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Voting Behavior in the U.S. House of Representatives: What Factors Influence How Elected Officials Vote?

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Voting Behavior in the U.S. House of Representatives
What factors influence how elected officials vote?

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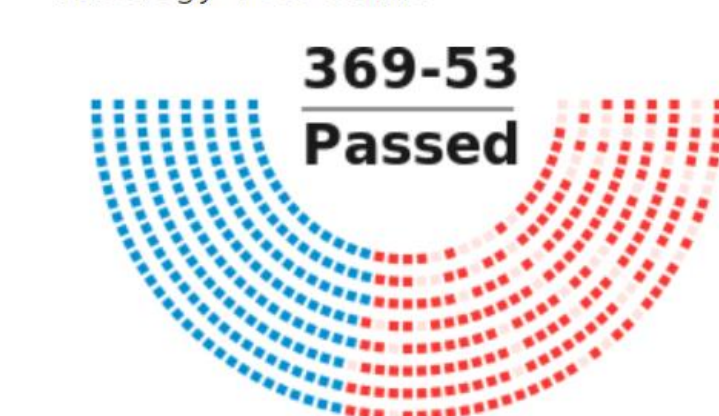
Abstract

What is the relationship between demographic characteristics (age, number of terms or tenure in office, marital status, urban/rural residence, previous military service, education, etc.) and other factors, such as related economic activities of the state from which the representative comes, immigrant populations in their state, etc., of elected U.S. Congressional representatives and the voting decision a representative makes? With sampling from California, Wisconsin, and Texas, we will assess why their members of the House of Representatives voted as they did on S. 1252: Global Food Security Act of 2016.

Hypothesis

Those who voted against the Global Food Security Act of 2016 will be conservative and represent well-to-do constituents.

Ideology Vote Chart

369-53
Passed

Key: R Yea | D Yea | R Nay

Seat position based on our ideology score.

Totals

	All Votes		Republicans	Democrats
Yea	85%	369	186	183
Nay	12%	53	53	0
Not Voting	3%	11	7	4

Passed. 2/3 Required. Source: house.gov.
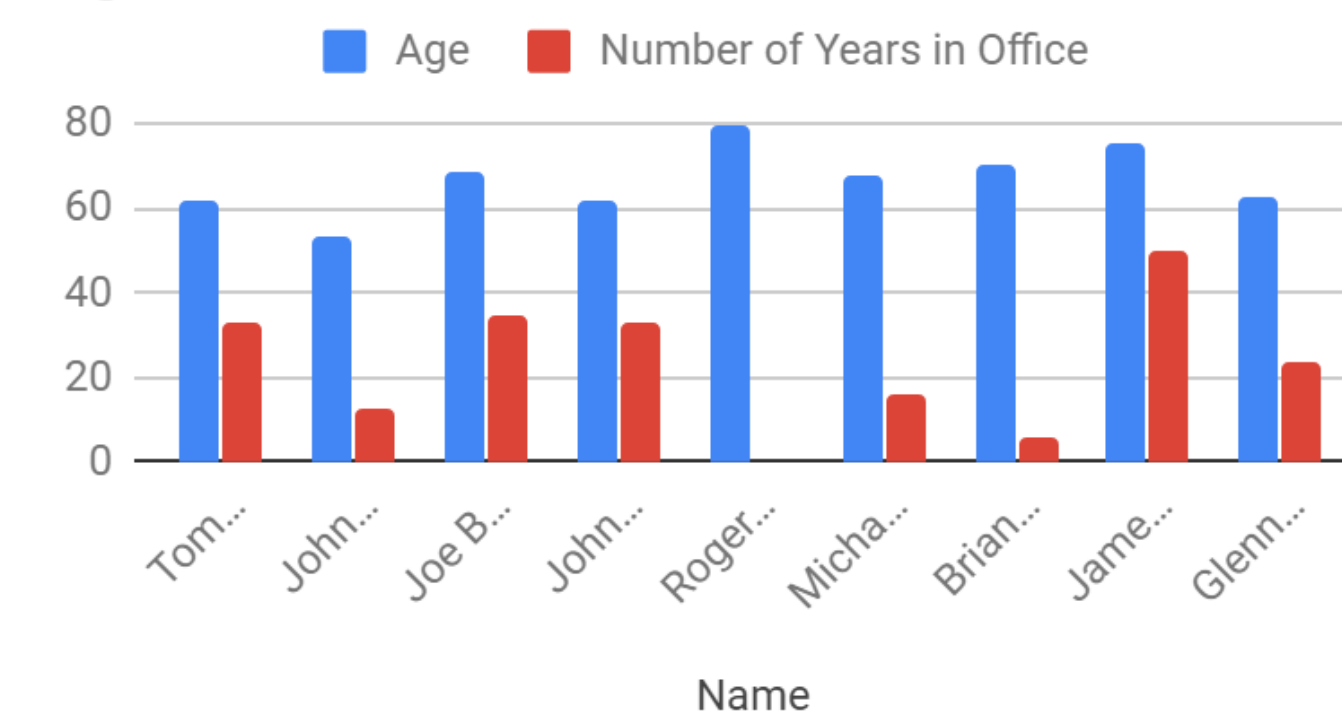
Review of the Literature

