Archival Sources
Congressional Whip Count Database

C. Lawrence Evans
College of William and Mary
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Most of the whip count data in this database were coded based on materials included in the papers of former House party leaders, especially former whips. The sources are best delineated by party and time period. Since I made use of nearly 500 separate file folders for this portion of the project, the location of the relevant materials is provided at the box level. If researchers would like information at the folder level, please contact me and I will provide the necessary citations.

- **Democrats, 1955-61, 84th Congress through the 1st Session of the 87th Congress**

The Carl Albert Collection, The Carl Albert Center, University of Oklahoma, Norman Oklahoma, Legislative Files, Boxes 26-58. My visit to the Albert Center was funded in part from a Visiting Scholars Grant generously awarded to me by the Center. Many thanks to the Carl Albert Center for this support, as well as for the guidance of Carolyn Hanneman and Todd Kosmerick during my visit.

- **Democrats, 1962-1970, 2nd Session of the 87th Congress through the 91st Congress**

The Hale Boggs Congressional Collection, Howard-Tilton Memorial Library, Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana, Majority Whip Collection, Boxes 1-3. Leon Miller of the special collections division at Howard-Tilton Library greatly enhanced my work during two visits.

- **Democrats, 1971-72, 92nd Congress**

The Thomas P. O'Neill Papers, John J. Burns Library, Boston College, Boston, Massachusetts, Series V, Subseries A, Box 347. Access to the O'Neill papers was greatly assisted by John Atteberry.

The Carl Albert Collection, The Carl Albert Center, University of Oklahoma, Legislative Files, Box 151.

- **Democrats, 1973-74, 93rd Congress**

Democratic whip count records for this Congress were not available in the papers of the relevant whip, John J. McFall, D-Calif. I thank AnnElise Golden, Holt-Atherton Special Collections Library, University of the Pacific, Stockton, California, for devoting several days to searching through the papers of Rep. McFall (albeit unsuccessfully) for whip items on my behalf.

Instead, most of the whip data for the 93rd Congress in this database were coded from records provided to me by Professor Lawrence C. Dodd of the University of Florida. Professor Dodd was an American Political Science Association Congressional Fellow during the 1974-75 academic year, serving in the office of the House Democratic Whip, and he originally secured these items during his time in the office. I am significantly indebted to Larry Dodd for his generosity in providing the documents, and more generally for his insights about the whip process. The master list of polled questions in the index is drawn from these records, but also from Dodd, Lawrence C., "The Expanded Roles of the House Democratic Whip System: The 93rd and 94th Congresses," *Capitol Studies* 7 (1979): 27-56.

The Dodd materials were supplemented by records from *The Carl Albert Collection*, The Carl Albert Center, University of Oklahoma, Legislative Files, Box 192.

- **Democrats, January 1975 – February 1976, 94th Congress**

John J. McFall was also House Democratic Whip during this Congress, and as mentioned, his papers do not include records of party whip counts. A partial set of records was obtained from *The Carl Albert Collection*, The Carl Albert Center, University of Oklahoma, Legislative Files, Box 237.

- **Democrats, 1977-86, 95th through the 99th Congress**

Congressional Papers of Thomas S. Foley, Manuscripts, Archives and Special Collections Department, Holland Library, Washington State University, Boxes 197-203. During my visit to the Foley archives, I benefited from the financial support of the Thomas S. Foley Institute, as well as further assistance from Ed Weber and Holly Tate of the Foley Institute and Laila Miletic-Vejzovic, then Head of Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections at Holland Library.

- **Republicans, 1975-80, 94th through the 96th Congress**

The Robert H. Michel Collection, Dirksen Congressional Center, Pekin, Illinois, Leadership Files, 1963-96, Boxes 1-3. Frank Mackaman, longtime Director of The Dirksen Congressional Center, provided critical assistance in securing copies of GOP whip records from Rep. Michel's papers, as well as during a follow-up visit to the Dirksen Center. A Congressional Research Award granted to me by the Center in 2011 made this visit possible.

Finally, the Excel coding shells that were used to create the member level data sets included in this database were adapted from roll call data sets created by Keith Poole for the Voteview.com website, as well as ICPSR Study No. 7803, Roster of United States Congressional Officeholders and Biographical Characteristics of Members of the United States Congress, 1789-1996: Merged Data, Carroll McKibbin. I thank these scholars and organizations, especially Professor Poole. Without the remarkable resources in

Voteview, compiling the data sets in the Congressional Whip Count Database would have been much more difficult.

