Sleeping with the enemy? How constituents constrain politicians' behavior towards interest groups*

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Abstract

Do politicians' constituents limit the influence of special interest groups? We investigate how foreign countries' reputations affect U.S. politicians' behavior toward international interest groups. Using novel data on lobbying contacts and public speeches, we employ a difference-in-differences approach to assess the impact of negative country-reputation shocks. Our findings reveal a dual response. Politicians with strong ties to affected countries receive fewer campaign contributions and publicly distance themselves from those countries. However, they increase meetings with lobbyists from the shocked countries, especially when constituents hold negative views of the country. This pattern suggests an optimal decoupling of public and private behavior: politicians publicly distance themselves to mitigate backlash while privately maintaining collaborations. As shocks increase the political costs, interest groups intensify lobbying efforts by offering more expertise and advice. Our study indicates that while constituents impose some constraints, politicians and interest groups strategically navigate these to sustain their collaboration.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Elected legislators are crucial in modern democracies, acting as a check on executive power and driving public policies that impact people's lives. A central goal of democratic institutions is therefore to ensure that legislators act in the public interest and that special interest groups do not capture them in exchange for private benefits (Stigler, 1971). Public regulation is one tool through which societies limit special interests' political influence, which has been extensively studied in economics. For instance, US legislation such as the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 (LDA) and the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938 (FARA) impose strict disclosure requirements on lobbyists' activities on behalf of interest groups. Additionally, legislation in both the US and Europe limits the ability of private interest groups to finance politicians' electoral campaigns. Research has examined different types of campaign financing regulations, showing that they reduce the vote shares obtained by politicians (Bekkouche et al., 2022), the public contracts assigned to their private donors (Baltrunaite, 2020; Gulzar et al., 2021), and the weight of those donors' concerns in politicians' campaign rhetoric (Cagé et al., 2022).

A much less studied tool to limit special interests' political influence, which we explore in this paper, is local constituents' pressure. To understand this mechanism, it is useful to think of politicians as the agents of two principals. On the one hand, politicians respond to special interest groups, who may provide them with campaign financing (Grossman and Helpman, 1994) and, through their lobbyists, with valuable knowledge, expertise, and guidance on the process of legislation (Hall and Deardorff, 2006; Bertrand et al., 2014; de Figueiredo and Richter, 2014), in exchange for their support. On the other hand, politicians respond to their own local constituents, who may withdraw campaign contributions and votes if they perceive that the politician

is disregarding issues of local or national interest to advance the agenda of special interest groups. If the threat of constituents' punishment is strong enough, such that constituents become the dominant principal, politicians may voluntarily limit their collaboration with special interest groups. The possibility for citizens to make (and withdraw) contributions to politicians' campaigns, which is often viewed as facilitating interest groups' political influence, may therefore also serve as a constraint on such influence.

Assessing the effectiveness of local constituents as a private regulation device is important because there is evidence that interest groups are often able to circumvent public regulation – for instance, by replacing campaign contributions with covert charitable donations as a means to secure the support of politicians (Bertrand et al., 2020). Despite its importance, however, research on this phenomenon has been limited by the paucity of data. It is difficult to observe exogenous variation in the threat of constituents' punishment, and how the many dimensions of a politician's collaboration with interest groups – from her effort to legitimize and advocate a group's agenda to her meetings with the group's lobbyists – respond to such threat.

In this paper, we provide a novel database and an empirical strategy that attempts to overcome these limitations. We focus on foreign interest groups (governments and firms) lobbying U.S. Congress members, a crucial area given the rising concern over foreign interference in democracies (Aidt et al., 2021). Using a difference-in-differences approach, we analyze U.S. legislators' and their constituents' behavior before and after twelve high-profile events that shed negative light on ten foreign countries. These shocks likely heightened constituents' desire to punish collaborations between foreign interest groups and U.S. politicians, allowing us to examine how the threat of constituent backlash constrains foreign interest groups' political influence. Examples of our country shocks are the 9/11 terrorist attacks (shock to Afghanistan

and Saudi Arabia), the second Iraq war (shock to Iraq and to France – via the *Freedom Fries* crisis), and the 2001 Hainan Island plane collision (shock to China).

A key advantage of our study is its ability to measure multiple dimensions of politicians' collaboration with interest groups and assess whether politicians reduce such collaboration in response to shocks that heighten the threat of constituents' punishment. First, we can observe whether a politician stops meeting the lobbyists of foreign interest groups after a shock. During these meetings, lobbyists promote their clients' agendas by providing pertinent information, research, and advice (Austen-Smith, 1995; Grossman and Helpman, 2001; Hall and Deardorff, 2006) and by leveraging interpersonal connections with the politicians (Blanes i Vidal et al., 2012; Bertrand et al., 2014). Most empirical research on lobbying lacks politician-level meeting data because US domestic LDA disclosure regulations require lobbyists to report the targeted branch of government (e.g., Congress) but not the specific politicians lobbied (You, 2020). In contrast, the more stringent FARA, enacted in 1938 to curb Nazi propaganda, mandates that US lobbying firms representing foreign principals report all contacts with US government politicians every six months. We downloaded, digitized, and cleaned all FARA supplemental statements from 1999 to 2017, creating a database of over 10 million politician-interest group lobbying contacts – one of the most comprehensive FARA research datasets available.

As a second dimension of politicians' collaboration with foreign interest groups around the shocks, we measure the support these politicians express for those groups in their public speeches. To do so, we conduct a sentiment analysis of the universe of politicians' congressional hearing speeches for the period 1999-2017.

In addition to observing multiple dimensions of the collaboration between politicians and foreign interest groups, we can verify that our country's shocks increase the threat of constituents' punishment faced by politicians. We do so by measuring

whether politicians' local constituents withdraw their campaign contributions around these events. For this purpose, we collected data from the Federal Election Commission (FEC) on the individual campaign contributions that politicians receive from donors in their electoral districts.

Armed with these data, we run difference-in-differences regressions of (1) constituents' campaign contributions to politicians, (2) politicians' public sentiment towards foreign countries, and (3) politicians' contacts with lobbyists representing interest groups from those countries, around our set of shocks. Our DID analysis is based on the idea that politicians who had many prior lobbying contacts with a country are more likely to be classified by constituents as having strong political connections with that country, and hence to be punished after a shock, relative to politicians without *many* prior contacts. Observing that politicians face a greater risk of punishment (withdrawal of contributions) after the shocks, and respond to such risk by "shutting the door" to interest groups (via less enthusiastic speeches and reduced meetings with lobbyists), would support the hypothesis that local constituents can constrain interest groups' political influence.

Our analysis delivers ambivalent results. On the one hand, local constituents of politicians strongly connected to a shocked country reduce their campaign contributions to them after the shock, relative to weakly connected politicians. Moreover, consistent with the increased threat of constituents' punishment, those politicians respond to the shock by speaking about the affected country with less enthusiasm than before. On the other hand, rather than closing the door to the lobbyists of interest groups from the shocked countries they are strongly connected to, we find that politicians meet more frequently with those lobbyists after a shock. These results are robust to using alternative measures of key variables (strong connection and distancing) and corrections to staggered differences-in-differences estimation strategies, and

to including or excluding events or countries from our list of country shocks.

In the second part of the paper, we develop a theoretical model to explain the discrepancy between politicians' public speeches and meetings and to investigate the underlying mechanisms. In this model, an interest group seeks support from a strongly connected politician along two distinct dimensions. The first dimension, speeches, can be easily observed by the politician's constituents (speeches are often broadcast on TV and published online). The second dimension of political support involves behind-the-scenes efforts, such as private conversations with other politicians, to form coalitions favoring the interest group's preferred bills. This more private dimension of support is observed by constituents only with some probability (for instance, because a newspaper's investigating campaign has uncovered it).

If local constituents observe the politician providing either type of support to the interest group, they punish her for it (e.g., by reducing their campaign contributions), and more so the less favorably they view the supported interest group. As in models of political influence buying (Grossman and Helpman, 1994), we assume that because supporting the interest group is costly (due to the threat of punishment), the politician demands to be compensated for doing so. Unlike in those models, however, and consistent with US foreign lobbying law, foreign interest groups cannot compensate the politician via campaign contributions.[1] Instead, we build from the fact that interest groups compensate the politician through lobbying efforts. In modeling lobbying effort as a utility-transferring mechanism, we draw upon both theories of "legislative subsidies" (Hall and Deardorff, 2006; Blumenthal, 2023; Schnakenberg and Turner, 2024), where lobbyists provide time-constrained politicians with research and data they can use to advocate policies of interest, and the political connection view (Blanes i Vidal et al., 2012; Bertrand et al., 2014; Hirsch et al., 2023), whereby lobbyists advise politicians on which interest groups to listen to, and give them "po-

litical intelligence about the preferences of congressional constituents" (Hansen, 1991, p. 5).

Our model predicts that if constituents' view of the interest group sharply deteriorates (as in the aftermath of the country shocks in our data), and if receiving some political support is valuable enough for the interest group, it is jointly optimal for the two parties to let the politician decouple her public and private behavior. That is, the politician will reduce the more public dimension of her support to the interest group (speeches) to mitigate constituents' total punishment while continuing to provide the more private dimension (coalition-building efforts). Moreover, as constituents' expected punishment of private support sharply increases after a shock, the interest group must raise its lobbying effort to compensate the politician, and the more so the worse the constituents' ex-ante view of the interest group. The model therefore suggests that while accountability to local constituents can soften politicians' support to special interest groups, it may fail to eradicate it.

This model is consistent with our empirical findings. However, because a politician's more private support to interest groups is empirically unobservable, one cannot a priori rule out alternative explanations for our evidence. In particular, it is possible that facing a more hostile political climate due to a country shock, foreign interest groups may ask their lobbyists to "beg" connected politicians for help – that is, they may use lobbying effort as a persuasion/influence tool rather than a compensation tool. If that were the case, the observed increase in lobbying meetings after a shock may not imply a continuation of private support as politicians may ultimately choose to reject the lobbyists' "advances" for fear of constituents' punishment. Fortunately, our model allows us to test for this alternative explanation. Because lobbying serves to compensate politicians' punishment risk in our theory, the model predicts that the post-shock increase in lobbying effort should be concentrated among politicians

whose constituents are a priori hostile to the interest group. The alternative influence theory would imply the opposite: to maximize their chances of persuading politicians, lobbyists should concentrate their efforts on those who are *least afraid* of constituents' punishment.

To investigate whether the effect of country shocks on lobbying meetings varies across politicians with different constituents in a manner consistent with our model, we collected data on the U.S. public's perception of foreign countries from the annual Gallup Poll Social Series on World Affairs. We then separately repeated our difference-in-difference analysis of campaign contributions and lobbying contacts around shocks for the subsamples of politicians whose constituents have unfavorable, neutral, or favorable views of the shocked country. Consistent with our compensation view of lobbying, but not with the influence view, we find that both constituents' punishment (the withdrawal of campaign contributions) and the increase in lobbying contacts are concentrated among politicians with constituents that are *unfavorable* to the shocked country.

Altogether, our paper suggests a cautious assessment of the role of local constituents as a check on special interest groups. While US constituents do punish politicians suspected of supporting hostile foreign interests, and politicians appear to listen to their constituents by publicly distancing themselves from those, the evidence also suggests that politicians' distancing may be a strategic device to reduce constituents' punishment while preserving their private collaboration with foreign interest groups.

Literature review

Our paper aims to contribute to the empirical literature on special interest groups. Building on the theoretical work of Grossman and Helpman (1994), Austen-Smith

(1995), Hall and Deardorff (2006) and others, studies in this literature have shown that interest groups and politicians enter mutually beneficial relationships. First, interest groups benefit from being connected to politicians. For instance, firms connected to or aligned with politicians obtain more favorable loans from state-owned banks (Sapienza, 2004; Khwaja and Mian, 2005; Claessens et al., 2008). Similarly, universities located in the district of key politicians obtain more discretionary research grants (de Figueiredo and Silverman, 2006). Consistent with the benefit of political connections highlighted by these studies, there is evidence that access to political connections is a key asset that interest groups buy when they hire professional lobbyists (Blanes i Vidal et al., 2012; Bertrand et al., 2014; Hirsch et al., 2023). Second, there is evidence that politicians also receive benefits from their relationships with interest groups, in the form of campaign contributions (Bekkouche et al., 2022; Baltrunaite, 2020; Gulzar et al., 2021), charitable donations (Bertrand et al., 2020), favorable corporate policies (Bertrand et al., 2018), and the information, expertise and political advice provided by the professional lobbyists hired by interest groups (Bertrand et al., 2014; Hirsch et al., 2023).[2]

Our paper contributes to the literature on special interest groups in two ways. First, as discussed above, while extant research focuses on campaign finance legislation as a tool to regulate the political influence of special interest groups (Bekkouche et al., 2022; Baltrunaite, 2020; Gulzar et al., 2021; Cagé et al., 2022), we investigate a private regulation channel - namely, politicians' accountability to their constituents.

Second, we contribute to a branch of the interest groups literature that focuses on lobbying. We do so by assembling twenty years of FARA data on lobbying contacts between politicians and foreign interest groups. Most earlier works have instead used the LDA data (Blanes i Vidal et al., 2012; Bertrand et al., 2014), which do not provide information on the contacts between interest groups' lobbyists and individ-

ual politicians. Few prior works (addressing different research questions) have used FARA data. In particular, Hye Young You and coauthors have pioneered the use of this data in a series of recent papers (You, 2020, 2023; Hirsch et al., 2023). You (2020) introduces the FARA data and discusses the main differences with respect to the LDA data. You (2023) studies detailed data for 10 years of lobbying contacts on the US-Korea Free trade agreement. Finally, Hirsch et al. (2023) studies 3 years of lobbying contacts across different foreign entities, and find that lobbyists screen interest groups for like-minded politicians whose support those groups seek that seek. Our paper and Grotteria et al. (2022) further expand and strengthen these data collection efforts by building the largest existing database of FARA registries (regarding both the scope of time coverage and the number of foreign entities). Our data covers 1999-2017 while Grotteria et al. (2022) covers 2000-2018. While our paper studies the evolution of lobbying contacts around reputational shocks to foreign agents, Grotteria et al. (2022) focuses on shocks to politicians. They find that foreign agents keep contacting politicians through their lobbyists even after they depart from key committees, suggesting that both foreign interest groups and politicians gain from the lobbying relationship.

Third, our paper sheds light on an understudied role of political campaign contributions. Most of the literature on campaign financing summarized above emphasizes campaign contributions as a tool used by special interest groups to influence or capture politicians. By showing that constituents withdraw their contributions to politicians strongly connected to hostile/disreputable foreign interests, our paper demonstrates that campaign financing can also regulate and discipline the political influence of special interest groups.

Lastly, our paper contributes to the literature on politicians' communication and speeches. Some studies show that investors are sensitive to politicians' speeches and

announcements, which therefore affect companies' stock prices and financial returns (Cooper et al., 2010; Boutchkova et al., 2012; Addoum and Kumar, 2016). Other papers study the determinants of politicians' rhetoric. Gennaro and Ash (2022) show that politicians' speeches are more emotional during times of war and for politicians with certain ideological and demographic characteristics. In a recent study, Le Pennec (2024) demonstrates that politicians strategically modulate their speech. Analyzing data from French candidate manifestos, she reveals that politicians weigh the costs of contradicting their party or previous policy statements when updating their campaign communications. Our paper documents a different form of strategic political communication, namely, distancing from connected interest groups under the pressure of constituents. Related to this paper, Di Tella et al. (2023) shows that in the second round of (or general) elections, the speeches of US and French political candidates move ideologically to the center relative to the first (or primary) round. Closer to our paper, Cagé et al. (2022) shows that in choosing how to communicate in their campaigns, politicians are sensitive to interest groups' donations. We complement this research by showing that politicians may also use speeches as a "strategic obfuscation" device to soften constituents' punishment of their collaboration with special interest groups.

2 SETTING AND DATA

To conduct the study described above, we assembled, cleaned, and merged five different databases.

2.1 FARA lobbying data

We collected the universe of U.S. Foreign Agent Registration Act (FARA) supplemental statements between 1999 and 2017. In the public FARA repository, these

statements come in the form of handwritten reports (see Figure B.1 for an example), which we digitized to make them amenable to statistical analysis. Under FARA, lobbying companies must register each contact they maintained with a U.S. politician on behalf of foreign principals (i.e., fully foreign legal entities that do not pursue purely commercial objectives), along with the politician's name and the means of contact, every six months. Failure to do this can lead to five years of imprisonment. Most foreign principals in our FARA data are governments or ministries. The data also features a few firms (e.g., the China Ocean Shipping Company), which typically operate in sectors of strategic national interest and are either partially state-owned or regulated.

This data is ideal for our study because unlike the domestic Lobbying Disclosure Act data used in most of the literature, FARA reports contacts with individual legislators, thus allowing us to identify which US politicians are more strongly connected to a given foreign country (and thus more exposed to reputational shocks to it), and to study politicians' contacts with the lobbyists of foreign interest groups around country shocks.

Figures A.1 through A.3 summarize and describe our FARA data. Figure A.1 shows that both the number of countries lobbying in the US and the foreign clients per lobbying company have been increasing in the last two decades. Figure A.2 shows that there has also been an increase in the number of lobbying companies working on behalf of foreign governments. Figure A.3 splits the countries based on the quartile of their lobbying intensity, measured as the number of times interest groups from each country contacted a member of the US Congress during the period 1999-2017. The figure shows substantial variation across countries in the intensity with which they lobby. The countries in our analysis (as it would be clearer below –those with shocks–: Afghanistan, Australia, China, France, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and

Spain) exhibit relatively higher lobbying intensity than other countries.

A notable feature of our FARA data, which we exploit in our analysis, is that they separately report different types of contacts between foreign interest groups and US politicians, from calls and emails initiated by the interest group (which the politician may or may not answer) to actual in-person meetings. Figure 1 shows that more than 60% of the total contacts, and in-person meetings, by lobbyists were with politicians who (at the time of the meeting) were members of the committees for Armed Services, Appropriations, Foreign Affairs, and Foreign Relations. The rest of the contacts and meetings were distributed almost uniformly across all the other committees.

2.2 Data on Congressional Hearing speeches

To measure the extent to which U.S. politicians distance themselves from shocked countries in their speeches, we downloaded the universe of Congressional Hearings in text format for the years 1999-2017.[3] In the textual transcripts of the congressional hearings, speakers are denoted by their occupation (e.g., senator or representative) and last name.[4]

We use VADER, a Natural Language Processing tool, to measure the sentiment expressed by politicians toward foreign countries in their Congressional Hearings speeches. VADER gives a score to each speech based on a dictionary of words and groups of words labeled according to their semantic orientation as positive, negative, or neutral. VADER is also sensitive to both the intensity and the context of speeches (see Appendix B for more details). Every time a politician speaks at a hearing, we obtain from VADER a score for the politician's sentiment towards each mentioned foreign country in the form of a real number between -1 (most negative sentiment) and 1 (most positive sentiment).

2.3 Data on campaign contributions

To measure the extent to which local constituents punish politicians strongly connected to a foreign interest group after a reputational shock, we collected data on all the campaign contributions made by US individuals to the political committees of Congress legislators for the years 1998–2016 from the FEC.[5] The FEC releases data on all individual contributions over $200.[6] We use the individual contributions' reported date to identify the yearly total contributions to each political committee. We then use this information to construct a measure of the yearly contributions received by each *politician* from her *constituents* (our variable of interest), as follows. First, we allocate contributions received by a political committee in a given year to each politician who is a member of the committee by dividing the total contributions by the number of members. Second, we use the zip-code location of each contributor and politician's office, as reported in FEC data, to identify contributions from donors inside a politician's local constituency (the district for Representatives, and the State for Senators) from those of outside donors.[7]

Figure A.4 shows significant yearly variation in contributions received by politicians from local constituents between 1998 and 2016. These contributions are approximately normally distributed, with a mean of 10.13 (or $145,607).

