# Policy Diffusion and Polarization across U.S. States<sup>\*</sup>

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September 2022

#### Abstract

Economists have studied the impact of numerous state laws, from welfare rules to voting ID requirements. Yet for all this policy evaluation, what do we know about policy diffusion—how these policies spread from state to state? We present a series of facts based on a data set of over 700 U.S. state policies spanning the past 7 decades. First, considering the introduction of new laws, state capacity seems to have a small role, in that larger and richer states are only slightly more likely to innovate policy. Second, the diffusion of policies from 1950 to 2000 is best predicted by proximity—a state is more likely to adopt a policy if nearby states have already done so—as well as similarity in demographics and voter policy preferences. Third, since 2000, political alignment is the strongest predictor of diffusion, while similarity in voter policy preferences can account for the earlier patterns, but the findings for the last two decades indicate a sharply increasing role of party control. We conclude that party polarization has emerged as a key factor recently for policy adoption, likely leading to a worse match between state policies and voter preferences.

<sup>\*</sup>We thank Tim Besley, Davide Cantoni, David Card, Maria Carreri, Janet Currie, Jeffrey Frieden, Matthew Gentzkow, Bryan Graham, Jonathan Gruber, Jonas Hjort, Lawrence Katz, Pat Kline, Brian Knight, Sendhil Mullainathan, Angel O'Mahony, Vincent Pons, Giacomo Ponzetto, Andrea Prat, Gautam Rao, Emmanuel Saez, Jesse Shapiro, James Snyder, Francesco Trebbi, Clemence Tricaud, Brian Wheaton, David Yang, as well as Jorg Spenkuch for his discussion at the NBER Summer Institute, and participants in presentations at NUS and the NBER Summer Institute (Political Economy) for helpful comments. We are grateful to a team of undergraduate research assistants—YeJin Ahn, Christian Alamos, Iden Azad, Emma Berman, Rupsha Debnath, Yifan Ding, AJ Grover, Rohan Jha, Chenxi Jiang, Chloe Liu, Matthew Liu, Junru Lu, Louis McKinnon, Akhalya Valluvan, Randol Yao, Owen Yeung, and Yi Yu—for exceptional research assistance.

## 1 Introduction

Economists have long studied the diffusion of innovations going back at least to the pioneering analysis of Griliches (1957) of agricultural innovations, followed by an extensive literature in the context especially of developing countries (e.g., Conley and Udry, 2010).

They have paid much less attention to the diffusion of policy innovations across government units, with the notable exceptions of the study of tax competition across U.S. states (Case, Rosen, and Hines, 1993; Besley and Case, 1995; de Paula, Rasul, and Souza, 2020), the theoretical literature on states as laboratories of democracy, (Callander and Harstad, 2015) and learning across countries (Buera, Monge-Naranjo, and Primiceri, 2011). This limited attention is surprising given that numerous studies across nearly each subfield of economics have examined the impact of policy innovations. A few recent examples are the impact of Medicaid adoption on health (Goodman-Bacon, 2021), voter ID laws on turnout (Cantoni and Pons, 2021), and minimum-wage laws on worker earnings (Cengiz et al., 2019). Better understanding the diffusion of such policies is not just of interest on its own, but could also inform our understanding of studies such as these.

In this paper, we study the innovation and diffusion of policies at the U.S. state level. While one could also consider the diffusion across countries or at other decision-making levels, the analysis of U.S. states has several advantages. The U.S. federalist system allows states to serve as "laboratories of democracy". At the same time, the states are still comparable, given similar political institutions. We also have a rich political science literature to build upon.<sup>1</sup> Further, a crucial benefit is the abundance of state-by-state data on policy adoptions.

Our main data source is the State Policy Innovation and Diffusion (SPID) Database (Boehmke et al., 2020) which includes information on over 700 state law policies adopted in the last century. For each state law—for example on "Kinship Care Program" or on "Voter Registration by Mail"—the data set reports the year of adoption by state (if ever). This recent data set, which to our knowledge has not been previously used in economics, provides a fairly representative coverage by topic of state laws, but only a limited coverage of the last decade. We thus extended its coverage through the 2010s for a subset of the policies.

