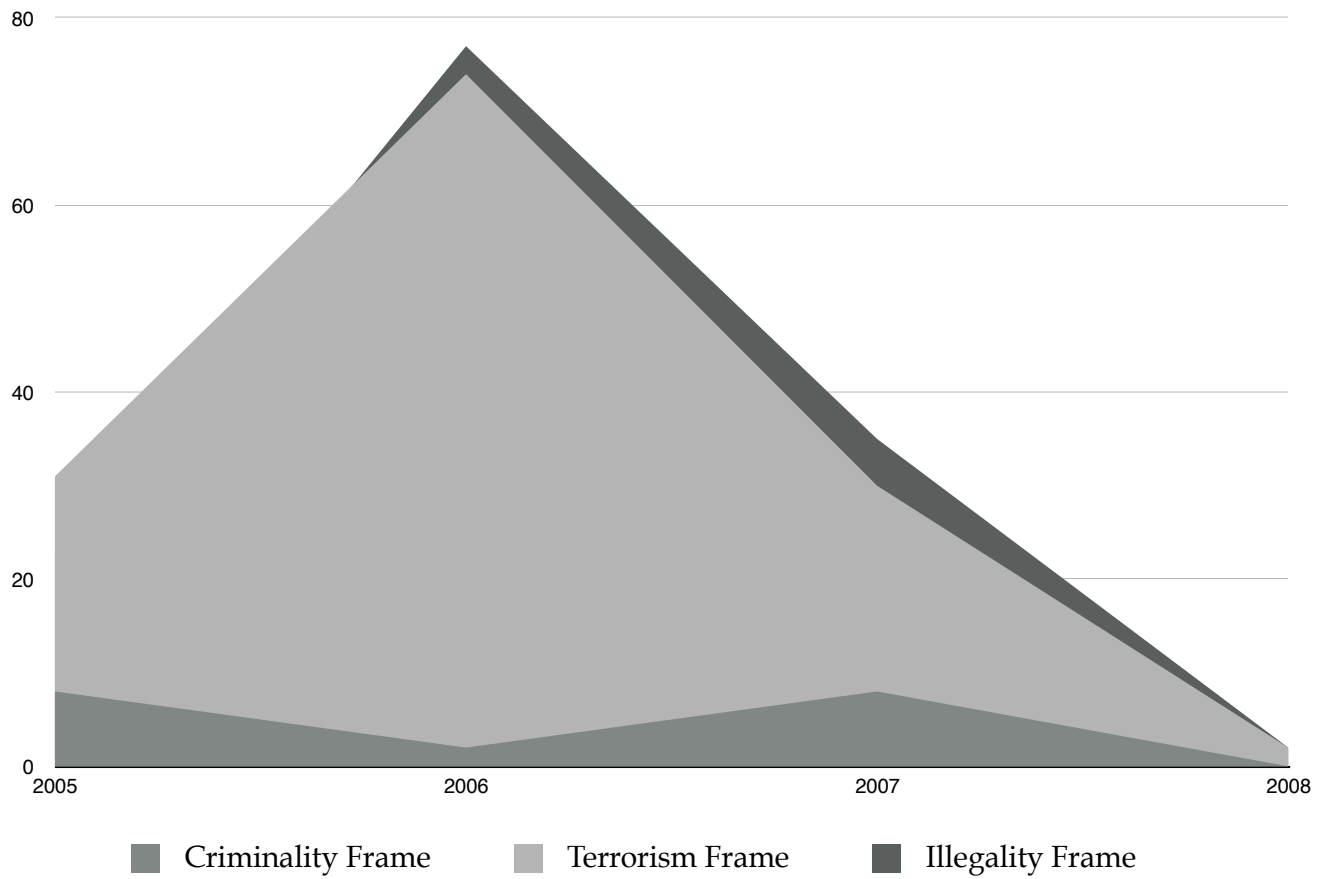
Table 1.
President G.W. Bush's Negative Immigration Narratives