2.4 Country shocks

To identify how the reputation of foreign interest groups affects the behavior of politicians strongly connected to those groups and their constituents, we use a list of events that negatively affected the image of foreign countries in the US. Three Economics undergraduates were tasked with identifying such events from public sources like Google and Wikipedia during our data period. An event was selected if all three students agreed it met each of the following criteria: (1) it negatively affected a foreign

country's reputation in the US; (2) it received wide media coverage, in the sense of being covered by major outlets such as the New York Times, CNN, Fox, and the Washington Post; and (3) it was described by the media covering it as difficult to anticipate.

The resulting list of shocks includes diverse events such as the 9/11 attacks (affecting Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia), the 2001 Hainan Island Jet Collision (affecting China), and Spanish leader Zapatero's refusal to stand for the US flag during the Iraq war (affecting Spain). Table A.1 summarizes these shocks, with detailed descriptions in Appendix section B.3. Our shocks involve ten different foreign countries, some being allies of the US at the time of the shock (Israel, France, Spain, Australia), others being adversaries (Iran, China, Afghanistan, Iraq), and a few have a somewhat neutral status (Saudi Arabia, Qatar).

One potential concern with our country shocks is that while the RAs classified all of them as salient, some shocks (e.g., 9/11, Hainan Island) likely had a stronger impact on U.S. public opinion than others (e.g., Zapatero). A second concern is that our RAs may have mistakenly excluded important events. To address the first concern, we replicated all of our analyses, excluding one shock at a time. To address the second concern, we replicated our analyses after adding the 2003 "Freedom Fries" crisis between the U.S. and France to our list of shocks, based on consistent recommendations we received from seminar audiences. The results from these exercises, discussed in section 4.4 below, align closely with our baseline findings.

We assume that a shocked country's loss of reputation in the US affects all interest groups based there and present in the FARA data, whether governmental or private. This assumption is reasonable because, as discussed above, the few private entities in our FARA data represent sectors and activities of governmental interest. Thus, constituents likely link the reputation of these entities to their country or government.

However, our results are robust to the exclusion of private entities.

Despite our robustness exercises, our list of shocks may include irrelevant events (type-I error) or exclude relevant ones (type-II error). So long as our classification is moderately correlated with the "true" list of relevant shocks – that is, one that only includes shocks that significantly reduced the reputation of foreign countries –, these errors will cause attenuation bias, making it harder to find significant results (see Mirenda et al., 2022 for a similar argument).

2.5 Other data

We collected data for each politician on party affiliation, election year, congressional chamber (House or Senate), and committee assignments from GovTrack's dataset on current and historical legislators.[8] Table A.2 shows that all countries receiving reputation shocks engaged with politicians from both parties. Contacts were largely bipartisan, with pre-shock Republican contacts at 53.13% and post-shock at 58.41%. Independent politicians accounted for only 0.3% of contacts. Figure A.5 shows that shocked countries engaged more with members of the majority party in each chamber.

3 EMPIRICAL METHODOLOGY

Given the biennial Congressional elections and the timing of the shocks, we focus on the four semesters before and after each country shock.[9] The events (shocks to countries) are stacked together to construct a panel dataset where the occurrence of a shock is normalized as time, $t = 0$. We estimate difference-in-differences regressions of the following type:

$$\begin{aligned} y_{i,c,t} \;=\; & \beta_1 \cdot Conn_{i,c} + \beta_2 \cdot Post_{c,t} + \beta_3 \cdot (Conn_{i,c} \times Post_{c,t}) \\ & + \; \alpha_i + \alpha_c + \alpha_t + \alpha_{I,t} + \gamma_1 \cdot X_{i,t} + \gamma_2 \cdot X_{c,t} + \epsilon_{i,c,t} \end{aligned} \tag{1}$$

where, c denotes countries, t denotes periods (semester or years), i denotes politicians, and I denotes politicians' party affiliation. In the above diff-in-diff equation, $y_{i,c,t}$ denotes our outcomes of interest (discussed in detail below); $Post_{c,t}$ is an indicator that switches from zero to one in the semester in which country c receives a shock and thereafter; and $Conn_{i,c}$ is an indicator for whether politician i is strongly connected to interest groups from country c before a shock, and hence more exposed to the threat of constituents' punishment after such shock.

We construct this "strong connection" dummy in three steps. In the first step, we calculate the average number of times interest groups from a given country c contacted the politician i over the four semesters before a shock to that country ($\bar{C}_{i,c}$). In the second step, we calculate the average number of times interest groups from the country c contacted *any* politician over the four semesters before a shock ($\bar{C}_c$). Lastly, we define the strong connection dummy, $Conn_{i,c}$, as follows:

$$Conn_{i,c} = \begin{cases} 1 & if\ \bar{C}_{i,c} > \bar{C}_c \\ 0 & if\ \bar{C}_{i,c} \leq \bar{C}_c \end{cases}$$

Politicians-country observations for which $Conn_{i,c} = 1$ represent cases where the politician i is "strongly connected" to an interest group from the foreign country c while observations for which $Conn_{i,c} = 0$ represent cases where the politician and the country are "weakly connected". This implies that the same politician can be "strongly connected" to some countries and "weakly connected" to others. Below we conduct several robustness exercises in which we use alternative definitions of this variable, obtaining consistent results.

The main advantage of our measure of politician-country connection, $Conn_{i,c}$, is that it exploits cross-sectional variation in a politician's exposure to countries that

will be shocked *before the event*. That is, the number of contacts that each politician has with shocked-to-be countries is arguably orthogonal to the presence and timing of negative reputational shocks of those countries.[10]

Dependent Variables The dependent variables in our diff-in-diff regression equation, denoted by $y_{i,c,t}$, are constructed to capture our three outcomes of interest:

1. the extent to which constituents punish the political connections of foreign interest groups,

2. the extent to which these politicians distance themselves from foreign interest groups in public speeches

3. the extent to which these politicians stop meeting with the lobbyists of foreign interest groups.

As an inverse measure of (1), we use the amount of campaign contributions (in thousands of US dollars) that politician i received in semester t from their local constituents.

To measure (2), we use our data on the sentiment politicians express towards shocked foreign countries in their congressional hearing speeches, as described in section 2.2 above. Specifically, we construct a measure of the support a politician provides in her speeches to interest groups from a focal country at a given time, which we then use to verify whether the politician's support decreases after a shock to the country – that is, whether distancing occurs.

We measure support in a politician's speeches as a dichotomous decision variable (high-enough vs. lower sentiment). We do so because marginal changes in the tone of a speech are unlikely to shift the audience's opinion about the focal country, and hence its decision to join the politician in supporting interest groups from that country,

compared to sharp changes in tone (e.g., from mildly to strongly favorable). To construct our high-sentiment measure, we proceed in two steps. First, we calculate as a benchmark the average sentiment expressed by politicians strongly connected to the country c about such country over the four semesters before the shock ($\bar{S}_c$). Then, we define a dummy for whether the sentiment of politician i's speeches about country c in semester t is higher than this benchmark:

$$y_{i,c,t} = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } sentiment_{i,c,t} > \bar{S}_c \\ 0 & \text{if } sentiment_{i,c,t} \leq \bar{S}_c \end{cases}$$

In our robustness checks below, we use alternative benchmarks to define politicians' high sentiment, obtaining consistent results.

Lastly, as an (inverse) measure of (3), we use the total number of contacts and the number of in-person meetings between politician i and foreign principals from country c in semester t. Under the hypothesis that facing an increased threat of constituents' punishment, politicians "close the door" to foreign interest groups, we should observe a post-shock decrease in politicians' contacts and meetings with the lobbyists of interest groups from shocked countries.

Other Variables The granularity of our data allows us to include a battery of fixed effects and controls in our regressions. First, we include semester fixed effects (α_t) to account for the potential common influence of time trends. Second, we include politician fixed effects (α_i) to account for time-invariant politician-specific factors (such as origin/ethnicity, education, and professional background), which may affect a politician's inclinations towards foreign countries regardless of the views of her

constituents. Third, we include country fixed effects (α_c) to control for country-specific lobbying strategies and institutional as well as other types of distance between the focal country and the U.S., which can influence U.S. politicians' engagement with interest groups from that country. Fourth, we include party-by-semester fixed effects ($\alpha_{I,t}$) to control for time-varying characteristics such as a change in party leadership or stance, the appeal of a party to a country due to common issues of interest, and the like.

In addition to including our rich set of fixed effects, we control for time-varying politician and country characteristics (respectively, $X_{i,t}$ and $X_{c,t}$), which may affect the importance of a specific politician for foreign interest groups, and the extent to which interest groups from a specific country need political support in the U.S. Controls in $X_{i,t}$ include (a) a binary indicator equal to one if politician i is affiliated to the party that holds the majority in the relevant chamber (House or Senate) in semester t, and (b) a binary indicator equal to one if politician i is the chairman of the congressional committee she belongs to in semester t. Controls in $X_{c,t}$ are (c) the annual volume of bilateral trade between the US and country c in semester t, and (d) exploiting the richness of the FARA data, we also include an indicator for country c's usage of US media for lobbying purposes during semester t (includes 'no usage', 'print' and 'audio/video').

3.1 Robustness to the heterogeneity of shocks - Corrections to DID estimation method

Recent work has noticed that when treatments are dispersed over time or heterogeneous, the OLS difference-in-differences estimates may be biased. More precisely, if shocks have heterogeneous effects, one may be concerned that the countries that have been shocked later may disproportionately contribute to the regression coeffi-

cient estimates relative to the countries shocked earlier. To address these concerns, we conduct robustness exercises in which we employ an event study design and replicate our main estimations using the corrections suggested by Callaway and Sant'Anna (2020) - Sant'Anna and Zhao (2020), and Borusyak et al. (2023). This exercise also provides clear assumptions on parallel trends between the two groups of politicians (strongly connected vs. weakly connected) that can be validated using the event study design.

Descriptive Statistics Descriptive statistics for all of our dependent and independent variables are presented in Table 1. The table shows substantial variation in our variables of interest. A politician in our sample, on average, receives about USD 151 thousand in campaign contributions each year. While the politicians in our sample, on average, give 11.2 speeches per semester where they mention one of the countries in our sample, the speech sentiment dummy has an average of 0.3 denoting the lower likelihood of praise from politicians for the countries in our sample. The countries in our sample contact, on average, 25.4 times a politician in a semester, while they hold 17 meetings per semester in person, on average. In our analysis, we separately estimate the effect of the shock on total contacts (including in-person meetings, phone calls, and e-mails) and in-person meetings, as in-person meetings help us understand the two-sided interest in the politician-country relationship post-shock.

4 MAIN RESULTS

4.1 Do local constituents punish the politicians connected to shocked countries?

Table 2 shows that constituents' punishment is present and substantial, and is consistent across specifications. Consider for example our most conservative specification in column (4). In the four semesters before a shock, connected politicians receive US$ 68 thousand (0.125 standard deviations or 40% of the mean of pre-shock contributions received by connected politicians), on average, more than weakly connected politicians. Following a negative shock to a foreign country's reputation, the constituents of U.S. politicians who are weakly connected to that country do not significantly change their contributions to those politicians. In contrast, the constituents of strongly connected politicians reduce their campaign contributions by US$ 73 thousand relative to the constituents of weakly connected ones – a reduction that corresponds to 0.13 standard deviations or 43% of the connected politician's mean pre-shock contribution. Figure A.6 provides evidence consistent with the assumption of parallel trends, and shows that the DID interaction estimates implementing corrections suggested by the recent literature are consistent with our baseline estimates.

4.1.1 Robustness Exercises

We repeat our baseline analysis using alternative definitions of "strong connection" between a politician and a country. We replicate the estimates redefining $Conn_{i,c}$ as a binary indicator equal to one, respectively, if (i) the average, (ii) the median, (iii) the 75th percentile, and (iv) the 90th percentile of the number of times politician i was contacted by interest groups from country c during the four semesters before a shock is higher than the average number of times this politician was contacted by

interest groups from all countries in our sample. Table A.3 shows that the results of this robustness check are, again, entirely consistent with those in Table 2.

4.2 Do politicians distance themselves from foreign interest groups in public speeches?

In this subsection, we estimate Equation (1) using the high-sentiment indicator for politicians' support to foreign interest groups as our dependent variable. Table 3 presents the results of this exercise. The estimates are robust across specifications and show that consistent with public distancing, politicians with strong prior connections to a shocked country are less likely to praise it in their speeches after the country suffers a reputational shock. To illustrate, consider again our strictest specification in column (4), which includes the full battery of fixed effects and controls. For politicians weakly connected to a shocked country, sentiment towards such a country barely decreases after the shock. In contrast, for strongly connected politicians, sentiment decreases after the shock by 0.576 relative to their weakly connected peers – a substantial effect, corresponding to 1.66 standard deviations or 67% of the strongly connected politicians' mean pre-shock sentiment. Figure A.6 confirms the parallel trends assumption, and the DID interaction estimates, adjusted per recent literature, align with the results from Table 3.

4.2.1 Robustness Exercises

As a first robustness check, we repeat the baseline analysis using alternative definitions of "strong connection" between a politician and a country as we did in section 4.1.1 above. Table A.4 shows that the results of this robustness check are entirely consistent with those in Table 3.

As a second robustness exercise, we repeat the baseline analysis using alternative definitions of politicians' high sentiment towards a country. Specifically, for the cal-

culation of ($\bar{S}_c$) we do not use the average but i) the median, ii) 75th percentile, iii) 90th percentile. We also use an indicator for whether the sentiment of the politician towards the country is above the average sentiment towards the country of all the politicians who were contacted by the country *at some point*. Table A.6 shows that the results of this robustness check are entirely consistent with those in Table 3.

As a final robustness exercise, we study whether "strongly-connected" politicians also mention less frequently the shocked countries. Table A.7 presents the results of this exercise. The differences-in-differences coefficient is negative and statistically significant in all specifications, suggesting that politicians distance themselves from shocked foreign interest groups not only by reducing their public praise for those groups but also by mentioning them less frequently in their speeches. In our most conservative specification in column (4), politicians with a strong connection to the shocked country mention the shocked country 4.1 times (0.26 standard deviation or 23.4% of the mean of pre-shock mentions by strongly connected politicians), on average, more than weakly connected politicians in the four semesters before a shock. Following the shock, weakly connected politicians mention the shocked countries 8.2 times or 0.52 standard deviations more often than before. However, in the four semesters following the shock, strongly connected politicians mention the shocked country less frequently by 5.3 times (0.34 standard deviation or 30.5% of the mean of pre-shock mentions by strongly connected politicians), on average, relative to the weakly connected politicians.

Tables 3 and A.7 together imply that strongly connected politicians talk more frequently and enthusiastically about shocked-to-be countries before the shock, and less frequently and enthusiastically after the shock. This contrasts with our findings for weakly connected politicians, who following a negative reputational shock, talk more frequently but less enthusiastically about the shocked country. Most importantly, the

diff-in-diff coefficients imply that after a shock, strongly connected politicians reduce both the frequency and the enthusiasm of their speeches about shocked countries significantly more than weakly connected politicians.

4.3 Do politicians "close the door" to the lobbyists of foreign interest groups?

Table 4 (Panel A) presents the results from estimating Equation (1) using as our dependent variable the total number of lobbying contacts between a politician and the lobbyists representing foreign interest groups. Unexpectedly (given the patterns we observe for campaign contributions and speeches), the results indicate that instead of shutting down their communication channels with interest groups from shocked countries, politicians actually increase the interaction with those groups' lobbyists. Column (4) in panel A of Table 4 illustrates this point. In the four semesters after the shocks, the contacts between politicians weakly connected to the shocked country and lobbyists of the country's interest groups did not significantly change. In contrast, strongly connected politicians see an increase in contacts of 15.86 relative to their weakly connected peers, corresponding to 0.16 standard deviations or 70% of their mean pre-shock contacts.

Exploiting the granularity of the FARA data, in panel B we replicate the analysis using as our dependent variable the number of in-person meetings. The difference between contacts and meetings is that while contacts may include unanswered emails sent by the lobbyist to the politician's office, meetings reflect the lobbyist's and politician's mutual agreement to interact. The results of this exercise are entirely consistent with those of Panel (A), suggesting that the post-shock increase in contacts is not driven by the interest groups' failed attempt to call or e-mail their political connections. The effect of country shocks on meetings is economically significant:

column (4) in Panel (B) shows that in the four semesters after a shock, politicians strongly connected to the shocked country increase their meetings with lobbyists of the country's interest group by 7.79 more units than the weakly connected politicians – an effect that corresponds to 0.12 standard deviations or 52% of the connected politicians' mean pre-shock meetings. Figure A.6 provides evidence consistent with the assumption of parallel trends, and the DID estimates after different econometric corrections are consistent with the findings of Table 4.

4.3.1 Robustness Exercises

To check the robustness of our results, we repeat the baseline analysis using alternative definitions of "strong connection" between a politician and a country as we did in section 4.1.1. Table A.8 shows that the results of this exercise are entirely consistent with those in Table 4.

4.4 Investigating the heterogeneity of shocks

One might be concerned that our baseline analysis may be biased by the fact that we treat our heterogeneous shocks as identical. First, our estimates may be driven by a few special countries or shocks. Second, as discussed above, the list of shocks assembled by our team of RAs may be missing some impactful events. We conducted two exercises to address these concerns.

In the first exercise, we replicated our regressions after individually dropping each country from our list of shocks. The results, displayed in Tables A.9 and A.10, show that none of the country shocks has a decisive role in driving the observed changes in campaign contributions, speech sentiment and lobbying contacts.[11] In the second robustness exercise, we replicated our regressions after adding the 2003 "freedom fries" crisis between the U.S. and France to our list of shocks. During this crisis, many U.S. citizens developed a negative view of France due to the latter's strong opposition to

the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, prompting a U.S. politician to provocatively propose to rename the French fries as "freedom fries". The results of this exercise, reported in Tables A.11 - A.14 are entirely consistent with our baseline estimates.

4.5 Discussion

The previous empirical results are difficult to reconcile. On the one hand, politicians strongly connected to foreign countries that received reputational shocks are punished by constituents and distance themselves from those countries in their speeches. These findings are consistent with a view of local constituents as a constraint on (foreign) interest groups' political influence. On the other hand, in contrast with such a view, politicians do not sever their contacts with connected foreign interest groups following a loss of reputation, and in fact, increase those contacts.

In the next section, we develop a simple theoretical model of the "political contracts" between foreign interest groups and their domestic political connections, and the role of lobbying in those contracts. The model serves two purposes. First, it provides plausible sufficient conditions under which the patterns we observe empirically should occur in equilibrium. Second, the model provides additional testable predictions that disentangle it from alternative mechanisms that may drive the observed patterns.

5 A MODEL OF POLITICAL CONTRACTS

5.1 The environment

Consider two risk-neutral players - a politician, P, and an interest group, F, strongly connected to P, who seeks P's support to advance a policy of interest. P's support to F has two components, $d \in \{0, 1\}$ and $s \in \{0, 1\}$. The first component, d, is the favor

with which P speaks about F (e.g., in Congressional hearings). Specifically, decision $d = 0$ denotes a highly favorable speech, which generates benefit $B > 0$ for F, whereas decision $d = 1$ denotes a less favorable speech, which generates no benefit. The second component of P's support, s, is the effort P exerts to convince colleagues to join her in approving F's policy of interest. Decision $s = 1$ denotes high effort, which generates a benefit of $\beta > 0$ for F, whereas $s = 0$ denotes low effort, which generates no benefit.