While this data provides broad coverage, it may not necessarily cover the state-level policies of interest to economists. We thus constructed a second sample from economics papers. From the 11,316 NBER working papers from April 2012 to September 2021, we identify 169 papers with U.S. state-level policy variation. Out of this set, 91 papers meet our criteria, for a total of 57 policies (given that some policies are in multiple papers).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Political scientists have studied the innovation and diffusion of policies across U.S. states as early as Walker (1969). See Graham, Shipan, and Volden (2012) for a review article and Mallinson (2020) for a meta-analysis.

The combined data set covers 733 policies adopted from the 1950s onward, 676 from the SPID data set and 57 from the NBER data set. The laws are most often about the provision of public services, law and crime, economics, and civil rights. Figure 1 presents three examples. Anti-bullying laws (Figure 1a) spread from the initial adoptions in Louisiana, West Virginia, and Colorado in 2001 in a fairly idiosyncratic way. In comparison, the Medicaid expansion from the Affordable Care Act (Figure 1b) followed political lines. Finally, the adoption of the initial prescription drug monitoring policy (Figure 1c) appears geographically clustered.

We consider first a case study on Medicaid. As mentioned, the ACA Medicaid expansion spread largely to Democratic states (McCarty, 2019). A possible explanation is the higher need in Democratic states, but in fact the share of population that would benefit from the policy is larger in the Republican states. Since the costs of the policy are heavily subsidized by the federal government (Gruber and Sommers, 2020), this suggests that the state-level adoption was more a function of political considerations than of match to local needs. Has this always been the case? Interestingly, the initial Medicaid introduction from 1966 at the state level was essentially orthogonal to state-level voting, and similarly for the introduction of the food stamp program in the 1960-70s. This case study thus suggests a recent increase in the role of partisan politics in the diffusion of state-level policies, but we cannot tell whether this is a general feature, or when this change occurred. We thus turn to the full data set.

We consider three main questions. First, are some states more likely to introduce new policies? Second, what predicts the diffusion of a policy across states? Third, are there patterns that allow us to tease out different models of policy adoption?

We point out some caveats. First, the findings mostly describe the patterns of policy diffusion and do not reflect causal inferences (Manski, 1993). Second, while the data set has broad coverage, it lacks details such as the text of the law or the likely medium of diffusion. Third, we do not observe the effectiveness of each policy, and thus cannot evaluate the role of effectiveness in the diffusion process. We nonetheless think that this descriptive evidence is valuable to cast light on different models and for predictive purposes, e.g., predicting which states are likely to adopt a particular policy in a difference-in-differences study.

Which states originate new laws? One theory is that states with more resources, capacity, or "legislative professionalism" innovate more (Walker, 1969; Besley and Persson, 2009). If innovative policies require a fixed cost, then larger and richer states should be more likely to generate new policies (Mulligan and Shleifer, 2005). Nevertheless, population and income per capita are not reliable predictors of originating more laws. Overall, while there are specific states that consistently produce new policies (e.g., California) and those that do not (e.g., Mississippi), innovation appears to be mostly orthogonal to observable state characteristics.

How do policies diffuse? The diffusion may depend on competition, e.g., states raising

expenditures when neighboring states do (Case, Rosen, and Hines, 1993; de Paula, Rasul, and Souza, 2020), learning (Wang and Yang, 2021), common preferences across states, and ideological alignment (Volden, Ting, and Carpenter, 2008). We measure this both "statically" and "dynamically". For the static measure, we take the states that have adopted the policy at a particular cross-section (say, after the first 10 adoptions), and assess their degree of similarity in the different dimensions (e.g., geographic or political similarity). In the dynamic method, we use a logit hazard model outlining the dimensions along which policies tend to diffuse, given the observed adoption up to that period. The dimension of diffusion is informative about the underlying models. For example, diffusion along politically similar states would suggest the importance of ideological alignment.

We document that the patterns of policy diffusion have changed substantially over the last seven decades. Policy adoption from the 1950s to the 1990s is best predicted by geographic proximity. Another important predictor is demographic similarity: a state is more likely to adopt a policy if other states with similar demographics (such as income or urban percentage) have already done so. The adoption by politically aligned states is a weaker predictor.

In the 2000s and 2010s, geographic and demographic proximity remain similarly predictive, but by far the strongest predictor becomes adoption by politically aligned states, as measured by the Republican vote-share in recent elections.

These findings apply not just in the SPID data set, but also to the polices extracted from the NBER working papers, the types of policies that economists study.