Our literature presented many factors to explain different voting behavior, including:
- Personal ideologies
- Party
- Constituents represented
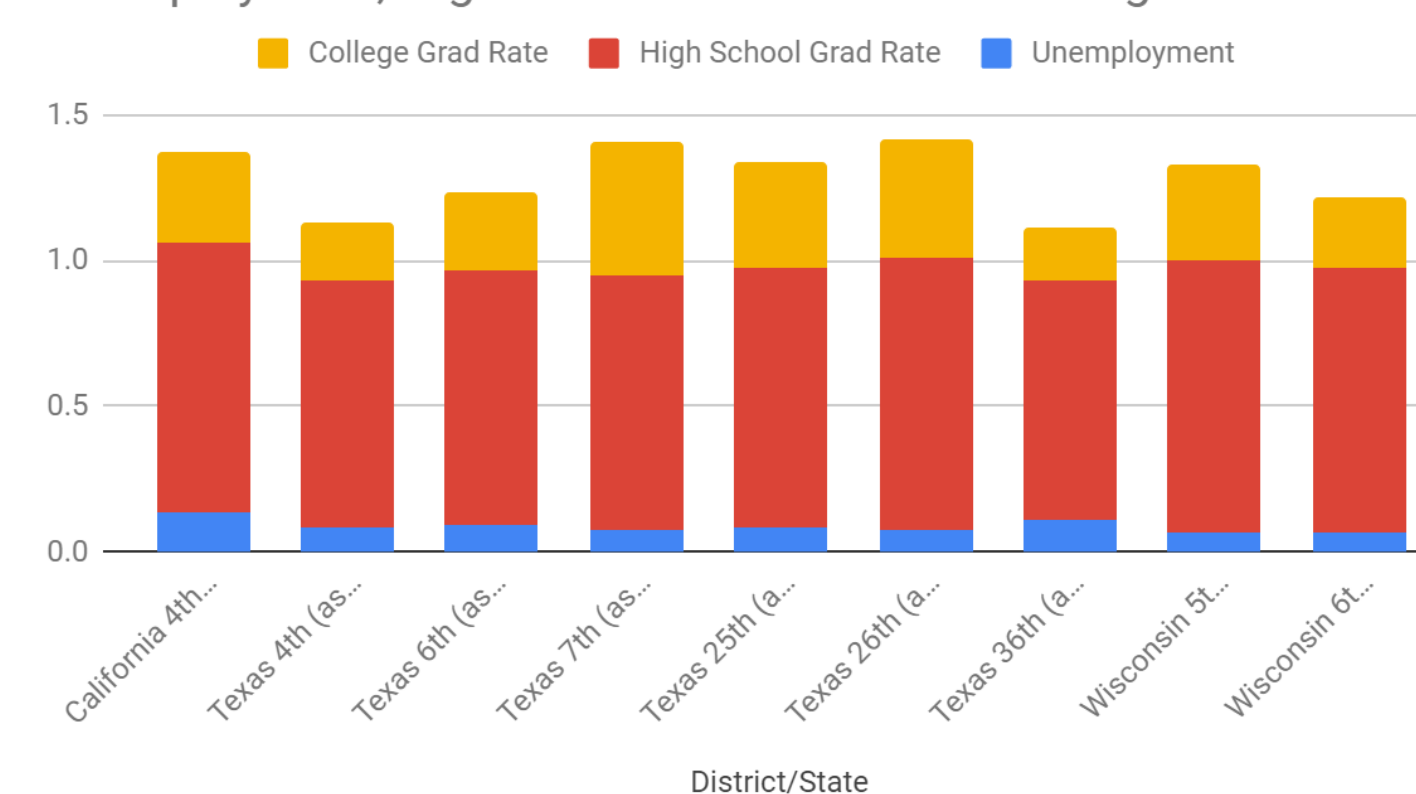- Race
- Gender/Sex
- Religion
- Type of vote