The key feature of our model is that P's local constituents dislike foreign influence on domestic politics. Because of that, if constituents observe P to select either $d = 0$ (a speech favorable to F) or $s = 1$ (high effort in advocating F's agenda), they punish P by causing her a disutility (e.g., through the withdrawal of campaign contributions). Consistent with our empirical settings, we assume constituents can more easily observe P's speech d (Congressional hearings are broadcast on television) than her advocacy effort s. Formally, constituents observe d with probability one whereas they observe s with probability $\tau < 1$. Even though s is observed by constituents with positive probability (e.g., due to a newspaper's investigative campaign), for ease of exposition we shall hereafter refer to it as "private" support; similarly, we will refer to d as "public" support.

The magnitude of constituents' punishment depends on two factors. The first one is the hostility with which constituents view F, denoted by $\theta > 0$. The second one is a random event realized at the outset of play and publicly observed (hereafter, the "shock"), which exacerbates constituents' hostility towards F (e.g., a military conflict between P's and F's countries, mistreatment of a domestic citizen in F's country, and the like). Formally, constituents' punishment of P's support actions equals θ in the absence of a shock, and $\alpha\theta$ in the presence of a shock, where $\alpha > 1$.[12]

Before proceeding with the analysis, it is useful to summarize the model's information structure. P and F perfectly observe all actions (d, s, and constituents'

punishment, both with and without a shock) and random events (whether a shock occurs or not). Constituents perfectly observe action d and the shock, whereas they only observe s, P's private support decision, with probability τ. We assume the rules of the game are common knowledge, implying that P knows θ, that is, she is aware of how supporting F will affect her utility. Thus, this is not a cheap-talk or Bayesian persuasion model in which F strategically communicates with P about the consequences of providing political support.

Given this setting, the collaboration between P and F proceeds as follows. After observing whether a shock has occurred, P and F commit to a "political contract" (s, d, l), which prescribes: (a) a private support decision, s, and (b) a public support decision, d, for P; and (c) an amount of lobbying effort, $l \in R^+$, that F must supply to P in exchange for her support.[13] We assume for simplicity that F has all the bargaining power, and hence makes P a take-it-or-leave-it offer at the contracting stage.

In this political contract, the lobbying effort l compensates P for her support, that is, it generates a benefit l for P, at a cost - also equal to l, for simplicity - for F (e.g., the cost of hiring a lobbyist). While this compensation function of lobbying is reminiscent of quid pro quo models (Grossman and Helpman, 1994), lobbying is not a monetary transfer in our model but rather valuable research and advice that F's lobbyist provides to P. For instance, the lobbyist may supply research that P would lack the time or expertise to conduct autonomously, which will help P in getting a policy of interest approved, as in "legislative subsidy" models of lobbying (Hall and Deardorff, 2006; Blumenthal, 2023; Schnakenberg and Turner, 2024).[14] Alternatively, the lobbyist may help P to advance her own agenda by sharing and mobilizing his broad portfolio of political connections (Blanes i Vidal et al., 2012; Bertrand et al., 2014), in exchange for P's support to her client F. The assumption that F compen-

sates P through lobbying effort rather than money is consistent with our empirical setting: when lobbying in the US, foreign governments face legal constraints on their ability to directly reward politicians (e.g., via campaign contributions).

Once P and F agree on a political contract, its terms are executed: P selects the prescribed support actions, and F provides the prescribed lobbying effort. After the contract is executed, constituents decide whether to punish P. Lastly, the payoffs are realized and consumed. Given our definitions, F's payoff under a given contract (s, d, l) is

$$u_F \equiv (1-d)\, B + s\beta - l.$$

P's payoff depends on whether a shock has occurred, and it is given - respectively, in the no-shock and in the shock scenario - by:

$$u_P^N \equiv l - (1-d)\theta - s\tau\theta,$$
$$u_P^S \equiv l - (1-d)\alpha\theta - s\tau\alpha\theta.$$

Having described our environment, we now proceed to analyze the model. Our goal is to characterize the optimal political support decisions and lobbying effort with and without a shock, and compare the two cases. We maintain the following assumptions throughout the model.

$$\beta > \alpha\tau\theta. \tag{2}$$

$$\tau > \frac{1}{\alpha - 1}. \tag{3}$$

The first assumption (equation 2) implies that F's benefit from P's private support

is high enough for such support to be jointly optimal (i.e., surplus-maximizing) both with and without a shock. This assumption is realistic in our empirical setting because foreign interest groups suffer from a lack of legitimacy (relative to domestic ones), and hence are especially in need of political support. The second assumption (equation 3) implies that the risk that constituents observe and punish private support (τ) and the increase in punishment driven by the shock (α) are not too small, such that P must be properly compensated for providing private support to F. This assumption is also realistic in our setting. Regarding τ, the US has strong and independent media and a tradition of investigative journalism, which gives them a non-negligible chance to detect politicians' collaboration with interest groups and inform constituents about it. Regarding α, if shocks were too mild, they would not affect constituents' and politicians' behavior, which is contrary to what we observe for our set of country shocks.

5.2 Optimal contracts with and without a shock

F's problem is to choose the public and private support decisions and the lobbying effort that maximizes his payoff u_F, subject to P's participation constraint. In the absence of a shock, this problem is:

$$\begin{aligned} \max_{s,d,l} \quad & u_F \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & u_P^N \geq 0. \end{aligned}$$

Clearly, it is optimal for F to exert the minimum lobbying effort that covers P's punishment cost – that is, the participation constraint must be binding:

$$l^N \equiv (1 - d + s\tau)\theta. \tag{4}$$

After substituting l^N into u_F, the optimal contracting problem simplifies maximizing P's and F's joint surplus. It immediately follows from our first assumption (equation 2) that regardless of the choice of public support, d, P provides F with private support in an optimal contract: $s = 1$. In contrast, public support may or may not be optimal because it is more likely to be observed by constituents, and hence carries a higher expected punishment. Formally, an optimal contract will ask P to select $d = 1$ (i.e., no public support) if, and only the benefit that public support provides to F is lower than the punishment it costs to P, that is:

$$\theta > B. \tag{5}$$

In the event of a shock, F's problem becomes:

$$\begin{aligned} \max_{s,d,l} \quad & u_F \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & u_P^S \geq 0. \end{aligned}$$

The solution is similar to the no-shock scenario, except that now F's lobbying effort must compensate a higher expected punishment:

$$l^S \equiv (1 - d + s\tau)\alpha\theta. \tag{6}$$

As in the no-shock scenario, private support is optimal ($s = 1$) whereas public support may or may not be optimal. However, because constituents punish P's support to F more harshly with a shock than without, P is now more likely to withhold her public support compared to the no-shock scenario. Formally, it is optimal for P to select $d = 1$ (no public support) if:

$$\alpha\theta > B, \tag{7}$$

where the condition represented by equation 7 is less stringent than the corresponding condition without a shock (equation 5).

Moreover, inspection of l^N and l^S reveals that regardless of the optimal level of d, P's expected punishment, and hence F's optimal lobbying effort, is higher with a shock than without:

$$l^S > l^N. \tag{8}$$

This result follows from our assumption that private support is harshly punished by constituents under shock (equation 3). Because of that, a shock increases P's total punishment, and hence the lobbying effort F must exert in equilibrium, even if P decides to withhold her public support.[15]

The comparison of political support, punishment, and lobbying effort with and without a shock is summarized by the following proposition.

Proposition 1. *Suppose conditions 2 and 3 are satisfied. Then, in an optimal political contract, P provides private support to F both with and without a shock. At the same time, P is more likely to withhold her public support from F with a shock than without. Moreover, a shock increases the punishment P receives from her constituents and the lobbying effort that F exerts to compensate P for such punishment.*

Proposition 1 suggests that an increase in the strength of constituents' punishment (the shock) may soften but not eliminate politicians' support to interest groups and that these groups must increase their lobbying efforts to compensate politicians for the increased cost of providing some support.

5.3 A test for the role of lobbying

Proposition 1 is consistent with our baseline empirical analysis. However, because one dimension of politicians' support to interest groups (the private support s) is empirically unobservable, one cannot a priori rule out alternative theoretical explanations for the observed patterns. In particular, it is possible that facing a more hostile political climate due to a country shock, foreign interest groups may ask their lobbyists to "beg" strongly connected politicians for help – that is, they may use lobbying efforts as a persuasion/influence tool rather than a compensation tool (as assumed in our model). Then, the observed increase in lobbying meetings after a shock may not imply a continuation of private support as politicians may ultimately choose to reject the lobbyists' "advances" for fear of constituents' punishment.

Fortunately, our model allows us to test for this alternative explanation. Inspection of l^S and l^N reveals that the post-shock rise in punishment and lobbying effort, $l^S - l^N$, increases in θ, the constituents' aversion towards interest group F.

Proposition 2. *The higher the constituents' aversion to F, θ, the larger the increase in constituents' expected punishment and F's lobbying effort with a shock, relative to the no-shock scenario.*

Because our model is based on the premise that lobbying effort serves to compensate politicians for constituents' punishment, it predicts that the post-shock increase in lobbying efforts should be concentrated among politicians whose constituents are particularly hostile to the shocked interest group. In contrast, an alternative theory based on the persuasion/influence view of lobbying would predict the opposite pattern: to maximize their chances of persuading the politician, lobbyists should concentrate their efforts on those politicians who are *least afraid* of constituents' punishment. Evidence supporting Proposition 2 would therefore be consistent with

our compensation model of lobbying but inconsistent with a persuasion model. We perform this test in the next and last section of the paper.

6 IMPLEMENTING THE TEST: CONSTITUENT-SPECIFIC EFFECTS OF COUNTRY SHOCKS

Our model is based on the premise that foreign interest groups transfer utility to politicians by sending their lobbyists to meet them. This holds true when lobbyists have extensive and diverse expertise and connections, which they offer to politicians in exchange for support. Extensive literature supports this premise (summarized in the Introduction). Empirical evidence in our setting also supports this condition. Although U.S. lobbying firms in our sample serve relatively few foreign clients (see Figure A.1), they typically serve many domestic clients. Thus, these firms can leverage the information, expertise, and political connections developed for their domestic clients, which are especially valuable to U.S. politicians, to gain support for their foreign clients. Data from the OpenSecrets database shows that during the period of our study (1998–2016), the average lobbying firm hired by foreign principals simultaneously served 90 domestic clients from 37 different industries each year.[16]

Reassured by this descriptive evidence, we now proceed to test Proposition 2 of the model, which distinguishes our theory of lobbying as a compensation mechanism from alternative theories.

6.1 Additional data

To test Proposition 2, we need variation in the potential threat of constituents' punishment across politicians (parameter θ). One plausible source of such variation is the differing views that local constituents of different politicians hold towards shocked

countries before a shock occurs. To measure constituents' views, we used data from the annual Gallup Poll Social Series Respondent-level dataset on World Affairs (2000-2017), one of the most comprehensive surveys of the US public perception of foreign countries. The Gallup survey asks a representative sample of individuals in the US to rate 43 foreign countries from 1 (very favorable view) to 6 (very unfavorable view). This survey covers all shocked countries and years in our study, with few exceptions (Australia is absent for four years, Spain for one year, and Qatar is not included in the survey).

Table A.15 shows that there is substantial variation in constituents' views, both across foreign countries and across U.S. constituencies for a given country. In particular, the table shows that among the countries in our study, Australia and France are the most favorably perceived countries in the US, while Afghanistan, Iran, and Iraq are the least favored.

6.2 Empirical analysis

Under Proposition 2 of our model, we expect the observed post-shock increase in constituents' punishment and contacts between US politicians and the lobbyists of foreign interest groups to be concentrated among politicians whose constituents hold less favorable views of the shocked country.

In this section, we verify these predictions empirically using the Gallup survey data on constituents' favor towards foreign countries. We proceed in three steps. First, we compute the national distribution of constituents' views in the four semesters before and after each country shock. Then, we use this distribution to classify politicians into three groups *each year* -given that local constituencies can change favorability towards foreign countries-. The *favorable* group includes politicians from states (for Senators) or districts (for Representatives) where the average constituent's favorability toward

the shocked country is above the 67th percentile of the national distribution. The *neutral* group includes politicians from locations where constituents' favorability lies between the 33rd and 66th percentiles. Lastly, the *unfavorable* group includes politicians from locations where constituents' favor lays below the 33rd percentile.[17]

In the last step of our empirical analysis, we separately replicate our difference-in-differences regressions of (1) campaign contributions (measuring constituents' punishment) and (2) lobbying contacts and meetings around country shocks for the three groups of constituents defined above. The results of these exercises are reported below.

6.2.1 Constituent-specific effect of shocks on campaign contributions

Consistent with Proposition 2, Table A.16 shows that the post-shock withdrawal of campaign contributions is concentrated among politicians whose constituents are a priori unfavorable to the shocked country. Following a country shock, constituents in the *unfavorable* group reduced their contributions to politicians strongly connected to shocked countries by US$448 thousand more than to weakly connected politicians – a contribution withdrawal corresponding to 0.47 standard deviations or 59% of the mean pre-shock contributions of strongly connected politicians. In contrast, constituents in the *neutral* and *favorable* groups did not significantly change their campaign contributions after a shock.

6.2.2 Constituent-specific effect of shocks on lobbying effort

Consistent with Proposition 2 in the model, Table 5 shows that the effect of country shocks on contacts and meetings between the lobbyists of foreign interest groups and their US political connections is concentrated among politicians who expect stronger punishments from their constituents. Regarding contacts, the table shows that in the *unfavorable* group of constituencies, the post-shock increase in contacts made by

interest groups from the shocked country with strongly connected politicians exceeded the increase for weakly connected politicians by 84 units – a difference corresponding to 0.89 standard deviations or 110% of the mean pre-shock contacts received by strongly connected politicians. In contrast, we observe no significant difference in contacts for the *favorable* and *neutral* constituencies.

We observe very similar results for in-person meetings. In the *unfavorable* group of constituencies, the post-shock increase in meetings between lobbyists of interest groups from the shocked country and strongly connected politicians exceeded the corresponding increase for weakly connected politicians by about 33 units – a difference corresponding to 0.35 standard deviations or about 57% of the mean pre-shock meetings. In contrast, we observe no significant difference in contacts for the *favorable* and *neutral* constituencies

6.3 Robustness Exercises

As for previous analyses, we replicated our constituency-specific campaign contributions and lobbying regressions after adding data from the 2003 "freedom fries" crisis between the U.S. and France to our list of shocks. The results, reported in Tables A.17 and A.18, are entirely consistent with our baseline estimates.

We also replicated our analysis using two alternative criteria to classify local constituencies based on of the risk of punishment faced by politicians (parameter θ in the model).

The first alternative classification criterion is based on social ties between a politician's constituents and the shocked country as an (inverse) measure of punishment. Specifically, we measure social ties at the constituency level as the ratio between the population of each U.S. state (for Senators) or district (for Representatives) that was born in the shocked country and the population that was born in the US. We obtained

the data to construct this variable from the annual *American Community Survey*, for the years 2000 - 2016.[18]. Descriptive statistics for this variable are provided in Table A.19.

The second alternative classification criterion is based on local political competition as a measure of constituents' ability to replace a focal politician with an alternative candidate in the next election. We proxy political competition by the difference between the number of votes received by the winning and best-losing candidate in the politician's state in the last Senate election before a country shock. To calculate this variable, we obtained data on the results of U.S. federal Senate elections at the state level (Data and Lab, 2017). Table A.20 shows that there is substantial variation in the gap between winners' and losers' pre-shock votes, both across country shocks and across U.S. states for a given shock.

We re-define the *favorable*, *neutral* and *unfavorable* constituent groups based on these two alternative criteria, using the same distribution cutoffs we used for the Gallup survey. When we replicate our test of Proposition 2 using the two alternative classifications of constituent groups, we obtain results that are entirely consistent with the baseline (Table A.21): the post-shock decrease in campaign contributions and the increase in lobbying contacts and meetings are concentrated among politicians from constituencies with fewer ties to the shocked country and where political competition is stronger.

7 CONCLUSION

We empirically investigated whether local constituents constrain the behavior of politicians towards special interest groups. Using new FARA data on lobbying contacts and politicians' speeches, we demonstrated that when the reputation of a foreign

country deteriorates, politicians closely connected to that country's interest groups experience reduced campaign contributions from their constituents and distance themselves from the tainted country in their public statements. At the same time, we observed an increase in meetings between these politicians and lobbyists representing the tainted interest groups, particularly among politicians whose constituents already held unfavorable views of the country in question. These findings suggest that politicians strategically adjust their speeches to mitigate potential constituent backlash while maintaining private collaborations with disreputable interest groups, who compensate them by intensifying the transfer of expertise and advice through their lobbyists. Our results therefore suggest that while constituents place some constraints on interest groups' influence, these constraints are mitigated by politicians' strategic responses, highlighting the complexity of political dynamics under external pressures.

We conclude the paper by highlighting two limitations of our empirical analysis, which may provide opportunities for future work. First, while we focus on US politicians for data availability reasons, it would be important for future research to investigate the validity of our results in non-US contexts such as the European Union. Second, this paper focused on how politicians and their constituents respond to negative reputational shocks to foreign countries. Future work may investigate whether there are symmetric effects when foreign countries face positive (rather than negative) shocks that improve their perception among local constituents.

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NOTES

[1]The FEC states: "Federal law prohibits contributions, donations, expenditures (including independent expenditures) and disbursements solicited, directed, received or made directly or indirectly by or from foreign nationals in connection with any federal, state or local election." https://www.fec.gov/help-candidates-and-committees/foreign-nationals/.

[2]Extensive reviews of the empirical literature on lobbying are provided by de Figueiredo and Richter (2014) and Bombardini and Trebbi (2020).

[3]The universe of Congressional Hearings has been transcribed and is publicly available on the website https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/chrg/. We parsed through this text and split it into paragraphs, followed by the use of the VADER toolkit for sentiment analysis of text. See appendix B.2 for more details.

[4]Hence, we cannot differentiate between speakers with the same occupation and last name. For instance, there may be multiple observations of Senator Smith in the legislators' directory from different states simultaneously, preventing us from uniquely identifying the speaker in our speech data. We drop such ambiguous observations, which account for less than 4% of the panel data observations.

[5]All contributions reported to the FEC are publicly available on its website (https://www.fec.gov/data/).

[6]A reported individual contribution can be later amended, in which case it appears in the data as a new contribution. We consider the latest amended entry if amendments are present, and the original entry otherwise.

[7]To assign donors' zip-code locations to politicians' congressional districts or states, we use concordance files from 2010 released by the US Census Bureau (see https://www.census.gov/geographies/reference-files/2010/geo/relationship-files.html for more details). We obtain 85% clean matches, losing some observations due to a mismatch between zip-code values in the FEC data and the concordance files.

[8]See https://data.world/govtrack/us-congress-legislators for more details.

[9]we do not consider a larger period because some events are close to the beginning or the end of the sample data which would provide dynamic estimates that underweight some periods for some shocks.

[10]Specifications that leverage (cross-sectional) variation in initial rates interacted with time exposure to shocks have been adopted in a range of existing works. For instance, Bleakley (2010) investigates the impact of malaria eradication using an interaction term between the initial incidence of malaria and the cohort exposure to DDT spread. Duflo (2001) analyzes the effect of school construction on schooling and labor market outcomes, interacting the initial number of schools with a cohort exposure indicator. Card and Krueger (2000) study on minimum wage uses this type of specification for an internal validity check for the standard diff-in-diff, where the employment changes at the store level are regressed against the gap between minimum wage and the initial wage of the store.