	Extracted speeches found in the *American Presidency Project*
02/2/2005	It is time for an immigration policy that permits temporary-guest workers to fill jobs Americans will not take, that rejects amnesty, that tells us who is entering and leaving our country, and that closes the border to drug dealers and terrorists.
11/28/2005	Illegal immigration puts pressure on our schools and hospitals; I understand that. I understand it strains the resources needed for law enforcement and emergency services. And the vicious human strugglers—smugglers and gangs that bring illegal immigrants across the border also bring crime to our neighborhoods and danger to the highways.
01/11/2006	Let me talk about immigration. We have an obligation to enforce our borders. And we do for a lot of reasons. The main reason is security reasons, seems like to me. And security means more than just a terrorist slipping in. It means drugs. The mayor was telling me that there's a lot of crime around the country—he's been studying this—because of drug use.
05/15/2006	First, the United States must secure its borders. This is a basic responsibility of a sovereign nation. It is also an urgent requirement of our national security. Our objective is straightforward: The border should be open to trade and lawful immigration, and shut to illegal immigrants as well as criminals, drug dealers, and terrorists.
06/14/2007	The number of illegal immigrants in our country has continued to grow, and illegal immigration is now supported by criminal enterprises. In other words, there are people who are preying on these folks that are coming to do work that Americans aren't doing.
01/28/2008	America needs to secure our borders, and with your help, my administration is taking steps to do so. We're increasing worksite enforcement, deploying fences and advanced technologies to stop illegal crossings. We've effectively ended the policy of catch-and-release at the border, and by the end of this year, we will have doubled the number of Border Patrol agents.

Figure 2.
States with the most Negative Narratives and the Most Negative-Effects Immigration Legislation

Effect of Negative Immigration Rhetoric on Legislation
(2005 -- 2008)

*M1 (H1 = p > .001)
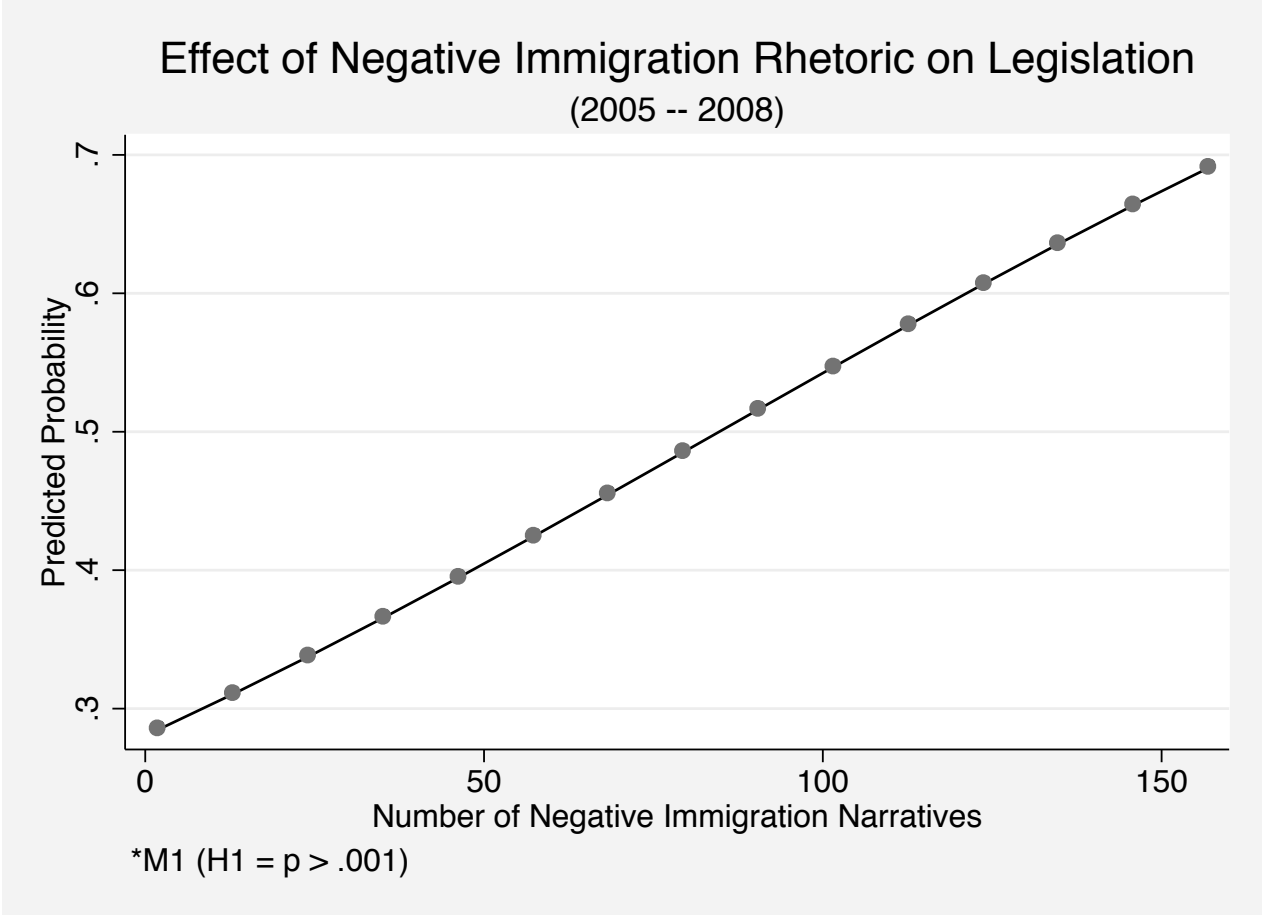
Table 2.
Predicting Negative Effects in State-Level Immigration Legislation