Results

Among the 53 congressmen and women who voted against the bill, all were republican – even though the majority of the voters in favor were republican. Thus, these 53 voted against there party. One congressman from California, six from Texas, and two from Wisconsin were included in the opposing group – all were white males with varying years of experience but averaging around 60 years of age. They all represented low unemployment, high graduation rate constituents whom had a median household income between $45,000.00 and $75,000.00.
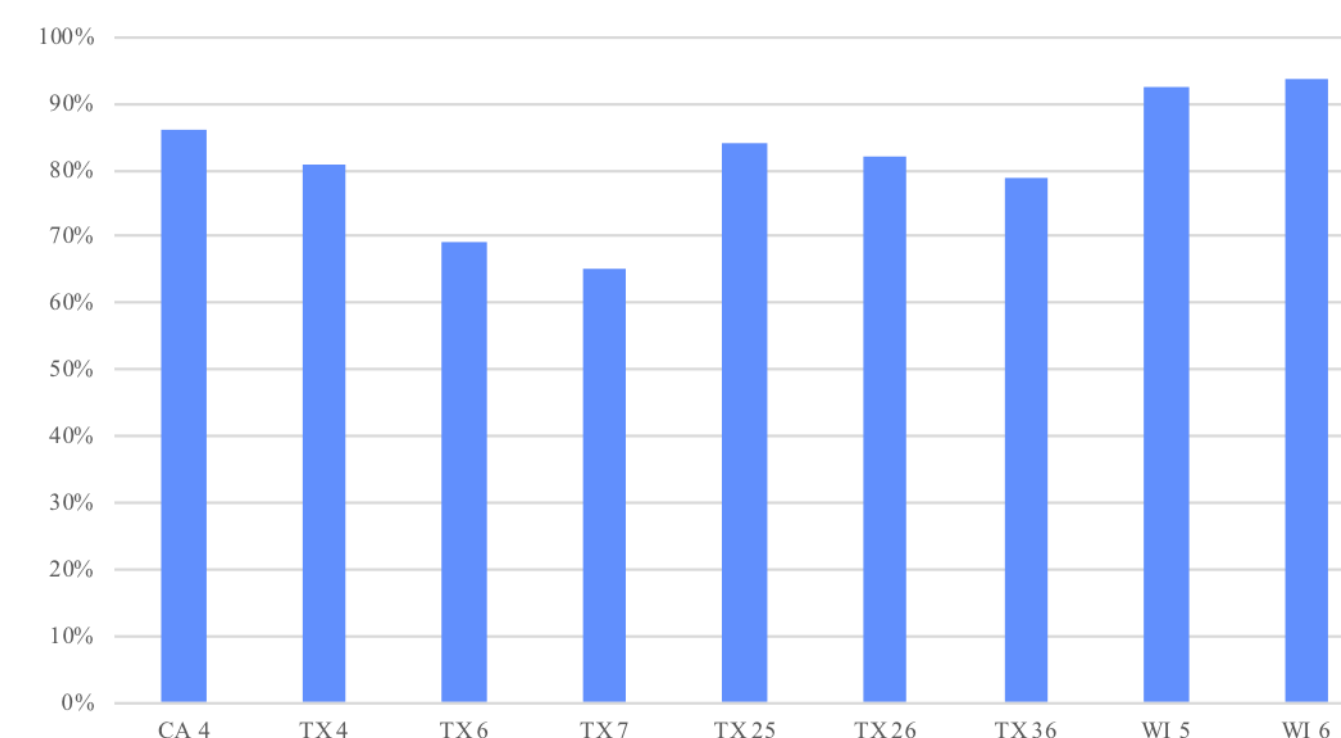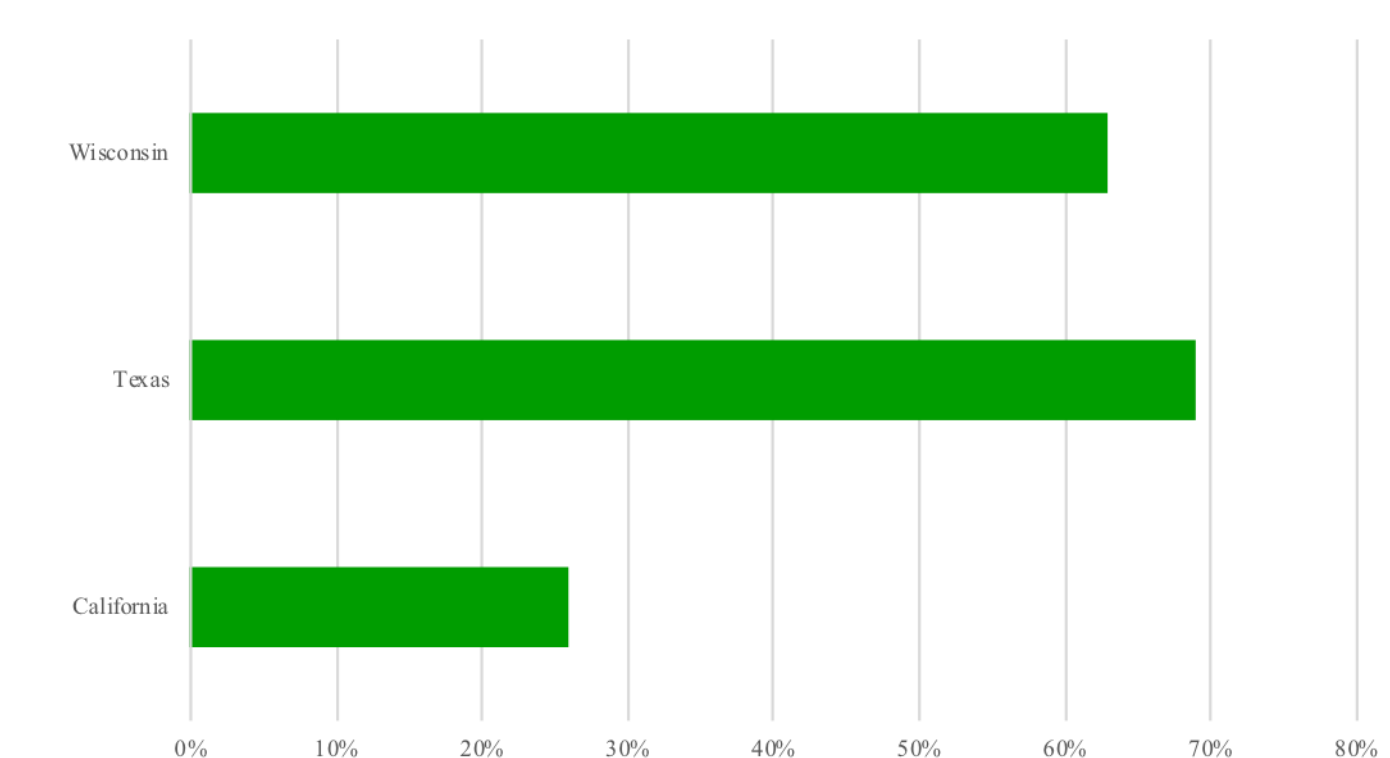
Age and Number of Years in Office

Legend: Age | Number of Years in Office

Unemployment, High School Grad Rate and College Grad Rate

Legend: College Grad Rate | High School Grad Rate | Unemployment

District/State

Percent of Consitituents who are White

CA 4 | TX 4 | TX 6 | TX 7 | TX 25 | TX 26 | TX 36 | WI 5 | WI 6

Percent Republican

Wisconsin | Texas | California

Analysis

The graphs are representative of the data collected from each member of congress and their voting behavior.

Age and number of years in office: 8 out of 9 members either the age of 60 or above. The graph also shows that the majority of congress members have been in office for 20 years or more.

Unemployment, High School Grad Rate, College Grad Rate: The graph shows that between 0.1 to 0.2% of the population are unemployed. 1% to1.2% of the population are high school graduates. 0.9 to 1.4% of the population are college graduates. percent of constituents who are white :64% to 94% of the congress members are white

Percent Republican: California 26% , Texas 69%, Wisconsin 63%

Conclusion

Research shows that representatives from California, Texas and Wisconsin where conservative members who were over the age of sixty. Who represent the higher class of their communities. This refers back to the literature that suggests that the ways in which and the communities people are brought up in have an impact on the ways in which they vote.

Selected Bibliography

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