[11]Although, we acknowledge that Table A.10 shows that dropping Afghanistan has a role on the significance of the interaction coefficients when the dependent variable is lobbying contacts.

[12]We, therefore, assume that constituents act like judges: if they do not observe support, they do not punish P. That is, absent evidence, constituents do not attempt to guess whether P chose to privately support F and were lucky enough not to be detected. The rationale underlying this assumption is that constituents engage in "motivated reasoning" - they adopt beliefs that prevent them from being angry so long as what they observe does not contradict these beliefs (Kunda, 1990; Dahl and Ransom, 1999; Haisley and Weber, 2010).

[13]We think of the political contract as a well-functioning informal agreement in which the focal politician's and interest group's concern for preserving their mutual relationship or their reputation vis-a-vis other politicians and interest groups is strong enough to guarantee self-enforcement.

[14]Legislative-subsidy models primarily focus on lobbyists' research and advice that lower the politician's cost of supporting the focal policy. This interpretation requires the politician to benefit from such a policy in the absence of research costs. However, legislative subsidies can be broader than that: lobbyists can subsidize politicians on policy A in exchange for the politician's support to policy B (Schnakenberg and Turner, 2024). Our model captures the latter interpretation of subsidies. However, it would be straightforward to extend the model (at the cost of additional notation) to capture the traditional interpretation of subsidies. One could do so by assuming that P obtains a benefit $G > 0$ from supporting F, while incurring research cost c that can be reduced by F's lobbying. In such a setting, a high-enough lobbying effort could induce P to support F in the presence of constituents' punishment if P's benefit from such support offsets constituents' punishment in the absence of research cost, that is, if $G > \tau\theta$.

[15]To formally prove this result, comparing l^S and l^N under all possible configuration of d (that is, $d = 0$ with and without a shock, $d = 1$ with and without a shock, and $d = 0$ without a shock and $d = 1$ with a shock). It is easy to check that $l^S > l^N$ is trivially satisfied in the first two cases, and it is also satisfied in the third case so long as the assumption in equation 3 holds.

[16]OpenSecrets is a nonpartisan, independent, and nonprofit group that collects data on domestic lobbying. Data accessed at https://www.opensecrets.org/federal-lobbying.

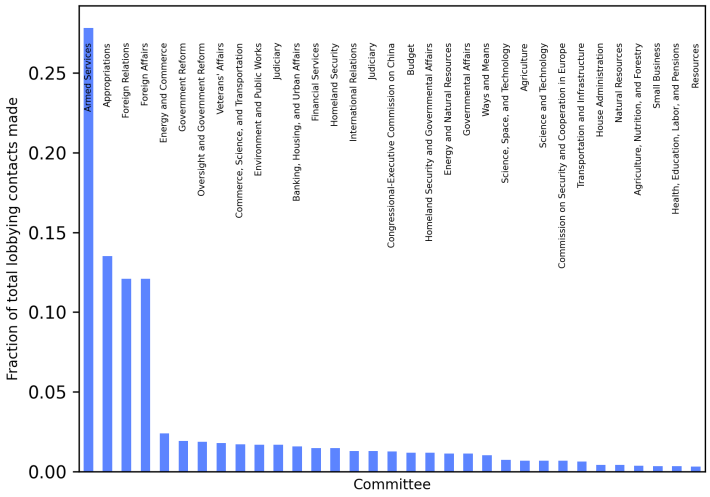
[17]For instance, if constituents hold a highly favorable view toward China in 2000, the politician is classified as part of the *favorable* group for the China-Hainan shock that year. Conversely, if constituents hold a highly unfavorable view toward China in 2002, the politician is classified as part of the *unfavorable* group for the China-Hainan shock in 2002.

[18]For more information, see https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data.html

FIGURES

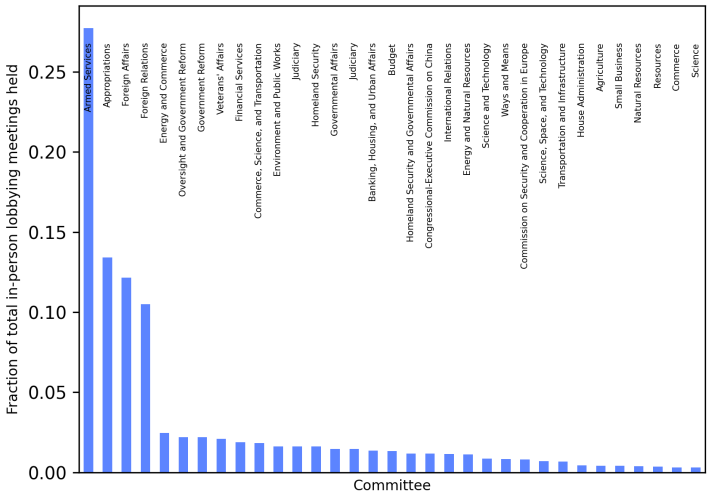
FIGURE 1: Lobbying of foreign organizations across congressional committees

(a) Distribution of total lobbying contacts



Note: This figure displays the distribution of total lobbying contacts between lobbyists and politicians, across committees.

(b) Distribution of in-person meetings



Note: This figure displays the distribution of total in-person meetings between lobbyists and politicians, across committees.

TABLES

TABLE 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	25th Pctl.	75th Pctl.
Outcome variables						
total # lobbying contacts	25.43	102.66	0	4134	0	16
in-person # lobbying contacts	16.98	68.14	0	3136	0	9
total individual campaign contributions (in thousand $)	151.58	503.27	45	8991.50	7	116.70
speech sentiment (dummy)	0.30	0.46	0	1	0	1
# speeches	11.23	8.18	1	32	4	18
Explanatory variables						
strong connection (dummy)	0.95	0.21	0	1	1	1
post (dummy)	0.64	0.48	0	1	0	1
Control variables						
chairman (dummy)	0.27	0.44	0	1	0	1
majority in chamber (dummy)	0.50	0.50	0	1	0	1
lobbyist's media usage (categorical)	0.49	0.61	0	2	0	1
ln(bilateral trade volume)	10.18	2.61	0.18	13.36	8.75	12.86

Note: This table reports the unconditional summary statistics using the full panel of observations. The statistics reported are the mean, standard deviation, minimum value, maximum value, 25th percentile value, and 75th percentile value.

TABLE 2: Effect of country shocks on campaign contributions

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Outcome: campaign contributions (in thousand $)				
strong connection	71.42**	67.68**	70.71**	67.55**
	(31.336)	(30.903)	(31.577)	(31.117)
post	55.30	55.65	54.41	54.02
	(37.003)	(35.317)	(36.863)	(35.136)
strong connection × post	-81.44**	-74.84*	-78.03**	-73.12*
	(38.548)	(38.976)	(37.975)	(38.480)
Observations	2,706	2,706	2,706	2,706
R-squared	0.273	0.275	0.286	0.288
mean(y)	169.8	169.8	169.8	169.8
sd(y)	540.2	540.2	540.2	540.2
time period	year	year	year	year
time FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
politician FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
country FE	-	✓	-	✓
party × time FE	-	-	✓	✓
controls_{it}	✓	✓	✓	✓
controls_{ct}	✓	✓	✓	✓
SE clustered by country × year				

Note: This table reports regressions of individual campaign contributions to politicians on the following variables: (a) whether a country shock occurs (post), (b) whether the politician is strongly connected to the shocked country (strong connection), and the interaction between (a) and (b). The first column has time and politician-fixed effects. The second column has in addition country-fixed effects. Column 3 has, in addition to column 1, the interaction of party and time-fixed effects. Finally, column 4 adds the country-fixed effects, in addition to column 3. All columns include controls for whether a politician is part of the majority party in the chamber and whether a politician is the chairman of the hearing committee at the politician × time level, and for the usage of media by the lobbying country and log of trade volume between US and lobbying country at the country × time level. Each unit in the sample is observed at the politician × event × time (year) level. The table also reports the pre-shock mean and standard deviation of the outcome variable for the connected politicians' group. Standard errors clustered at the country × year level.

TABLE 3: Effect of country shocks on sentiment in politicians' speeches

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Outcome: sentiment				
strong connection	0.578***	0.577***	0.580***	0.578***
	(0.017)	(0.018)	(0.017)	(0.018)
post	-0.0330**	-0.0331**	-0.0316**	-0.0317**
	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.014)	(0.014)
strong connection × post	-0.574***	-0.574***	-0.576***	-0.576***
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)
Observations	18,693	18,693	18,693	18,693
R-squared	0.566	0.567	0.570	0.571
mean(y)	0.861	0.861	0.861	0.861
sd(y)	0.346	0.346	0.346	0.346
time period	semester	semester	semester	semester
time FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
politician FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
country FE	-	✓	-	✓
party × time FE	-	-	✓	✓
controls$_{it}$	✓	✓	✓	✓
controls$_{ct}$	✓	✓	✓	✓
SE clustered by country × semester				

Note: This table reports regressions of politician sentiment in congressional hearings on the following variables: (a) whether a country shock occurs (post), (b) whether the politician is strongly connected to the shocked country (strong connection), and the interaction between (a) and (b). The first column has time and politician-fixed effects. The second column includes in addition country fixed effects. Column 3 has, in addition to column 1, the interaction of party and time-fixed effects. Finally, column 4 adds the country-fixed effects, in addition to column 3. All columns include controls for whether a politician is part of the majority party in the chamber and whether a politician is the chairman of the hearing committee at the politician × time level, and for the usage of media by the lobbying country and log of trade volume between US and lobbying country at the country × time level. Each unit in the sample is observed at the politician × event × time (semester) level. The table also reports the pre-shock mean and standard deviation of the dependent variable for the connected politicians' group. Standard errors clustered at the country × semester level.

TABLE 4: Effect of country shocks on lobbying contacts

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Panel A: total # contacts				
strong connection	7.405	16.10**	7.344	16.22**
	(7.333)	(6.627)	(7.402)	(6.657)
post	11.91	10.47	11.40	10.09
	(7.396)	(6.863)	(7.370)	(6.816)
strong connection × post	22.02***	15.83**	22.23***	15.86**
	(7.902)	(7.199)	(7.920)	(7.176)
Observations	18,693	18,693	18,693	18,693
R-squared	0.235	0.255	0.239	0.260
mean(y)	22.62	22.62	22.62	22.62
sd(y)	95.15	95.15	95.15	95.15
Panel B: in-person # contacts				
strong connection	7.989**	8.203**	7.821*	8.144**
	(4.037)	(4.091)	(4.039)	(4.098)
post	17.54***	12.81***	17.16***	12.50***
	(5.146)	(4.499)	(5.124)	(4.462)
strong connection × post	9.654**	7.727*	9.826**	7.789*
	(4.746)	(4.534)	(4.751)	(4.529)
Observations	18,693	18,693	18,693	18,693
R-squared	0.226	0.241	0.233	0.248
mean(y)	14.89	14.89	14.89	14.89
sd(y)	64.94	64.94	64.94	64.94
time period	semester	semester	semester	semester
time FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
politician FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
country FE	-	✓	-	✓
party × time FE	-	-	✓	✓
controls_{it}	✓	✓	✓	✓
controls_{ct}	✓	✓	✓	✓
SE clustered by country × semester				

Note: This table reports regressions of total number of contacts made (Panel A) and number of in-person contacts (Panel B) on the following variables: (a) whether a country shock occurs (post), (b) whether the politician is strongly connected to the shocked country (strong connection), and the interaction between (a) and (b). The first column has time and politician-fixed effects. The first column has time and politician-fixed effects. The second column includes in addition country fixed effects. Column 3 has, in addition to column 1, the interaction of party and time-fixed effects. Finally, column 4 adds the country-fixed effects, in addition to column 3. All columns include controls for whether a politician is part of the majority party in the chamber and whether a politician is the chairman of the hearing committee at the politician × time level, and for the usage of media by the lobbying country and log of trade volume between US and lobbying country at the country × time level. Each unit in the sample is observed at the politician × event × time (semester) level. The table also reports the pre-shock mean and standard deviation of the dependent variable for the connected politicians' group. Standard errors clustered at the country × semester level.

TABLE 5: Constituency-specific effect of country shocks on lobbying contacts

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Local support:	Unfavorable	Neutral	Favorable
Panel A: total # contacts			
strong connection	-38.69	45.02**	20.23
	(30.559)	(19.246)	(19.835)
post	-0.572	4.075	7.310
	(38.469)	(17.957)	(21.521)
strong connection × post	84.00**	12.39	28.29
	(33.892)	(20.880)	(22.534)
Observations	1,749	1,258	1,789
R-squared	0.479	0.549	0.484
mean(y)	75.70	88.38	107
sd(y)	94.17	104.6	153.4
Panel B: in-person # meetings			
strong connection	-15.16	26.67*	12.31
	(18.465)	(15.371)	(20.006)
post	5.496	24.11	25.74
	(18.732)	(15.540)	(20.724)
strong connection × post	33.35*	-15.13	-0.927
	(18.464)	(18.487)	(19.535)
Observations	1,749	1,258	1,789
R-squared	0.467	0.546	0.502
mean(y)	58.96	55.93	63.65
sd(y)	94.84	96.97	158.6
time period	semester	semester	semester
time FE	✓	✓	✓
politician FE	✓	✓	✓
country FE	✓	✓	✓
party × time FE	✓	✓	✓
controls_{it}	✓	✓	✓
controls_{ct}	✓	✓	✓
SE clustered by country × semester			

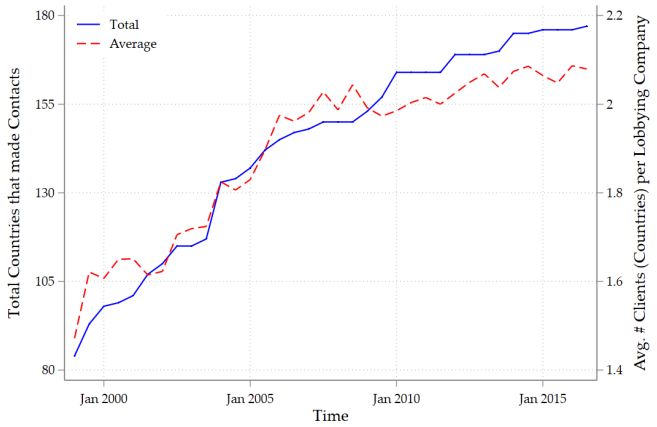
Note: This table reports regressions of the total number of contacts made (Panel A) and number of in-person meetings (Panel B) for subgroups of political constituencies that differ in their views of the shocked country on the following variables: (a) whether a country shock occurs (post), (b) whether the politician is strongly connected to the shocked country (strong connection), and the interaction between (a) and (b). To measure such views, columns (1) to (3) use the Gallup World Affairs poll on public perception of a foreign country in a given state-year (for Senators) or district-year (for Representatives). The *favorable* group includes observations from the 67th to 100th percentile of the distribution, the *neutral* group includes observations from the 33rd to 66th percentile, and the *unfavorable* group includes observations below the 33rd percentile. All columns have time, politician-fixed effects, country-fixed effects, and the interaction of party and time-fixed effects. All columns include controls for whether a politician is part of the majority party in the chamber and whether a politician is the chairman of the hearing committee at the politician × time level, and for usage of media by the lobbying country and log of trade volume between US and lobbying country at the country × time level. Each unit in the sample is observed at the politician × event × time (semester) level. The table also reports the pre-shock mean and standard deviation of the dependent variable for the connected politicians' group. Standard errors clustered at the country × semester level.

ONLINE APPENDIX

A ADDITIONAL FIGURES AND TABLES

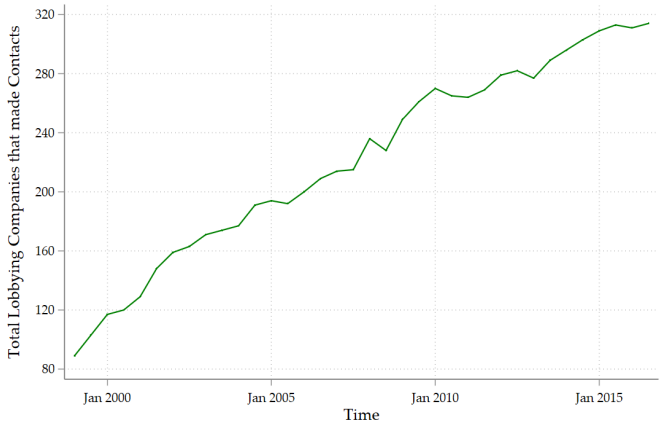
Figures

FIGURE A.1: Lobbying behavior of countries over time



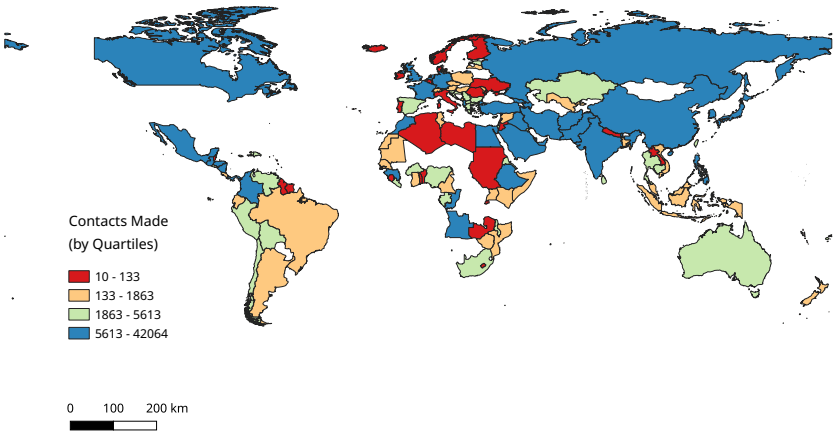
Note: This figure displays, on the left axis, the number of countries that made at least one contact during a given semester and, on the right axis, the average number of clients per lobbying company. The unit of observation is semester. The sample size is equal to 36 semi-annual observations from January 1999 to July 2016.

FIGURE A.2: Lobbying behavior of companies hired by countries over time



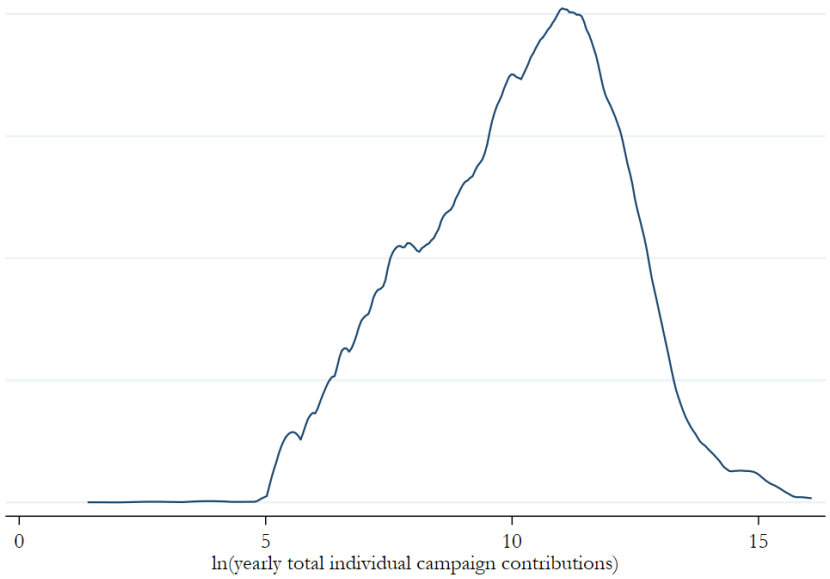
Note: This figure displays the number of lobbying companies that made at least one contact on behalf of a foreign client during a given semester. The unit of observation is semester. The sample size is equal to 36 semi-annual observations from January 1999 to July 2016.