Next, we relate these findings to leading models of policy diffusion. A set of explanations stresses correlated preferences and environments, learning, or competition among states. These (distinct) explanations all naturally capture the importance of geographic and demographic proximity in the earlier decades, whether due to similar contexts, local spread of information, or competition at the borders. The recent patterns are a less obvious fit, but it is plausible that recently information flows, the extent of competition, and the correlation in preferences across states may have shifted from mostly geographic to largely political. To control for preferences, we measure the similarity in policy views across states among voters surveyed in the American National Election Studies (ANES). To capture information flows and to an extent competition, we use migration flows across states. These two variables do predict policy diffusion, and they reduce the explanatory power of geography and demographics. However, they do not affect at all the importance of the political variables, suggesting that these explanations are less likely to account for the recent patterns.

A separate explanation is that in the recent decades, *party discipline* increasingly explains state policy, beyond the predictive power of local preferences, learning, or competition. To zero in on this explanation, we examine the impact of state party control on policy diffusion, controlling for the state voting patterns. Indeed, similarity in state government, which did not predict policy up until the 1990s, is highly predictive in the last two decades. Further, we provide causal evidence through an event study of switches from divided state governments to unified state governments (that is, the governor and the majority in both state houses belong to the same party). We detect no impact in the earlier decades, but in the last two decades, this transition indeed raises the probability of passing laws associated with the governing state party, with no impact on bipartisan laws.

A final explanation is that different types of laws, for instance in more politically controversial topics, have become more common. While we find similar results even after reweighting for changes in the composition of policy areas over time, we also address this concern by focusing on one specific category of laws: public health policies for preventing infectious diseases. We compare COVID-related state laws and rules, which we document are strongly driven by political factors, to state vaccination laws passed since 1980, which display no such pattern. Thus, these results are consistent with our general findings.

Our findings indicate an important change in the match of state policy to voter preferences. The patterns for the earlier years are consistent with the findings of Erikson, Wright, McIver, 1989, that state policy used to be largely driven by voter beliefs, not state party control. A contribution of our dyadic diffusion models is that we do not need to assign a partisan value to each law, as we use the *similarity* in voter beliefs and in state party control to predict the diffusion of laws; this approach allows us to use a larger sample of laws. Our findings for the last two decades indicate instead a decreased role of voter beliefs and a strong role for party control. We thus add to the growing literature on polarization (Poole and Rosenthal, 1985; Fiorina and Abrams, 2008; Caughey, Warshaw, and Xu, 2017; McCarty, 2019; Canen, Kendall, and Trebbi, 2020; Boxell, Gentzkow, and Shapiro, forthcoming), documenting a sharp uptick at the state level since the 2000s that mimics, with a delay, the trend for politicians in Congress since the 1950s. These findings imply likely a worse match of policies to local voter preferences (e.g., Strumpf and Oberholzer-Gee, 2002).

The paper is related to the literature on policy experimentation (e.g., Callander and Harstad, 2015, Hjort et al., 2021, and Wang and Yang, 2021). While we do not observe the policy effectiveness, the increased impact of party politics suggests that factors other than policy impact are playing a growing role in policy adoption.

The paper is related to the literature on policy diffusion. Relative to the small number of papers within economics, we provide evidence on broad patterns of diffusion for a wide range of policies, complementing the detailed evidence on specific policies, e.g., taxation in the pioneering contribution of Besley and Case (1995), state-level fair employment laws (Collins, 2003), and welfare reform (Bernecker, Boyer, and Gathmann, 2021). In political science, in line with our findings, Caughey, Warshaw, and Xu (2017), Grumbach (2018), and Mallinson (2021) also detect evidence of widening polarization in the adoption of state laws. Relative to these papers, our main contributions are that (i) we compare quantitatively the impact of polarization to the impact of geographic and demographic similarity; (ii) we document even stronger patterns for the policies studied by economists; (iii) we estimate similar polarization impacts for vaccination policies; (iv) we provide evidence on the models by testing additional predictions; and (v) we classify policy changes in economics papers.