Comprehensiveness of Sources

The evidence in this database derives from archival records of what once were working files maintained by House leadership offices. Many of these files date from 40 or 50 years prior to the preparation of the database. One potential cause for concern, then, relates to the likely comprehensiveness of the files and whether important material might have been lost over time. A second issue is whether any major gaps in the archival evidence are especially likely for certain time periods, potentially undermining our ability to generalize over time. Obviously, we cannot know with certainty where there are significant omissions in the archival record, but some informed conjectures are possible based on the physical state of the files and the published work and more informal observations of whip staff from the past.

Based on the extensive records and careful organization of the whip materials in the Carl Albert papers, I am confident that the evidence for Democrats for 1955-61 is nearly comprehensive. The Carl Albert Collection remains one of the most extensive and comprehensive of all congressional leadership papers.

In contrast, the papers in the Hale Boggs Collection are not as well organized and the quantity and scope of these materials varies significantly across different whipped issues and bills. My sense is that these files provide accurate information about the evolving positions of members until fairly late in the vote-gathering process, but that the records of last-minute changes immediately prior to floor action are uneven.

Randall Ripley's classic article about the House whip system (*American Political Science Review*, Vol. 58, 1964, 561-76) was based in part on count data he collected as an American Political Science Association Congressional Fellow working in the whip office of Hale Boggs. Ripley later included in his published work tables that incorporate his own records of Democratic whip counts from the early 1960s (see especially his Table V). The proportions of members responding as yes, no, undecided, and so on are fairly similar between the data sets included in this database and Ripley's results, and his references to the positions of particular members and voting blocs are fully reflected here. However, Ripley consistently reports lower numbers of undecided and nonresponsive members than are found in this database for the relevant counts (again, see especially Table V of his article). Most likely, his evidence included more extensive information about the final stages of the vote-gathering efforts than is available in the Boggs papers. These limitations to the archival records will not matter all that much if the goal is to capture position changes from early in the whip process to the vote. But if the goal is to evaluate how well whip results predict roll call behavior (Ripley's focus in the aforementioned table), then these gaps are problematic.

In addition, there are certain legislative questions that Ripley cites as whipped for

which there are no archival traces in the Boggs papers. Included, for example, are the famed Kennedy tax cuts, first considered by the House in 1963, and the 1964 civil rights act, both nontrivial enactments, to say the least. However, much of the whipping for the Kennedy tax measure was conducted by the Democratic members of the Committee on Ways and Means, and the 1964 civil rights bill was formally polled by the Johnson White House because the Democratic Caucus was divided on the matter along sectional lines. The evidence included in this database is only from whip counts formally conducted by the congressional leadership.

For the most part, the records from Tip O'Neill's two years as Democratic whip do appear to include both early positions and last-minute changes, but for several of the whipped questions there are archival traces only of the text of the question and perhaps aggregate results by zone or geographic area, rather than full individual-level information about member positions.

As mentioned, the Democratic data for 1973-76 are from photocopies made and maintained by Larry Dodd, as well as selected materials from the Albert papers. The quantity of records for 1973-74 is not large – only about 200 pages in total. While serving as an APSA Congressional Fellow in the office, Professor Dodd's access to the whip master files was fairly limited and he was only able to photocopy selectively. Still, the records that he gathered appear to capture positions changes at the individual level quite well.

The materials for 1975-76, in contrast, are mostly from the Albert papers and appear to be the final position tallies immediately before floor action. For 1975-76, then, the early positions and position changes probably are not fully reflected in the data provided here and thus the evidence may not be fully comparable with other years and Congresses.

The records from John Brademas's service as whip, 1977-80, are not incorporated in the Brademas Congressional Collection at New York University, but instead can be found in the Thomas Foley papers at Washington State University. Brademas's electoral defeat in 1980 caught the entire Washington political community by surprise, including staff in the whip office, and it appears that his aides neglected to have his whip records integrated into his personal papers. As a result, whip records from this era were incorporated into the papers of his successor in the position, Thomas Foley. That said, the Brademas records are extensive and very well organized, and I am confident that they are nearly comprehensive. For that matter, I also have a similar sense of the archival files from Foley's time in the position. The Brademas and Foley files are arranged by date and topic, and for the most part feature the same range of documents.

Finally, the House GOP evidence also appears to be nearly comprehensive about whip activities on that side of the partisan aisle, 1975-80. The raw archival files share the same basic structure as the records in the Foley Collection and the archivist staff at the Dirksen Center obviously has done an outstanding job at organizing and maintaining them.

Users of this database with more specific questions about the physical state and completeness of the underlying archival evidence are welcome to contact me for additional information.