FIGURE A.3: Lobbying behavior of countries, by contacts made



Note: This figure displays the variation across countries when their intensity of lobbying activity is expressed in terms of the number of times they contacted a politician/bureaucrat in the US. Categories are split by quartiles.

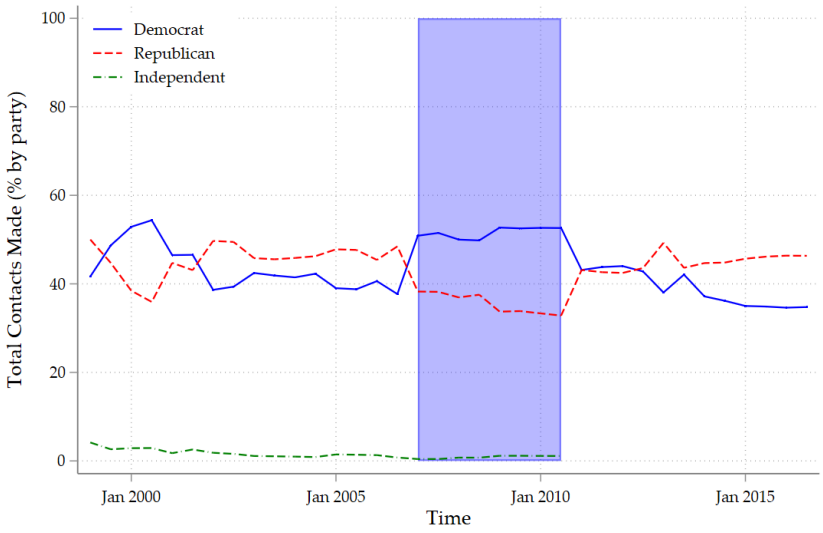
FIGURE A.4: Distribution of campaign contribution received by politicians



Note: This figure displays the density plot of the natural log of local contribution received by politicians for their campaigns during the years 1998-2016.

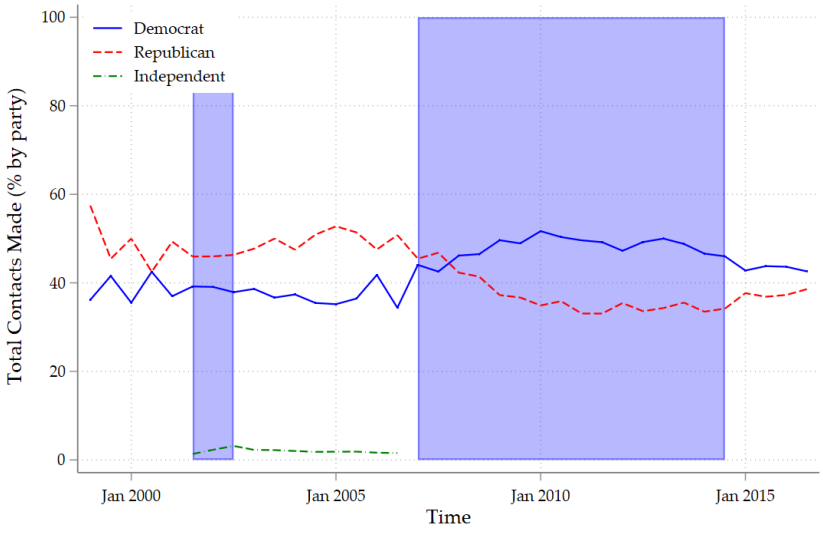
FIGURE A.5: Partisanship (for the countries affected by a reputational shock)

(a) Chamber: House



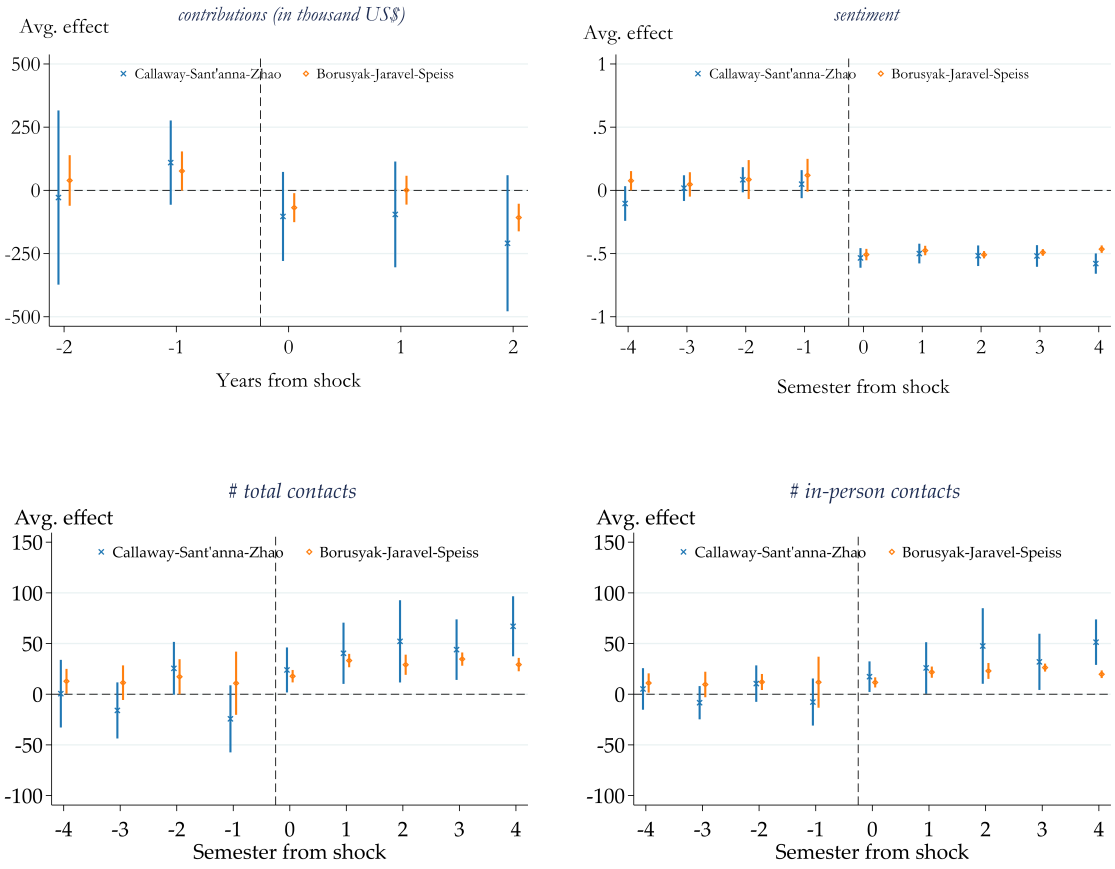
Note: This figure displays the partisanship in lobbying activity, of countries that received a shock, in contacting members of the House. The blue background denotes the Democrat majority. The sample size is equal to 36 semi-annual observations from January 1999 to July 2016.

(b) Chamber: Senate



Note: This figure displays the partisanship in lobbying activity, of countries that received a shock, in contacting members of the Senate. The blue background denotes the Democrat majority. The sample size is equal to 36 semi-annual observations from January 1999 to July 2016.

FIGURE A.6: Event study of main outcome variables



Note: This figure displays the leads and lags coefficients for (i) Callaway and Sant'Anna (2020) and Sant'Anna and Zhao (2020), (ii) Borusyak et al. (2023) estimators. Panel A plots the effect on annual campaign contributions. Panel B plots the effect on politicians' sentiment in congressional hearings. Panel C plots the effect on total lobbying contacts. Panel D plots the effect on in-person lobbying contacts.

Tables

TABLE A.1: Shocks: a brief description

Date of Shock (DD/MM/YYYY)	**Country Affected**	**Event (a short description)**	**# hits on US Google Search** (in thousands)
01/03/2001	China	Hainan Island jet collision	112
11/09/2001	Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia	9/11 attacks	48,500
11/03/2003	France	Freedom fries: France opposition to Iraq invasion	432
20/03/2003	Iraq	Invasion of Iraq	5,300
12/10/2003	Spain	Spanish leader disrespects the US flag	3,200
12/07/2006	Israel	Israel rocket launch on civilians	1,450
09/03/2007	Iran	Disappearance of Robert Levinson	109
09/03/2009	China	Chinese vessels harass US ship	10,900
15/03/2009	Australia	Australian censorship of US anti-abortion site	1,370
31/07/2009	Iran	Detention of American hikers by Iran	62
07/04/2010	Qatar	Terrorism scare on United Airlines Flight 663	104
11/10/2011	Iran	Assassination plot in the US	13,800

Note: This table reports the unconditional summary statistics of each shock in our analysis. The statistics reported are (a) the date of occurrence, (b) the countries involved, (c) short description of the shock, (d) the total number of results on Google when searched with the shock description (accessed on 10 July 2023).

TABLE A.2: Descriptive Statistics: Contacts made, by shocked country × US political party

	(in #)	(in %)		
Country	Politicians Contacted	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Afghanistan	132	54.55	44.55	0
Australia	26	46.15	50.00	3.85
China	496	46.17	53.23	0.60
France	33	36.36	63.64	0
Iran	99	36.36	63.64	0
Iraq	392	48.98	51.02	0
Israel	29	51.72	48.28	0
Qatar	50	32.00	68.00	0
Saudi Arabia	61	37.70	62.30	0
Spain	42	50.00	50.00	0
Total	1327	46.42	53.28	0.30

Note: This table summarises the contacts made by each shocked country, across US political parties. Column 2 reports the total number of politicians contacted. Among those, Columns 3, 4, and 5 report the percentage of Democrats contacted, the percentage of Republicans contacted, and the percentage of Independents contacted.

TABLE A.3: Effect of country shocks on campaign contributions, under alternative definitions of strong connection

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Outcome: campaign contributions (in thousand $)			
strong connection (by median)	327.6**		
	(150.407)		
post	314.8**	692.1***	727.9***
	(120.662)	(175.531)	(187.397)
strong connection (by median) × post	-405.9**		
	(176.697)		
strong connection (by 75th pctl.)		608.9***	
		(187.752)	
strong connection (by 75th pctl.) × post		-749.8***	
		(195.389)	
strong connection (by 90th pctl.)			690.7***
			(213.186)
strong connection (by 90th pctl.) × post			-844.6***
			(230.901)
Observations	1,867	1,867	1,867
R-squared	0.931	0.932	0.933
mean(y)	172.5	166.8	166.7
sd(y)	551.8	529.6	527.9
time period	semester	semester	semester
time FE	✓	✓	✓
politician FE	✓	✓	✓
country FE	✓	✓	✓
party × time FE	✓	✓	✓
controls_{it}	✓	✓	✓
controls_{ct}	✓	✓	✓
SE clustered by country*year			
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1			

Note: This table reports regressions of individual campaign contributions to politicians under alternative definitions of strong connection on the following variables: (a) whether a country shock occurs (post), (b) whether the politician is strongly connected to the shocked country (strong connection) by median, (c) the interaction between (a) and (b), (d) strong connection by 75th percentile, (e) the interaction between (a) and (d), (f) strong connection by 90th percentile, and (g) the interaction between (a) and (g). All columns have time, politician fixed effects, country fixed effects, and the interaction of party and time fixed effects. All columns include controls for whether a politician is part of the majority party in the chamber and whether a politician is the chairman of the hearing committee at the politician × time level, and for usage of media by the lobbying country and log of trade volume between US and lobbying country at the country × time level. Each unit in the sample is observed at the politician × event × time (year) level. The table also reports the pre-shock mean and standard deviation of the dependent variable for the connected politicians' group. Standard errors clustered at the country × year level.

TABLE A.4: Effect of country shocks on sentiment, under alternative definitions of strong connection

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Outcome: sentiment			
strong connection (by median)	0.428***		
	(0.023)		
post	-0.200***	-0.0186	-0.0314**
	(0.021)	(0.014)	(0.014)
strong connection (by median) × post	-0.422***		
	(0.024)		
strong connection (by 75th pctl.)		0.579***	
		(0.017)	
strong connection (by 75th pctl.) × post		-0.581***	
		(0.017)	
strong connection (by 90th pctl.)			0.523***
			(0.016)
strong connection (by 90th pctl.) × post			-0.533***
			(0.016)
Observations	23,157	23,157	18,693
R-squared	0.559	0.573	0.535
mean(y)	0.787	0.783	0.781
sd(y)	0.410	0.412	0.413
time period	semester	semester	semester
time FE	✓	✓	✓
politician FE	✓	✓	✓
country FE	✓	✓	✓
party × time FE	✓	✓	✓
controls_{it}	✓	✓	✓
controls_{ct}	✓	✓	✓

SE clustered by country*semester
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Note: This table reports regressions of individual campaign contributions to politicians under alternative definitions of strong connection on the following variables: (a) whether a country shock occurs (post), (b) whether the politician is strongly connected to the shocked country (strong connection) by median, (c) the interaction between (a) and (b), (d) strong connection by 75th percentile, (e) the interaction between (a) and (d), (f) strong connection by 90th percentile, and (g) the interaction between (a) and (g). All columns have time, politician-fixed effects, country-fixed effects, and the interaction of party and time-fixed effects. All columns include controls for whether a politician is part of the majority party in the chamber and whether a politician is the chairman of the hearing committee at the politician × time level, and for the usage of media by the lobbying country and log of trade volume between US and lobbying country at the country × time level. Each unit in the sample is observed at the politician × event × time (semester) level. The table also reports the pre-shock mean and standard deviation of the dependent variable for the connected politicians' group. Standard errors clustered at the country × semester level.

TABLE A.5: *Evidence on politicians' public distancing*:Effect of country shocks on # speeches, under alternative definitions of strong connection

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Outcome: # speeches			
strong connection (by median)	2.962***		
	(0.892)		
post	7.023*	6.339*	12.12***
	(3.586)	(3.424)	(3.305)
strong connection (by median) × post	-2.148*		
	(1.104)		
strong connection (by 75th pctl.)		2.483**	
		(1.086)	
strong connection (by 75th pctl.) × post		-3.442***	
		(1.149)	
strong connection (by 90th pctl.)			4.594***
			(1.625)
strong connection (by 90th pctl.) × post			-6.603***
			(1.504)
Observations	23,157	23,157	18,693
R-squared	0.544	0.586	0.514
mean(y)	11.11	11.25	11.29
sd(y)	14.02	14.17	14.21
time period	semester	semester	semester
time FE	✓	✓	✓
politician FE	✓	✓	✓
country FE	✓	✓	✓
party × time FE	✓	✓	✓
controls_{it}	✓	✓	✓
controls_{ct}	✓	✓	✓
SE clustered by country*semester			
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1			

Note: This table reports regressions of individual campaign contributions to politicians under alternative definitions of strong connection on the following variables: (a) whether a country shock occurs (post), (b) whether the politician is strongly connected to the shocked country (strong connection) by median, (c) the interaction between (a) and (b), (d) strong connection by 75th percentile, (e) the interaction between (a) and (d), (f) strong connection by 90th percentile, and (g) the interaction between (a) and (g). All columns have time, politician-fixed effects, country-fixed effects, and the interaction of party and time-fixed effects. All columns include controls for whether a politician is part of the majority party in the chamber and whether a politician is the chairman of the hearing committee at the politician × time level, and for the usage of media by the lobbying country and log of trade volume between US and lobbying country at the country × time level. Each unit in the sample is observed at the politician × event × time (semester) level. The table also reports the pre-shock mean and standard deviation of the dependent variable for the connected politicians' group. Standard errors clustered at the country × semester level.

TABLE A.6: Effect of country shocks on sentiment, under alternative definitions of high sentiment

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Outcome: sentiment >	avg. of connected	median of connected	75pctl. of connected	90pctl. of connected	avg. of ever contacted
strong connection	0.579***	0.460***	0.211***	0.0610***	0.804***
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.014)	(0.009)	(0.014)
post	-0.0318**	-0.0359**	-0.0133	-0.00419	0.0252**
	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.011)	(0.007)	(0.013)
strong connection × post	-0.576***	-0.457***	-0.207***	-0.0593***	-0.790***
	(0.018)	(0.017)	(0.014)	(0.009)	(0.014)
Observations	18,693	18,693	18,693	18,693	18,693
R-squared	0.571	0.462	0.238	0.114	0.766
mean(y)	0.316	0.293	0.264	0.253	0.342
sd(y)	0.346	0.401	0.449	0.462	0.251
sd(y)	0.346	0.401	0.449	0.462	0.251
time	semester	semester	semester	semester	semester
time FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
politician FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
country FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
party × time FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
controls_{it}	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
controls_{ct}	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

SE clustered by country × time
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Note: This table reports regressions of politician sentiment (which is a dummy that equals one if politician i and country c in semester t is (i) greater than the average of connected politicians previously to the shock, (ii) is greater than the pre-shock median of connected politicians, (iii) 75th percentile, (iv) 90th percentile of sentiment of connected politicians, and (v) is greater than the average sentiment of politicians ever contacted by the country either pre or post-shock on the following variables: (a) whether a country shock occurs (post), (b) whether the politician is strongly connected to the shocked country (strong connection), and the interaction between (a) and (b). All columns have time, politician-fixed effects, country-fixed effects, and the interaction of party and time-fixed effects. All columns include controls for whether a politician is part of the majority party in the chamber and whether a politician is the chairman of the hearing committee at the politician × time level, and for the usage of media by the lobbying country and log of trade volume between US and lobbying country at the country × time level. Each unit in the sample is observed at the politician × event × time (semester) level. The table also reports the pre-shock mean and standard deviation of the dependent variable for the connected politicians' group. Standard errors clustered at the country × time level.

TABLE A.7: Effect of country shocks on # speeches

Outcome: # speeches	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
strong connection	3.837***	4.077***	3.827***	4.109***
	(1.240)	(1.137)	(1.247)	(1.143)
post	9.927***	8.171**	9.914***	8.197**
	(3.590)	(3.737)	(3.599)	(3.744)
strong connection × post	-4.496***	-5.332***	-4.479***	-5.357***
	(1.223)	(1.142)	(1.227)	(1.145)
Observations	18,693	18,693	18,693	18,693
R-squared	0.512	0.562	0.513	0.563
mean(y)	17.59	17.59	17.59	17.59
sd(y)	15.80	15.80	15.80	15.80
time period	semester	semester	semester	semester
time FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
politician FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
country FE	-	✓	-	✓
party × time FE	-	-	✓	✓
controls_{it}	✓	✓	✓	✓
controls_{ct}	✓	✓	✓	✓
SE clustered by country × semester				

Note: This table reports regressions of the number of congressional speeches about the shocked country on the following variables: (a) whether a country shock occurs (post), (b) whether the politician is strongly connected to the shocked country (strong connection), and the interaction between (a) and (b). The first column has time and politician-fixed effects. The second column includes in addition country fixed effects. Column 3 has, in addition to column 1, the interaction of party and time-fixed effects. Finally, column 4 adds the country-fixed effects, in addition to column 3. All columns include controls for whether a politician is part of the majority party in the chamber and whether a politician is the chairman of the hearing committee at the politician × time level, and for the usage of media by the lobbying country and log of trade volume between US and lobbying country at the country × time level. Each unit in the sample is observed at the politician × event × time (semester) level. The table also reports the pre-shock mean and standard deviation of the dependent variable for the connected politicians' group group. Standard errors clustered at the country × semester level.