	Dependent Variable: Pr (Success = 1) N = 565			
Log Likelihood - 316.11351			χ^2 = 121.31 (p < .0000)	
	Coefficients	**Odds Ratios**	**p value**	**standard errors**
Negative Frames	.0111	1.011	.001	.0034
Approval Rating	-.0355	.9652	.129	.0233
Vote Share	.1050	1.111	.000	.0199
House Legislators	.0095	1.010	.138	.0064
Senate Legislators	-.0872	.9165	.001	.0261
Party Control Senate	.9083	2.480	.005	.3242
Party Control House	-.3801	.6838	.174	.2793
Party Control Governorship	.6967	2.007	.001	.2081
Unemployment	.2416	1.273	.408	.2917
Hispanic Population Growth	.0061	1.006	.095	.0037

[i] It begins with President Bush's second speech on immigration after 9/11 and continues until the creation of the DHS. *The Immigration and Naturalization Service* was consumed into the *Department of Homeland Security* (DHS). The *Department of Homeland Security* (DHS) was created in January 2003. However, most of the agencies were not transferred to the DHS until March of 2003. We begin collecting presidential immigration rhetoric and state legislation in 2005 to allow for the time for the DHS and the newly named *U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement* agency to adjust to their new responsibilities and mission statements.

[ii] Shannon Gleeson and Tanya Golash-Boza have argued that, "Immigration has become the national security issue of our time." See their July 25, 2013 Op-Ed in *Counter Punch*.

[iii] As Arthur and Woods (2013) have argued, on the aggregate, presidents tend to speak more negatively about immigration when their approval ratings are lower, a 'blame the other' strategy.

[iv] We created a fourth narrative in other research that addresses immigrants as some sort of a threat to the stability of the U.S. economy. It creates a framework wherein immigrants and the immigration system are seen as a credible threat to the economic well-being of the citizenry. Most notably, the threat is manifested in the immigrants' task of taking jobs from 'hard-working Americans.' President G.W.Bush, however, only used this framework four times during his second administration. Moreover, we created another narrative framework that encompassed everything else. We called this category "other" so that it could include the few instances of presidential rhetoric that address immigrants or immigration policy not covered by the four narrative frameworks.

[v] We were concerned with the reliability of coding so we utilized the standard practices for inter-coder agreement tests. We tested each variable using 30 percent of the total database. Agreement spanned from around 85 percent to 100 percent. We also decided to use *Scott's Pi* to correct for any agreements that happened by chance. The variables also spanned from nearly .80 to .95 (Riffe, Lacy & Fico, 2005). We used alpha levels of .80 or higher as the measure of significant reliability (Krippendorff, 1970). These extra measures of reliability resulted in confidence that our coding was appropriate and standardized. To control for any bias in our coding scheme, we employed additional reliability assessments with 12 additional coders. These coders were given minimal training comparatively. These additional tests confirmed our previous reliability. The average percentage of agreement ranged from 92 percent to 98 percent.

[vi] Moreover, we coded the speeches by day and then aggregated them to accommodate each model. For instance, if a piece of immigration legislation was passed on 5/30/2006 we aggregated each negative mention and types of negative narratives from the start of the legislative session until the bill became law. The coding was consistently treated in the same fashion for each variable of presidential rhetoric so that the model was specified correctly.

[vii] As illustrated by Table 2, the president's approval rating does not have a significant impact on immigration legislation as *H3* predicted. Therefore, we have excluded it from the discussion.