TABLE A.8: Effect of country shocks on lobbying contacts, under alternative definitions of strong connection)

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Panel A: total # contacts			
strong connection (by median)	20.25***		
	(6.522)		
post	8.877	11.04	11.71
	(6.387)	(7.098)	(7.592)
strong connection (by median) × post	16.53**		
	(7.214)		
strong connection (by 75th pctl.)		12.31*	
		(7.034)	
strong connection (by 75th pctl.) × post		13.48*	
		(7.319)	
strong connection (by 90th pctl.)			9.272
			(7.318)
strong connection (by 90th pctl.) × post			12.66
			(7.708)
Observations	18,693	18,693	18,693
R-squared	0.261	0.258	0.258
mean(y)	14.41	14.57	14.58
sd(y)	77.09	77.97	77.90
Panel B: in-person # contacts			
strong connection (by median)	10.77***		
	(4.157)		
post	12.13***	12.44***	12.72***
	(4.253)	(4.514)	(4.552)
strong connection (by median) × post	7.794*		
	(4.532)		
strong connection (by 75th pctl.)		4.207	
		(4.295)	
strong connection (by 75th pctl.) × post		7.137	
		(4.582)	
strong connection (by 90th pctl.)			5.993
			(4.225)
strong connection (by 90th pctl.) × post			7.023
			(4.533)
Observations	18,693	18,693	18,693
R-squared	0.249	0.247	0.247
mean(y)	9.272	9.431	9.439
sd(y)	54.56	54.94	54.90
time period	semester	semester	semester
time FE	✓	✓	✓
politician FE	✓	✓	✓
country FE	✓	✓	✓
party × time FE	✓	✓	✓
$controls_{it}$	✓	✓	✓
$controls_{ct}$	✓	✓	✓
SE clustered by country × semester			

Note: This table reports regressions of total number of contacts (Panel A) and in-person number of contacts (Panel B) on the following variables: (a) whether a country shock occurs (post), (b) whether the politician is strongly connected to the shocked country (strong connection) by median, (c) the interaction between (a) and (b), (d) strong connection by 75th percentile, (e) the interaction between (a) and (d), (f) strong connection by 90th percentile, and (g) the interaction between (a) and (g). All columns have time, politician-fixed effects, country-fixed effects, and the interaction of party and time-fixed effects. All columns include controls for whether a politician is part of the majority party in the chamber and whether a politician is the chairman of the hearing committee at the politician × time level, and for the usage of media by the lobbying country and log of trade volume between US and lobbying country at the country × time level. Each unit in the sample is observed at the politician × event × time (semester) level. The table also reports the pre-shock mean and standard deviation of the dependent variable for the connected politicians' group. Standard errors clustered at the country × semester level.

TABLE A.9: Effect of country shocks on sentiment, leave-one-out regressions

Country left out		Outcome: contributions (in thousand US$)				Outcome: sentiment				Outcome: # speeches			
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
	strong connection	65.05**	68.04**	62.93*	66.35**	0.578***	0.576***	0.579***	0.577***	4.447***	4.070***	4.428***	4.081***
		(31.954)	(31.801)	(32.121)	(32.016)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(1.240)	(1.151)	(1.247)	(1.157)
Afghanistan	post	60.66	61.32*	58.13	58.31	-0.0357**	-0.0355**	-0.0345**	-0.0345**	10.13***	8.175**	10.10***	8.182**
		(38.301)	(35.941)	(38.112)	(35.686)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(3.665)	(3.789)	(3.675)	(3.797)
	strong connection × post	-77.98**	-77.93*	-72.70*	-74.32*	-0.573***	-0.573***	-0.575***	-0.575***	-5.029***	-5.314***	-4.998***	-5.315***
		(39.351)	(39.415)	(38.704)	(38.928)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(1.212)	(1.137)	(1.217)	(1.140)
	strong connection	71.97**	68.16**	71.02**	67.70**	0.575***	0.575***	0.577***	0.577***	3.896***	4.036***	3.888***	4.069***
		(31.462)	(31.030)	(31.734)	(31.233)	(0.017)	(0.018)	(0.017)	(0.018)	(1.231)	(1.139)	(1.237)	(1.145)
Australia	post	54.75	55.01	54.11	53.60	-0.0330**	-0.0339**	-0.0313**	-0.0322**	9.867***	8.202**	9.849***	8.228**
		(37.135)	(35.425)	(36.884)	(35.173)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(3.612)	(3.755)	(3.620)	(3.762)
	strong connection × post	-81.88**	-75.12*	-78.25**	-73.10*	-0.571***	-0.572***	-0.573***	-0.575***	-4.501***	-5.260***	-4.483***	-5.285***
		(38.808)	(39.269)	(38.276)	(38.771)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(1.204)	(1.141)	(1.206)	(1.143)
	strong connection	-11.98	-13.41	0.775	8.902	0.580***	0.569***	0.579***	0.568***	-0.315	3.668***	-0.402	3.708***
		(102.358)	(102.011)	(98.294)	(95.204)	(0.023)	(0.024)	(0.024)	(0.024)	(1.099)	(0.916)	(1.091)	(0.927)
China	post	-9.659	-39.81	-15.60	-45.06	-0.0391	-0.0358	-0.0413	-0.0384	5.227**	2.061	5.154**	2.042
		(97.090)	(99.497)	(100.355)	(100.783)	(0.029)	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.030)	(2.162)	(2.232)	(2.132)	(2.190)
	strong connection × post	-0.355	11.93	-5.226	1.085	-0.565***	-0.563***	-0.564***	-0.562***	-0.429	-2.124**	-0.325	-2.116**
		(91.023)	(88.056)	(94.302)	(90.790)	(0.025)	(0.024)	(0.025)	(0.025)	(1.189)	(1.017)	(1.173)	(1.009)
	strong connection	76.26**	72.65**	74.17**	70.68**	0.584***	0.582***	0.586***	0.584***	2.567*	3.017**	2.572*	3.045**
		(31.941)	(31.375)	(31.821)	(31.224)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.020)	(1.395)	(1.328)	(1.405)	(1.336)
Iran	post	71.17**	65.24**	69.90**	63.98**	-0.0324**	-0.0296*	-0.0304*	-0.0277*	8.771**	7.827*	8.785**	7.863*
		(33.887)	(32.074)	(33.657)	(31.796)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(4.220)	(4.261)	(4.229)	(4.267)
	strong connection × post	-90.55**	-90.97**	-87.43**	-87.73**	-0.586***	-0.583***	-0.587***	-0.585***	-3.844***	-4.170***	-3.847***	-4.196***
		(37.561)	(38.293)	(37.007)	(37.717)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(1.214)	(1.164)	(1.222)	(1.172)
	strong connection	77.96**	72.72**	78.83**	73.74**	0.578***	0.576***	0.578***	0.576***	3.321**	4.499***	3.330**	4.543***
		(33.102)	(33.003)	(33.672)	(33.366)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(1.306)	(1.296)	(1.313)	(1.300)
Iraq	post	69.71*	70.50*	70.30*	70.76*	-0.0365**	-0.0364**	-0.0363**	-0.0359**	10.02***	9.638**	10.02***	9.671**
		(39.639)	(38.705)	(39.431)	(38.631)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.015)	(3.851)	(4.009)	(3.864)	(4.021)
	strong connection × post	-88.91**	-77.90*	-86.66*	-77.49*	-0.573***	-0.573***	-0.573***	-0.573***	-4.793***	-5.523***	-4.788***	-5.556***
		(44.506)	(45.766)	(43.939)	(45.171)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(1.244)	(1.150)	(1.247)	(1.154)
	strong connection	71.19**	67.67**	70.76**	67.75**	0.576***	0.575***	0.578***	0.577***	3.903***	4.073***	3.892***	4.102***
		(31.388)	(30.913)	(31.648)	(31.167)	(0.017)	(0.018)	(0.017)	(0.018)	(1.240)	(1.142)	(1.247)	(1.149)
Israel	post	55.87	56.06	55.18	54.67	-0.0345**	-0.0347**	-0.0329**	-0.0332**	9.918***	8.197**	9.902***	8.218**
		(37.152)	(35.439)	(37.069)	(35.325)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(3.605)	(3.752)	(3.614)	(3.760)
	strong connection × post	-80.75**	-74.23*	-77.57**	-72.70*	-0.573***	-0.573***	-0.575***	-0.575***	-4.508***	-5.298***	-4.488***	-5.318***
		(38.688)	(39.091)	(38.138)	(38.629)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(1.217)	(1.144)	(1.222)	(1.149)
	strong connection	70.14**	66.79**	68.66**	65.77**	0.577***	0.576***	0.578***	0.577***	3.926***	3.970***	3.921***	4.004***
		(32.314)	(31.730)	(32.341)	(31.769)	(0.017)	(0.018)	(0.017)	(0.018)	(1.247)	(1.144)	(1.254)	(1.151)
Qatar	post	50.91	55.11	49.71	52.73	-0.0323**	-0.0327**	-0.0310**	-0.0313**	9.709***	8.150**	9.698***	8.175**
		(36.820)	(35.643)	(36.720)	(35.527)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(3.604)	(3.744)	(3.613)	(3.751)
	strong connection × post	-79.64**	-73.38*	-75.43*	-70.75*	-0.573***	-0.572***	-0.575***	-0.574***	-4.361***	-5.184***	-4.349***	-5.210***
		(39.645)	(40.031)	(38.849)	(39.315)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(1.217)	(1.142)	(1.221)	(1.146)
	strong connection	70.01**	66.07**	69.60**	66.22**	0.578***	0.576***	0.579***	0.578***	3.953***	4.060***	3.948***	4.089***
		(31.288)	(31.076)	(31.631)	(31.395)	(0.017)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(1.239)	(1.135)	(1.247)	(1.142)
Saudi	post	52.02	51.55	51.15	50.06	-0.0332**	-0.0334**	-0.0315**	-0.0317**	10.01***	8.221**	9.994***	8.241**
		(36.773)	(35.144)	(36.594)	(34.939)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(3.596)	(3.753)	(3.606)	(3.761)
	strong connection × post	-78.96**	-72.81*	-76.33**	-71.81*	-0.574***	-0.574***	-0.576***	-0.576***	-4.422***	-5.409***	-4.409***	-5.429***
		(38.809)	(39.330)	(38.421)	(38.988)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(1.212)	(1.139)	(1.218)	(1.144)
	strong connection	69.94**	66.54**	68.46**	65.83**	0.576***	0.575***	0.577***	0.576***	3.881***	4.051***	3.869***	4.083***
		(31.560)	(31.139)	(31.707)	(31.253)	(0.017)	(0.018)	(0.017)	(0.018)	(1.233)	(1.138)	(1.239)	(1.144)
Spain	post	53.45	53.52	51.46	50.89	-0.0342**	-0.0344**	-0.0328**	-0.0330**	9.929***	8.172**	9.914***	8.198**
		(37.150)	(35.524)	(36.871)	(35.195)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(3.596)	(3.749)	(3.605)	(3.756)
	strong connection × post	-81.10**	-74.60*	-76.85**	-72.05*	-0.572***	-0.572***	-0.574***	-0.574***	-4.451***	-5.297***	-4.430***	-5.321***
		(38.725)	(39.162)	(38.027)	(38.544)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.018)	(1.212)	(1.144)	(1.215)	(1.147)
	SE clustered by country × semester												

Note: This table reports regressions of the amount of campaign contributions, sentiment, and # speeches (leaving out the country on the left) on the following variables: (a) whether a country shock occurs (post), (b) whether the politician is strongly connected to the shocked country (strong connection), and the interaction between (a) and (b). The first and fifth columns have time and politician-fixed effects. The second and sixth columns include in addition country fixed effects. Columns three and seven have, in addition to columns one and five, the interaction of party and time-fixed effects. Finally, columns four and eight add the country fixed effects, in addition to columns three and seven. All columns include controls for whether a politician is part of the majority party in the chamber and whether a politician is the chairman of the hearing committee at the politician × time level, and for the usage of media by the lobbying country and log of trade volume between US and lobbying country at the country × time level. Each unit in the sample is observed at the politician × event × time (semester) level. The table also reports the pre-shock mean and standard deviation of the dependent variable for the connected politicians' group. Standard errors clustered at the country × semester level.

TABLE A.10: Effect of country shocks on lobbying contacts, leave-one-out regressions

Country left out		Outcome: # total contacts				Outcome: in-person contacts			
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	connection	21.44***	22.76***	21.68***	23.02***	10.33**	9.152**	10.23**	9.101**
		(6.037)	(6.161)	(6.000)	(6.121)				
Afghanistan	post	15.28**	14.03**	15.16**	13.90**	18.54***	14.11***	18.20***	13.79***
		(6.645)	(6.372)	(6.558)	(6.275)	(5.126)	(4.434)	(5.076)	(4.377)
	connection × post	9.983	10.42	9.856	10.28	6.098	5.752	6.228	5.826
		(7.005)	(6.876)	(6.918)	(6.779)	(4.682)	(4.535)	(4.674)	(4.522)
	strong connection	7.594	15.86**	7.503	15.94**	7.511*	7.913*	7.368*	7.872*
		(7.313)	(6.658)	(7.379)	(6.683)	(4.096)	(4.131)	(4.090)	(4.130)
Australia	post	11.56	10.65	11.00	10.23	17.49***	12.66***	17.12***	12.35***
		(7.380)	(6.906)	(7.352)	(6.860)	(5.189)	(4.522)	(5.170)	(4.488)
	strong connection × post	21.95***	16.18**	22.22***	16.27**	10.04**	7.907*	10.21**	7.973*
		(7.900)	(7.242)	(7.918)	(7.218)	(4.806)	(4.571)	(4.808)	(4.562)
	strong connection	-24.99*	-19.15	-26.18*	-19.44	-15.91**	-9.556	-17.10**	-10.56
		(13.097)	(14.606)	(14.286)	(15.890)	(8.071)	(8.699)	(8.640)	(9.388)
China	post	38.51***	32.12**	36.15***	30.16**	36.72***	30.69***	34.99***	28.87***
		(12.813)	(13.575)	(13.613)	(14.625)	(8.802)	(9.434)	(9.236)	(9.875)
	strong connection × post	32.10***	22.44*	33.07**	22.57	17.75**	15.87*	18.73**	16.69*
		(12.020)	(12.543)	(13.258)	(13.964)	(8.338)	(8.756)	(8.848)	(9.361)
	strong connection	3.757	12.88**	3.900	13.10**	5.741	4.956	5.932	5.198
		(7.241)	(6.486)	(7.269)	(6.466)	(3.880)	(4.023)	(3.852)	(3.987)
Iran	post	5.299	6.693	5.183	6.634	11.04**	9.247**	11.15**	9.395**
		(7.525)	(6.792)	(7.505)	(6.743)	(4.629)	(4.349)	(4.609)	(4.323)
	strong connection × post	17.11**	11.71	17.05**	11.55	6.201	6.253	5.922	5.919
		(7.913)	(7.333)	(7.855)	(7.246)	(4.701)	(4.764)	(4.660)	(4.711)
	strong connection	4.720	13.09*	4.638	13.27*	8.900**	12.80***	8.722**	12.70***
		(7.683)	(7.208)	(7.695)	(7.178)	(4.153)	(4.107)	(4.112)	(4.066)
Iraq	post	4.493	-0.215	4.058	-0.477	8.760**	5.960	8.419*	5.606
		(7.826)	(6.845)	(7.764)	(6.769)	(4.451)	(4.094)	(4.400)	(4.023)
	strong connection × post	21.36**	14.58*	21.51**	14.50*	5.130	2.787	5.297	2.893
		(8.794)	(7.915)	(8.802)	(7.861)	(4.971)	(4.653)	(4.951)	(4.623)
	strong connection	7.789	16.67**	7.872	16.97**	8.508**	9.220**	8.435**	9.309**
		(7.339)	(6.572)	(7.395)	(6.580)	(4.035)	(4.020)	(4.026)	(4.008)
Israel	post	12.28*	10.82	11.91	10.61	18.47***	13.48***	18.21***	13.31***
		(7.393)	(6.812)	(7.355)	(6.748)	(5.237)	(4.478)	(5.212)	(4.434)
	strong connection × post	22.20***	15.75**	22.28***	15.61**	9.294*	6.975	9.384**	6.914
		(7.882)	(7.116)	(7.888)	(7.070)	(4.763)	(4.479)	(4.753)	(4.452)
	strong connection	7.679	15.62**	7.630	15.72**	8.317**	7.992*	8.161**	7.925*
		(7.374)	(6.702)	(7.442)	(6.734)	(4.062)	(4.128)	(4.063)	(4.137)
Qatar	post	11.13	10.35	10.60	9.945	16.94***	12.71***	16.57***	12.38***
		(7.421)	(6.920)	(7.398)	(6.876)	(5.121)	(4.518)	(5.099)	(4.481)
	strong connection × post	22.39***	16.21**	22.60***	16.26**	9.793**	7.828*	9.955**	7.899*
		(7.960)	(7.276)	(7.979)	(7.256)	(4.784)	(4.569)	(4.789)	(4.566)
	strong connection	7.002	15.08**	6.957	15.15**	7.595*	7.394*	7.422*	7.292*
		(7.411)	(6.685)	(7.471)	(6.711)	(4.063)	(4.122)	(4.064)	(4.127)
Saudi	post	11.56	9.837	11.03	9.390	16.89***	11.85***	16.49***	11.47***
		(7.469)	(6.895)	(7.444)	(6.848)	(5.143)	(4.454)	(5.120)	(4.414)
	strong connection × post	23.22***	16.03**	23.42***	16.09**	10.62**	8.010*	10.79**	8.109*
		(7.989)	(7.309)	(8.003)	(7.284)	(4.790)	(4.598)	(4.798)	(4.593)
	strong connection	7.106	15.47**	6.999	15.55**	7.690*	7.737*	7.496*	7.657*
		(7.390)	(6.707)	(7.472)	(6.746)	(4.082)	(4.146)	(4.088)	(4.156)
Spain	post	12.01	10.56	11.45	10.14	17.53***	12.78***	17.13***	12.43***
		(7.453)	(6.946)	(7.434)	(6.908)	(5.182)	(4.549)	(5.160)	(4.512)
	strong connection × post	22.52***	16.25**	22.79***	16.32**	10.11**	8.144*	10.31**	8.227*
		(7.977)	(7.291)	(8.009)	(7.280)	(4.795)	(4.590)	(4.804)	(4.589)
		SE clustered by country × semester							

Note: This table reports regressions of number of total contacts and in-person contacts (leaving out the country on the left) on the following variables: (a) whether a country shock occurs (post), (b) whether the politician is strongly connected to the shocked country (strong connection), and the interaction between (a) and (b). The first and fifth columns have time and politician-fixed effects. The second and sixth columns include in addition country fixed effects. Columns three and seven have, in addition to columns one and five, the interaction of party and time-fixed effects. Finally, columns four and eight add the country fixed effects, in addition to columns three and seven. All columns include controls for whether a politician is part of the majority party in the chamber and whether a politician is the chairman of the hearing committee at the politician × time level, and for the usage of media by the lobbying country and log of trade volume between US and lobbying country at the country × time level. Each unit in the sample is observed at the politician × event × time (semester) level. The table also reports the pre-shock mean and standard deviation of the dependent variable for the connected politicians' group. Standard errors clustered at the country × semester level.

TABLE A.11: Effect of country shocks on campaign contributions, including the Freedom Fries crisis as a shock

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Outcome: campaign contributions (in thousand $)				
strong connection	72.23**	68.02**	71.78**	68.29**
	(31.423)	(30.933)	(31.688)	(31.195)
post	55.98	55.60	55.43	54.42
	(36.781)	(35.173)	(36.745)	(35.049)
strong connection × post	-82.43**	-74.98*	-79.26**	-73.71*
	(38.400)	(38.897)	(37.896)	(38.463)
Observations	2,735	2,735	2,735	2,735
R-squared	0.273	0.275	0.286	0.288
mean(y)	168	168	168	168
sd(y)	535.6	535.6	535.6	535.6
time period	year	year	year	year
time FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
politician FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
country FE	-	✓	-	✓
party × time FE	-	-	✓	✓
controls_{it}	✓	✓	✓	✓
controls_{ct}	✓	✓	✓	✓
SE clustered by country × year				

Note: This table reports regressions of individual campaign contributions to politicians including the Freedom Fries crisis as a shock on the following variables: (a) whether a country shock occurs (post), (b) whether the politician is strongly connected to the shocked country (strong connection), and the interaction between (a) and (b). The first column has time and politician-fixed effects. The second column has in addition country-fixed effects. Column 3 has, in addition to column 1, the interaction of party and time-fixed effects. Finally, column 4 adds the country-fixed effects, in addition to column 3. All columns include controls for whether a politician is part of the majority party in the chamber and whether a politician is the chairman of the hearing committee at the politician × time level, and for the usage of media by the lobbying country and log of trade volume between US and lobbying country at the country × time level. Each unit in the sample is observed at the politician × event × time (year) level. The table also reports the pre-shock mean and standard deviation of the outcome variable for the connected politicians' group. Standard errors clustered at the country × year level.

TABLE A.12: Effect of country shocks on sentiment, including the Freedom Fries crisis as a shock

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Outcome: sentiment				
strong connection	0.580***	0.578***	0.582***	0.580***
	(0.017)	(0.018)	(0.017)	(0.018)
post	-0.0316**	-0.0322**	-0.0301**	-0.0307**
	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.014)	(0.014)
strong connection × post	-0.577***	-0.577***	-0.579***	-0.579***
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.017)	(0.018)
Observations	18,885	18,885	18,885	18,885
R-squared	0.567	0.569	0.571	0.572
mean(y)	0.859	0.859	0.859	0.859
sd(y)	0.348	0.348	0.348	0.348
time period	semester	semester	semester	semester
time FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
politician FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
country FE	-	✓	-	✓
party × time FE	-	-	✓	✓
controls_{it}	✓	✓	✓	✓
controls_{ct}	✓	✓	✓	✓

SE clustered by country × semester
*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

Note: This table reports regressions of politician sentiment including the Freedom Fries crisis as a shock on the following variables: (a) whether a country shock occurs (post), (b) whether the politician is strongly connected to the shocked country (strong connection), and the interaction between (a) and (b). The first column has time and politician-fixed effects. The second column includes in addition country fixed effects. Column 3 has, in addition to column 1, the interaction of party and time-fixed effects. Finally, column 4 adds the country-fixed effects, in addition to column 3. All columns include controls for whether a politician is part of the majority party in the chamber and whether a politician is the chairman of the hearing committee at the politician × time level, and for the usage of media by the lobbying country and log of trade volume between US and lobbying country at the country × time level. Each unit in the sample is observed at the politician × event × time (semester) level. The table also reports the pre-shock mean and standard deviation of the dependent variable for the connected politicians' group. Standard errors clustered at the country × semester level.

TABLE A.13: Effect of country shocks on # speeches, including the Freedom Fries crisis as a shock

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Outcome: # speeches				
strong connection	1.821***	1.869***	1.819***	1.885***
	(0.615)	(0.572)	(0.618)	(0.575)
post	4.841***	4.340**	4.838***	4.353**
	(1.775)	(1.828)	(1.779)	(1.832)
strong connection × post	-2.548***	-2.682***	-2.542***	-2.694***
	(0.624)	(0.584)	(0.626)	(0.586)
Observations	18,885	18,885	18,885	18,885
R-squared	0.511	0.547	0.512	0.548
mean(y)	9.783	9.783	9.783	9.783
sd(y)	8.728	8.728	8.728	8.728
time period	semester	semester	semester	semester
time FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
politician FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
country FE	-	✓	-	✓
party × time FE	-	-	✓	✓
controls_{it}	✓	✓	✓	✓
controls_{ct}	✓	✓	✓	✓
SE clustered by country × semester				

Note: This table reports regressions of the number of speeches including the Freedom Fries crisis as a shock on the following variables: (a) whether a country shock occurs (post), (b) whether the politician is strongly connected to the shocked country (strong connection), and the interaction between (a) and (b). The first column has time and politician-fixed effects. The second column includes in addition country fixed effects. Column 3 has, in addition to column 1, the interaction of party and time-fixed effects. Finally, column 4 adds the country-fixed effects, in addition to column 3. All columns include controls for whether a politician is part of the majority party in the chamber and whether a politician is the chairman of the hearing committee at the politician × time level, and for the usage of media by the lobbying country and log of trade volume between US and lobbying country at the country × time level. Each unit in the sample is observed at the politician × event × time (semester) level. The table also reports the pre-shock mean and standard deviation of the dependent variable for the connected politicians' group. Standard errors clustered at the country × semester level.

TABLE A.14: Effect of country shocks on lobbying contacts, including the Freedom Fries crisis as a shock

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Panel A: total # contacts				
strong connection	8.263	15.86**	8.083	15.89**
	(7.259)	(6.618)	(7.341)	(6.658)
post	12.91*	10.47	12.29*	10.01
	(7.428)	(6.846)	(7.402)	(6.802)
strong connection × post	22.15***	16.45**	22.48***	16.55**
	(7.789)	(7.139)	(7.821)	(7.125)
Observations	18,885	18,885	18,885	18,885
R-squared	0.235	0.257	0.239	0.261
mean(y)	23.93	23.93	23.93	23.93
sd(y)	96.90	96.90	96.90	96.90
Panel B: in-person contacts				
strong connection	9.271**	8.451**	9.005**	8.321**
	(4.028)	(4.098)	(4.031)	(4.109)
post	18.25***	12.70***	17.80***	12.32***
	(5.244)	(4.509)	(5.217)	(4.470)
strong connection × post	9.554**	7.989*	9.815**	8.110*
	(4.719)	(4.503)	(4.729)	(4.503)
Observations	18,885	18,885	18,885	18,885
R-squared	0.224	0.243	0.231	0.250
mean(y)	16	16	16	16
sd(y)	67.05	67.05	67.05	67.05
time period	semester	semester	semester	semester
time FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
politician FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
country FE	-	✓	-	✓
party × time FE	-	-	✓	✓
controls$_{it}$	✓	✓	✓	✓
controls$_{ct}$	✓	✓	✓	✓
SE clustered by country × semester				

Note: This table reports regressions of the total number of contacts (Panel A) and in-person contacts (Panel B) including the Freedom Fries crisis as a shock on the following variables: (a) whether a country shock occurs (post), (b) whether the politician is strongly connected to the shocked country (strong connection), and the interaction between (a) and (b). The first column has time and politician-fixed effects. The second column includes in addition country fixed effects. Column 3 has, in addition to column 1, the interaction of party and time-fixed effects. Finally, column 4 adds the country-fixed effects, in addition to column 3. All columns include controls for whether a politician is part of the majority party in the chamber and whether a politician is the chairman of the hearing committee at the politician × time level, and for the usage of media by the lobbying country and log of trade volume between US and lobbying country at the country × time level. Each unit in the sample is observed at the politician × event × time (semester) level. The table also reports the pre-shock mean and standard deviation of the dependent variable for the connected politicians' group. Standard errors clustered at the country × semester level.

TABLE A.15: Descriptive Statistics for public perception of foreign countries

Country	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	25th Pctl.	75th Pctl.
Afghanistan	3.20	0.63	1	5.35	2.96	3.63
Australia	1.19	0.32	1	1.56	1	1.56
China	2.75	0.71	1	6	2.21	3.04
France	2.34	0.51	1.48	3.53	2	2.67
Iran	3.45	0.62	1.40	6	3	4
Iraq	3.17	0.63	1	6	2.87	3.57
Israel	2.21	0.91	1	5	1.65	2.53
Saudi Arabia	2.92	0.78	1	5	2.45	3.26

Note: This table reports the unconditional summary statistics of the distribution of public perception of foreign countries across US districts, during the years 2000 - 2017. The table uses the favourability index reported in the Gallup Poll Social Series Respondent-level dataset on World Affairs from 1 - Very Favorable to 6 - Very Unfavorable. The statistics reported are the mean, standard deviation, minimum value, maximum value, 25th percentile value, and 75th percentile value. Data for Qatar is not available in the Gallup Poll Social Series Respondent-level dataset on World Affairs and data for Spain was not available with clean district identifiers.

TABLE A.16: Constituency-specific effect of country shocks on campaign contributions

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Local support:	Unfavorable	Neutral	Favorable
Outcome: campaign contributions (in thousand $)			
strong connection	524.2**	-59.58	-29.04
	(213.877)	(67.213)	(19.050)
post	448.0**	34.34	-20.50*
	(187.537)	(34.604)	(11.667)
strong connection × post	-527.4**	25.24	29.04
	(213.224)	(75.217)	(17.525)
Observations	308	192	284
R-squared	0.674	0.651	0.798
mean(y)	757.4	53.16	138
sd(y)	1111	63.88	195.3
time period	semester	semester	semester
time FE	✓	✓	✓
politician FE	✓	✓	✓
country FE	✓	✓	✓
party × time FE	✓	✓	✓
controls_{it}	✓	✓	✓
controls_{ct}	✓	✓	✓
SE clustered by country × semester			

Note: This table reports regressions of campaign contributions to politicians for subgroups of political constituencies that differ in their views of the shocked country on the following variables: (a) whether a country shock occurs (post), (b) whether the politician is strongly connected to the shocked country (strong connection), and the interaction between (a) and (b). To measure such views, columns (1) to (3) use the Gallup World Affairs poll on public perception of a foreign country in a given state year (for Senators) or district year (for Representatives). The *favorable* group includes observations from the 67th to 100th percentile of the distribution, the *neutral* group includes observations from the 33rd to 66th percentile, and the *unfavorable* group includes observations below the 33rd percentile. All columns have time, politician-fixed effects, country-fixed effects, and the interaction of party and time-fixed effects. All columns include controls for whether a politician is part of the majority party in the chamber and whether a politician is the chairman of the hearing committee at the politician × time level, and for the usage of media by the lobbying country and log of trade volume between US and lobbying country at the country × time level. Each unit in the sample is observed at the politician × event × time (year) level. The table also reports the pre-shock mean and standard deviation of the dependent variable for the connected politicians' group. Standard errors clustered at the country × year level.

TABLE A.17: Constituency-specific effect of country shocks on campaign contributions, including the Freedom Fries crisis as a shock

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Local support:	Unfavorable	Neutral	Favorable
Outcome: campaign contributions (in thousand $)			
strong connection	520.9**	-59.58	-29.04
	(212.303)	(67.213)	(18.588)
post	442.7**	34.34	-20.93*
	(185.087)	(34.604)	(11.568)
strong connection × post	-524.2**	25.24	29.34*
	(211.787)	(75.217)	(17.094)
Observations	310	192	290
R-squared	0.673	0.651	0.801
mean(y)	617	52.77	130.2
sd(y)	1028	66.11	185.8
time period	semester	semester	semester
time FE	✓	✓	✓
politician FE	✓	✓	✓
country FE	✓	✓	✓
party × time FE	✓	✓	✓
controls_{it}	✓	✓	✓
controls_{ct}	✓	✓	✓
SE clustered by country × semester			

Note: This table reports regressions of total individual campaign contributions for subgroups of political constituencies that differ in their views of the shocked country on the following variables: (a) whether a country shock occurs (post), (b) whether the politician is strongly connected to the shocked country (strong connection), and the interaction between (a) and (b). As a proxy for politicians' preferences toward a country, Columns (1) to (3) use the Gallup World Affairs poll on public perception of a foreign country in a given state-district-year. The *favorable* group includes observations from the 67th to 100th percentile of the distribution, the *neutral* group includes observations from the 33rd to 66th percentile, and the *unfavorable* group includes observations below the 33rd percentile. All columns have time, politician-fixed effects, country-fixed effects, and the interaction of party and time-fixed effects. All columns include controls for whether a politician is part of the majority party in the chamber and whether a politician is the chairman of the hearing committee at the politician × time level, and for the usage of media by the lobbying country and log of trade volume between US and lobbying country at the country × time level. Each unit in the sample is observed at the politician × event × time (year) level. The table also reports the pre-shock mean and standard deviation of the dependent variable for the connected politicians' group. Standard errors clustered at the country × semester level.

TABLE A.18: Constituency-specific effect of country shocks on lobbying contacts, including the Freedom Fries crisis as a shock

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Local support:	Unfavorable	Neutral	Favorable
Panel A: total # contacts			
strong connection	-39.29	44.80**	19.06
	(30.396)	(19.636)	(19.333)
post	-1.030	3.645	5.208
	(38.222)	(18.040)	(20.657)
strong connection × post	84.68**	12.62	29.14
	(33.796)	(21.074)	(22.208)
Observations	1,759	1,253	1,814
R-squared	0.479	0.549	0.482
mean(y)	68.33	94.48	103.5
sd(y)	82.65	109.2	151.3
Panel B: in-person # meetings			
strong connection	-15.43	25.96	10.84
	(18.352)	(16.069)	(19.511)
post	5.418	23.68	23.46
	(18.671)	(15.734)	(19.828)
strong connection × post	33.80*	-14.86	0.118
	(18.411)	(18.977)	(19.108)
Observations	1,759	1,253	1,814
R-squared	0.467	0.547	0.497
mean(y)	52.76	61.20	61.86
sd(y)	82.07	104.2	155.6
time period	semester	semester	semester
time FE	✓	✓	✓
politician FE	✓	✓	✓
country FE	✓	✓	✓
party × time FE	✓	✓	✓
controls_{it}	✓	✓	✓
controls_{ct}	✓	✓	✓
SE clustered by country × semester			

Note: This table reports regressions of the total number of contacts made (Panel A) and number of in-person meetings (Panel B) for subgroups of political constituencies that differ in their views of the shocked country on the following variables: (a) whether a country shock occurs (post), (b) whether the politician is strongly connected to the shocked country (strong connection), and the interaction between (a) and (b). As a proxy for politicians' preferences toward a country, Columns (1) to (3) use the Gallup World Affairs poll on public perception of a foreign country in a given state-district-year. The *favorable* group includes observations from the 67th to 100th percentile of the distribution, the *neutral* group includes observations from the 33rd to 66th percentile, and the *unfavorable* group includes observations below the 33rd percentile. All columns have time, politician-fixed effects, country-fixed effects, and the interaction of party and time-fixed effects. All columns include controls for whether a politician is part of the majority party in the chamber and whether a politician is the chairman of the hearing committee at the politician × time level, and for the usage of media by the lobbying country and log of trade volume between US and lobbying country at the country × time level. Each unit in the sample is observed at the politician × event × time (semester) level. The table also reports the pre-shock mean and standard deviation of the dependent variable for the connected politicians' group. Standard errors clustered at the country × semester level.

TABLE A.19: Descriptive Statistics for foreign-born population, by birthplace country

Birthplace	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	25th Pctl.	75th Pctl.
Afghanistan	6.1	6.7	0	36.2	1.0	8.6
Australia	4.7	4.2	0	21.4	1.3	6.5
China	81.5	119.9	0	1282.0	20.6	86.2
France	11.7	8.0	0.3	31.8	5.3	16.8
Iran	15.2	18.9	0	152.4	4.2	19.7
Iraq	17.7	38.3	0	366.8	1.4	14.7
Israel	28.7	49.1	0	186.8	1.6	21.9
Saudi Arabia	6.7	9.0	0	45.8	0.3	6.7
Spain	11.1	10.8	0	1282.1	4.6	50.1

Note: This table reports the unconditional summary statistics of the ratio of foreign-born population to US-born population across US districts, by birthplace country, during the years 2000 - 2016. The statistics reported are the mean, standard deviation, minimum value, maximum value, 25th percentile value, and 75th percentile value. To ease the interpretation, all numbers are multiplied by 10^4. Data for Qatar is not available in the American Community Survey.

TABLE A.20: Descriptive Statistics for differences of votes received by winners and closest losers in the year preceding the shock

Date of Shock	Country Affected	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	25th Pctl.	75th Pctl.
01/03/2001	China	64.6	70.9	0.2	205.4	9.9	83.8
11/09/2001	Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia	64.6	70.8	0.2	205.4	9.9	83.8
11/03/2003	France	59.7	59.8	0.05	204.6	16.3	83.8
20/03/2003	Iraq	59.9	59.8	0.05	204.6	16.3	83.8
12/10/2003	Spain	73.3	69.7	0.4	220.7	15.3	110.7
12/07/2006	Israel	73.3	69.7	0.4	220.7	15.3	110.7
09/03/2007	Iran	73.3	69.7	0.4	220.7	15.3	110.7
09/03/2009	China	78.3	68.3	0.03	209.5	17.8	114.0
15/03/2009	Australia	78.7	68.3	0.03	209.5	17.8	114.0
31/07/2009	Iran	78.3	68.3	0.03	209.5	17.8	114.0
07/04/2010	Qatar	78.5	68.3	0.03	209.5	17.8	114.0
11/10/2011	Iran	50.1	40.4	0.03	139.7	15.6	94.8

Note: This table reports the unconditional summary statistics of the distribution of political competition, proxied by differences of votes received by winners and closest losers across US states in the year preceding the shock. The statistics reported are the mean, standard deviation, minimum value, maximum value, 25th percentile value, and 75th percentile value. All numbers are divided by 10^4 to facilitate interpretation.

TABLE A.21: Constituency-specific effect of country shocks on lobbying contacts, using social ties and political competition to classify constituencies

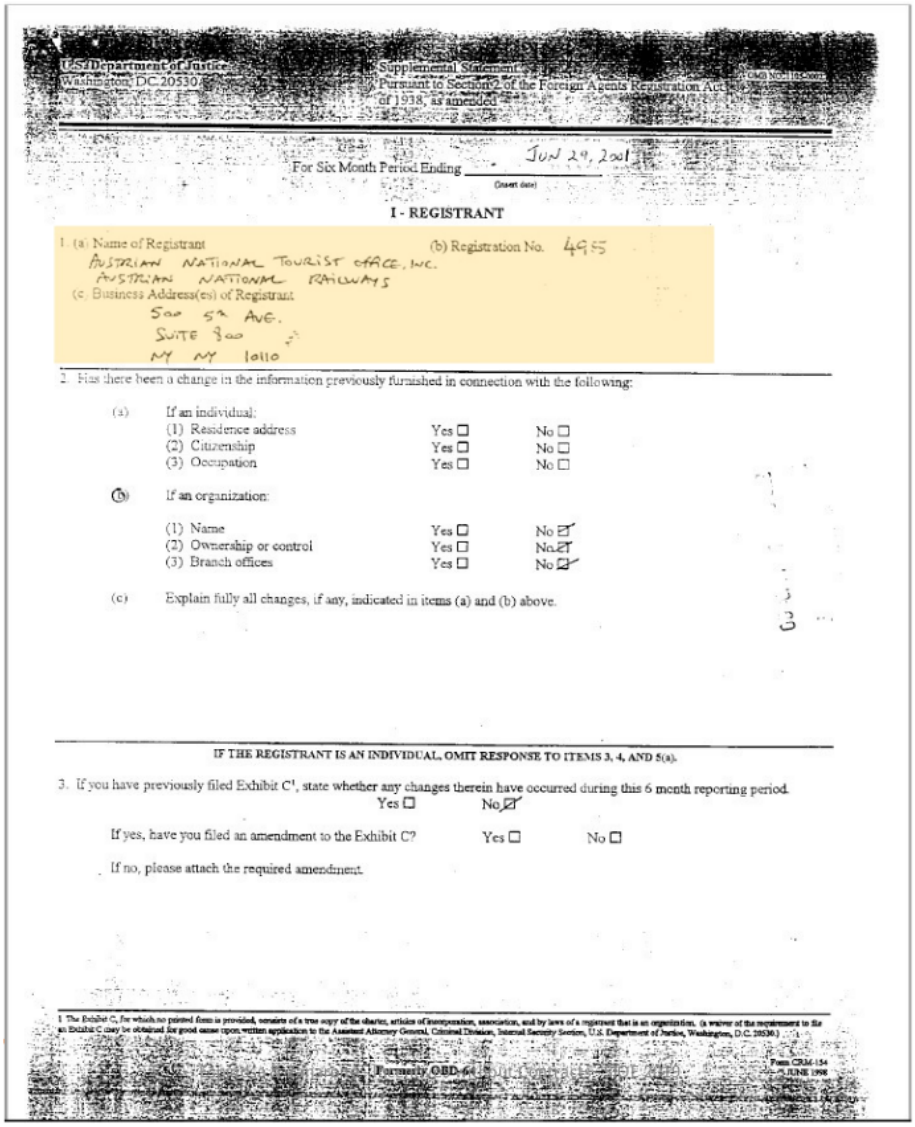
	% population born in foreign country			electoral win margin		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Local support:	Unfavorable	Neutral	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Favorable
Panel A: total # contacts						
strong connection	-19.67	5.626	27.07	4.871	38.39	26.41
	(20.273)	(14.267)	(16.468)	(16.844)	(26.749)	(41.768)
post	-7.048	-3.086	31.77	-8.926	21.78	35.56
	(13.150)	(10.957)	(21.994)	(18.568)	(26.233)	(46.174)
strong connection × post	40.38*	14.62	10.14	30.78	-8.003	54.49
	(22.721)	(13.749)	(16.951)	(19.648)	(25.814)	(41.555)
Observations	1,832	1,826	1,823	656	614	674
R-squared	0.558	0.436	0.528	0.415	0.518	0.393
mean(y)	95.82	115.2	102.2	115.1	137.6	96.71
sd(y)	154.7	169.2	170.1	170.8	211.7	115.7
Panel B: in-person # meetings						
strong connection	-1.518	-0.530	11.38	-4.706	4.195	-5.626
	(12.036)	(6.657)	(13.276)	(12.338)	(21.378)	(25.424)
post	4.559	14.10*	26.68	-6.855	24.94	12.75
	(7.934)	(7.344)	(19.385)	(13.342)	(29.611)	(23.746)
strong connection × post	4.957	3.973	9.160	32.31**	5.623	44.17
	(12.290)	(6.694)	(14.075)	(14.773)	(21.990)	(26.924)
Observations	1,832	1,826	1,823	656	614	674
R-squared	0.515	0.478	0.444	0.440	0.470	0.341
mean(y)	53.88	46.86	59.67	58.07	85.62	62.47
sd(y)	103.4	84.28	141.8	112.5	186	105.9
time period	semester	semester	semester			
time FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
politician FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
country FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
party × time FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
$controls_{it}$	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
$controls_{ct}$	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SE clustered by country × semester						

Note: This table reports regressions of the total number of contacts made (Panel A) and number of in-person meetings (Panel B) for subgroups of political constituencies that differ in their views of the shocked country on the following variables: (a) whether a country shock occurs (post), (b) whether the politician is strongly connected to the shocked country (strong connection), and the interaction between (a) and (b). As a proxy for politicians' preferences toward a country, Columns (1) to (3) use the percentage of the foreign-born population over the total population in a particular state-year, and Columns (4) to (6) use the difference of votes received by winners and closest losers for a particular state in the year preceding the shock. From each of the above proxy distributions, the favorable group includes observations from the 67th to 100th percentile of the distribution, the neutrally supported group includes observations from the 33rd to 66th percentile, and the unfavorable group includes observations below the 33rd percentile. All columns have time, politician-fixed effects, country-fixed effects, and the interaction of party and time-fixed effects. All columns include controls for whether a politician is part of the majority party in the chamber and whether a politician is the chairman of the hearing committee at the politician × time level, and for the usage of media by the lobbying country and log of trade volume between US and lobbying country at the country × time level. Each unit in the sample is observed at the politician × event × time (semester) level. The table also reports the pre-shock mean and standard deviation of the dependent variable for the connected politicians' group. Standard errors clustered at the country × semester level.

B DATA

B.1 Lobbying

FIGURE B.1: FARA report



U.S. Department of Justice
Washington, DC 20530

Supplemental Statement
Pursuant to Section 2 of the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, as amended

For Six Month Period Ending JUN 29, 2001
(Insert date)

I - REGISTRANT

1. (a) Name of Registrant AUSTRIAN NATIONAL TOURIST OFFICE, INC. AUSTRIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS (b) Registration No. 4955
(c) Business Address(es) of Registrant
500 5TH AVE.
SUITE 800
NY NY 10110

2. Has there been a change in the information previously furnished in connection with the following:

(a) If an individual:
(1) Residence address Yes ☐ No ☐
(2) Citizenship Yes ☐ No ☐
(3) Occupation Yes ☐ No ☐

(b) If an organization:
(1) Name Yes ☐ No ☑
(2) Ownership or control Yes ☐ No ☑
(3) Branch offices Yes ☐ No ☑

(c) Explain fully all changes, if any, indicated in items (a) and (b) above.

3

IF THE REGISTRANT IS AN INDIVIDUAL, OMIT RESPONSE TO ITEMS 3, 4, AND 5(a).

3. If you have previously filed Exhibit C[1], state whether any changes therein have occurred during this 6 month reporting period.
Yes ☐ No ☑

If yes, have you filed an amendment to the Exhibit C? Yes ☐ No ☐

If no, please attach the required amendment.

1 The Exhibit C, for which no printed form is provided, consists of a true copy of the charter, articles of incorporation, association, and by-laws of a registrant that is an organization. (A waiver of the requirement to file an Exhibit C may be obtained for good cause upon written application to the Assistant Attorney General, Criminal Division, Internal Security Section, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C. 20530.)

Formerly OBD-64

Form CRM-154
JUNE 1998

Lobbying data was manually encoded from FARA reports. Figure B.1 shows an example.

B.2 Politicians' speech sentiment

We use the Valence Aware Dictionary and Sentiment Reasoner (VADER) tool for sentiment analysis. This is available as a Python package.[19] It assigns a score to a

word or group of words while being sensitive to the intensity of the speech and the context of the speech. For example, the word 'okay' is assigned a score of +0.9, 'good' is assigned +1.9, 'great' is assigned +3.1, and 'horrible' is assigned a score of -2.5. VADER also considers contextual rules such as grammatical, and syntactical and is word-order sensitive. For example, "extremely bad" gets a more negative score than "bad", however, "kinda bad" gets a less negative score than "bad".

As an outcome, VADER gives a continuous score in the interval $[-1, 1]$. We consider each paragraph as in the text data as a separate observation. Below are two examples, each showing a paragraph with negative and positive sentiment along with the outcome variable.

> "That picture, sadly, is replicated and has been done over and over again, tens of millions of times throughout China, but in this case, there is a picture, and now it is posted and people are finally, at long last, seeing the gruesome reality of China's one-child-per-couple policy with its reliance on forced abortion, which is cruelty beyond words."

- Sentiment: -0.9052

> "Our strong ally and partner, Australia has demonstrated steadfast commitment and bold leadership in the GWOT and in essentially every other security endeavor in the region. ... Australia is the southern anchor of our security architecture in the region, and we will maintain the vibrancy of this strategic relationship."

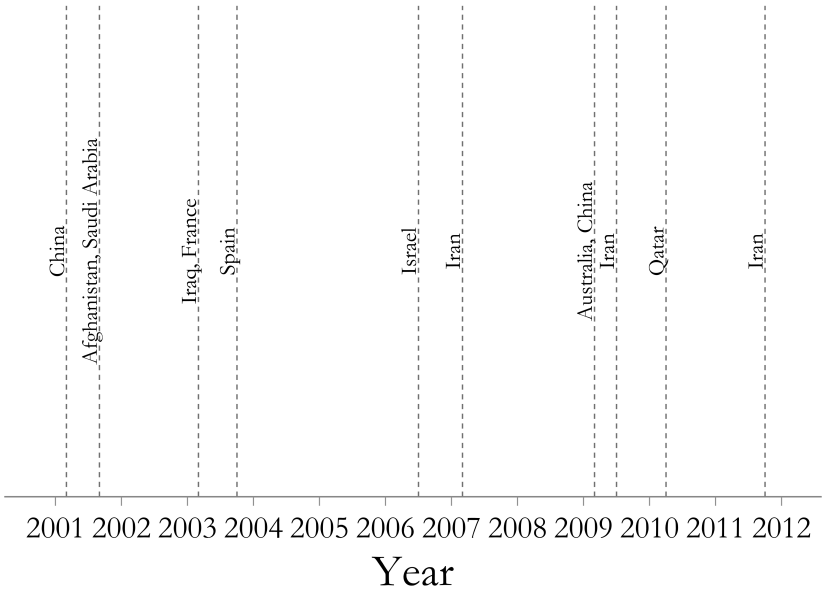
- Sentiment: +0.9231

Then, we find the mean sentiment across paragraphs where the same countries were mentioned. We do this for each politician for each day of each hearing.

B.3 Description of shocks

In this appendix, we describe in detail the reputational shocks used in our empirical analysis. These shocks are unexpected events that occurred in our data period, negatively affected the reputation of one or more foreign countries in the U.S., and received wide media coverage and attention in the U.S.

FIGURE B.2: Timeline of shocks



Note: This figure displays the timeline of shocks. They are distributed across the time horizon of data from FARA and the congressional hearings.

Here are more details about the shocks:

1. China - Hainan Island jet collision (March 1, 2001)

A U.S. Navy spy plane was on a routine surveillance mission near the Chinese coast when it was suddenly hit by the Chinese jet for no apparent reason (Rosenthal and Sanger, 2001). There were conflicting versions of the collision. The version of Chinese officials was that the U.S. plane turned abruptly into the Chinese jet, while the U.S. version was that the Chinese jet hit the U.S. plane (Pomfret, 2001).

The event negatively affected the reputation of China in the U.S. as several American journalists severely criticized China after the accident. An aviation expert told CNN that according to aviation protocols, the accident was not caused by the U.S., and the downed aircraft was a very sensitive piece of equipment (CNN, 2001b). After the release of the U.S. plane's crew, the U.S. questioned the Chinese version and criticized the handling of the incident (FoxNews, 2001).

2. Afghanistan - 9/11 attacks (September 11, 2001)

On this day, terrorist commandos hijacked and crashed four commercial passenger jets. Two aircraft slammed into the north and south towers of the World Trade Center in Manhattan, respectively. Afterward, a third plane crashed into the Pentagon. Lastly, a fourth plane crashed near Shanksville, Pennsylvania (CNN, 2001a).

The event negatively affected the reputation of Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia in the U.S. Afghanistan served as a training camp and basis for the attack perpetrators and executors. Saudi Arabia was the country of origin of Osama Bin Laden, the attack's mastermind, and several hijackers. Besides receiving massive and prolonged media coverage, the event prompted a wave of controls and restrictions affecting Islamic countries, some episodes of discrimination against their citizens (Mineo, 2021), and a long-term deterioration in how Americans view such countries. In March of 2002, 25% of Americans had negative views of Islam, as they thought that Islam was a religion that promoted violence. Twenty years later, the share of Americans holding this negative view doubled to 50% (Galston, 2021).

3. France - France's opposition to the US invasion of Iraq (March 11, 2003)

Despite being a long-standing ally of the US, France threatened to use her veto power at the Security Council to block the US-proposed invasion of Iraq. To express strong displeasure over the "ungrateful" partner, two Republican lawmakers held a news conference on March 11, 2003, to announce the name change from "French fries" to "freedom fries" for cafeteria menus in the three House office buildings (Loughlin, 2003). Some restaurants around the nation did the same.

The opposition to military intervention in Iraq negatively affected the reputation of France in the US. Most notably, American consumers decided to boycott French products. According to Pandya and Venkatesan (2016), $43 million in sales were lost during the week of March 16. In July 2003, President Chirac declared that France would not send troops to Iraq to help the American peacekeeping effort there (Sciolino, 2003). However, he insisted that long-term relations between France and the United States would not be damaged. Three years later, the anti-France sentiment in the US public started to decline due to a rise in opposition to the Iraq war and disapproval of the George W. Bush administration.

4. Iraq - US Invasion of Iraq (March 20, 2003)

While the U.S. plan to invade Iraq was known to many, the starting date of the invasion and military campaign came as a surprise given that the UN had not authorized military action against Iraq. The invasion therefore suddenly turned Iraq and its government into official war enemies of the U.S., with important and negative consequences on how U.S. citizens viewed Iraq.

Most Americans supported President Bush's decision to invade Iraq in March of 2003, as they were convinced that Iraq possessed nuclear weapons and supported Islamic terrorism – a major public concern after the 9/11 attacks (Williams, 2007). Right after the U.S. invaded Iraq, 72% of Americans favored the U.S. war with Iraq, according to Gallup polls. In addition, one in three Americans were convinced that war was not only just but necessary (Smith and Lindsay, 2003).

5. Spain - Spanish leader disrespects the US flag (October 12, 2003)

In 2003 United States troops carrying the American flag marched during Spain's national military parade upon invitation of the Spanish government (AP, 2006). During the march, opposition leader José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero unexpectedly decided to remain seated as a sign of dissatisfaction with the war in Iraq.

This event negatively affected the reputation of Spain in the U.S. Through that gesture, Zapatero made it clear that a large part of Spain did not support the United States in the war with Iraq. Indeed, a year later Zapatero became Prime Minister, and, the United States was no longer invited to participate in the military parade (AP, 2006). Furthermore, in 2004 Spain brought home the 1,300 Spanish soldiers that the previous government had sent to Iraq, thereby completely withdrawing Spanish

support to the U.S.-led military campaign.

6. Israel - Israel rocket launch on civilians (July 12, 2006)

The conflict started when Hezbollah, the Lebanese guerrilla group, launched a surprise attack on Israel, firing rockets at Israeli border towns (Myre and Erlanger, 2006). Israel responded by launching rockets that killed civilians in Lebanon.

This event negatively affected the reputation of Israel in the U.S. According to Saad (2006), most Americans agreed that Hezbollah was to blame for the conflict, but felt that the Israeli use of force was excessive. The USA Today/Gallup poll showed that the U.S. denounced the actions of the Hezbollah organization in Lebanon but stopped short of endorsing the extent of military action taken by Israel, and more than half of Americans said that Israel had gone too far or not justified its military action (Saad, 2006).

7. Iran[20] - The disappearance of Robert Levinson (March 9, 2007)

Robert Levinson was an agent who disappeared under mysterious circumstances while in Iran, during an unauthorized mission. There are diverging accounts of the reason he traveled to Iran. For example, according to Johnson and Shesgreen (2020) the Associated Press reported in 2013 that Levinson was on a mission for the CIA. In contrast, the FBI said he was working as a private investigator. The White House declared that Levinson was not a U.S. government employee during that time. Finally, Levinson's wife said that she did not know why he traveled to Iran, because her husband never spoke about it.

This episode negatively affected the reputation of Iran in the U.S., as the U.S. blamed Iran for the disappearance of Levinson. According to Goldman (2020), during the Obama administration, Iranian officials informed that the remains of Levinson had been buried in Pakistan, but since the remains were never found, the U.S. accused Iran of attempting to disguise its role in Levinson's disappearance. Nearly 14 years after the U.S. officially blamed two intelligence Iranian officers for the actions that ended in the likely death of Levinson (Johnson and Shesgreen, 2020), U.S. judge ordered Iran to pay $1.45 bn to Levinson's family in compensatory damages (BBC, 2020).

8. China - Chinese vessels harass US ship (March 9, 2009)

A U.S. Ocean surveillance ship was conducting routine operations when five Chinese ships suddenly sailed within 25 feet of the ship, waved flags and ordered to leave. Two of the Chinese ships blocked the American ship after it requested safe transit, while Chinese sailors tried to hook the cables towing the sonar equipment (Shanker, 2009).

This event negatively affected the reputation of China in the U.S. The incident prompted the US embassy in Beijing to lodge an official protest with the Chinese government. The Pentagon called the incident "one of the most aggressive actions they had seen" (CNN, 2009). In addition, the Defense Department said the Chinese ships "shadowed and aggressively maneuvered in dangerously close proximity" (France24, 2009), while the Pentagon stated that, "the unprofessional maneuvers by Chinese vessels violated the requirement under international law to operate with due regard for the rights and safety of other lawful users of the ocean" (France24, 2009).

9. Australia - Australian censorship of US anti-abortion site (March 15, 2009)

A user reported a US anti-abortion site to the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) in 2009, and in response to this complaint, ACMA banned the

U.S. website and removed its link (Cettl, 2014).

This unexpected action of ACMA negatively affected the reputation of Australia in the U.S. The Australian government censored an American website that displayed images of aborted fetuses thereby constraining the public's ability to receive information on an important and controversial issue. Moreover, the actions of ACMA directly targeted a U.S. information outlet, thus bringing the American public's attention on this event.

10. Iran - Detention of American hikers by Iran (July 31, 2009)

Three American vacationers were suddenly and unexpectedly arrested in Iran while hiking (Healy, 2009). The Iranian foreign minister said they had entered the country illegally, but the U.S. Secretary of State denied that and called the Iranian government's actions totally unfounded (Healy, 2009).

This event negatively affected the reputation of Iran in the U.S. Iran arbitrarily arrested the three American hikers without evidence to corroborate their accusations. According to Goodman and Cowell (2011), the Iranian officials never produced any evidence that the American hikers were spies. Accordingly, the United Nations secretary-general and the human rights group Amnesty International called for hikers' release. They were held in prison for more than two years, even though the U.S. repeatedly demanded their release. In 2011, when the hikers were finally released, they accused Iran of holding them hostage for the mere fact of being American (Walker, 2011).

11. Qatar - Fear of Terrorist Attack on United Airlines Flight 663 (April 7, 2010)

During flight 663 from Washington to Denver, a Qatari diplomat was found smoking in the aircraft lavatory in violation of safety rules and confronted by air marshals who were on the plane (Spencer, 2010; O'Connor, 2010).

This event received ample media coverage, and it negatively affected the reputation of Qatar in the U.S. The 9/11 attacks made Americans especially sensitive to the threat of terrorist attacks, and many people suspected the Qatari diplomat might have attempted a shoe bombing attack while in the bathroom. Furthermore, Fox News reported that the Qatari diplomat was on his way to a consular visit to a jailed Al Qaeda operative. The episode therefore created tension with the U.S. government (FoxNews, 2015), and even triggered an alert to a Europe-bound President Obama aboard Air Force One.

12. Iran - Assassination plot in the US (October 11, 2011)

U.S. officials alleged that there was a plot by the Iranian government to assassinate the Saudi Ambassador to the United States. According to Esposito and Ross (2011), This plot involved assassinating the ambassador with a bomb and subsequently bombing the Saudi and Israeli embassies in Washington, D.C. The U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder said the plan was "conceived, sponsored and was directed from Iran" (Esposito and Ross, 2011). The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ, 2011) declared that two people were charged for their alleged involvement in this plot.

This sudden and widely publicized event negatively affected the reputation of Iran in the U.S. The Obama administration accused the Iranian government of planning the attacks in collaboration with a Mexican drug cartel (MacAskill, 2011). According to Warrick and Erdbrink (2011), the allegation plunged U.S.-Iranian relations into a crisis. Furthermore, U.S. officials said the plot must have originated at the highest level of Iran's government, given the cost and complexity of its execution. According to Schimtt and Shane (2011), bank transfers and intercepted telephone calls in the

possession of U.S. officials indicated that Iranian senior leaders were likely involved in the plot.

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