## 2 Case Study: Medicaid and Food Stamp Program

Before we present the full analysis, we consider a case study. An important component of the Affordable Care Act was the expansion of the Medicaid health insurance to cover adults earning up to 138% of the Federal Poverty Line. The expansion comes at nearly no cost to the states, as the federal government pays 100% for newly eligible enrollees until 2016, and 90% thereafter (Gruber and Sommers, 2020). Despite this generous subsidy, the adoption at the state level has followed partian lines, as Figure 1b shows. Indeed, Figure 2a shows that the Republican vote-share of the state predicts very accurately the year of adoption.

This suggests a large partian impact on policy adoption, but it could be that the political preferences align with the underlying demand for the policy: the Republican states that delay adoption may have fewer people who would benefit from it. In fact, the opposite is the case: the states with higher Republican vote-share—the non-adopters—have a higher share of population that would benefit from the expansion (Figure 2b). The political preference thus appears to come at the expense of the match quality between the policy and the state.

A possible explanation is that major benefit expansions have always had this partisan structure. We thus revisit the initial Medicare roll-out enacted in July 1965. Voluntarily participating states received federal funds from January 1966, with an initial match of 50-83% across states, though the states had to cover certain groups and provide required benefits. This subsidy structure is thus not too dissimilar from the one for the ACA Medicaid expansion (though not as generous). Overall, 26 states enacted the Medicaid program within the first year, 37 within two, and nearly all within four years. Strikingly, the state political leaning does not predict the timing of adoption, as Figure 2c shows.

Another major public benefit expansion in the 1960s is the food stamp program. After county-level food stamp programs piloted in 1961, the Food Stamp Act was passed in 1964 and counties set up their own food stamp programs, with the federal government paying for the benefits and the states setting their own eligibility criteria. As the bin scatter in Figure 2d shows, the county voting patterns have no predictive power for the timing of approval. Demographics are predictive for the timing of adoption (i.e., counties with more vulnerable population) as Hoynes and Schanzenbach (2009) show, but not politics.

These case studies suggest that polarization may be playing a role in the current adoption of state politics in a way that was not the case in earlier years. Is this a general lesson? We address this question and others in the next sections.

## 3 Data and Summary Statistics

**SPID Data Set.** The main source of data is the State Policy Innovation and Diffusion (SPID) Database (Boehmke et al., 2020). The data set includes information on over 700 state law policies adopted in the last century and combines existing data sets on state-level adoptions with the purpose of providing a representative sample of state policy topics. The main datasets aggregated in the SPID data set are (i) Boehmke and Skinner (2012) with 79 policies, itself building on the pioneering work of Walker (1969); (ii) Caughey and Warshaw (2016) with 104 policies mostly related to certification requirements for professions; (iii) the Uniform Law Commission (which focuses on nonpartisan legislation) with 187 policies, (iv) the National Center for Interstate Compacts with 52 policies, and (v) other smaller sources. We present 50 randomly sampled examples of these laws in Table A.1a.

For each state law—for example on "Kinship Care Program" or on "Voter Registration by Mail"—the data set reports the name of the law, the source, its policy area, and the year of adoption in each state (if ever). The data set does not record if a law is rescinded, since it is a fairly rare event. Furthermore, the data set records only binary adoption, and not continuous variables such as the level of the minimum wage across states.

As with any policy data set, there are natural concerns with the representativeness and reliability. While there was certainly selection by topic in some of the meta-analyses used to build the data set, the final product is representative of the policy areas in typical state laws (Figure 3a, reproduced from Boehmke et al., 2020). We also cross-checked a sample of the laws and validated the adoption dates with rare corrections.

A significant limitation of the data set is the limited coverage of the most recent decade, as Figure 3b shows. We thus extended its coverage especially from 2015 to 2020 for a subset of the policies using publicly available data sources (see Figure 3b).

**NBER Data Set.** While the SPID data set is extensive, there is no guarantee that it covers the type of state laws of interests to economists. We thus collected a similar, though smaller, sample of policy adoptions used in economics papers. From the 11,316 NBER working papers from April 2012 to September 2021, we manually checked and identified 169 papers with U.S. state-level policy variation, covering especially labor, public, and health

economics (Column 2 in Table 1a). We then apply our sample restrictions, including the restriction to binary policy adoption, resulting in a sample of 91 working papers (Column 3). For 81 out of these 91 papers we can extract the timing of state-level policy adoption, typically from a table in the paper, covering 57 policies (given that, for example, multiple papers analyze the same policy of Medicaid expansion). In this sample, health economics is the most common field, followed by labor and public economics, and the share of published papers, 46 percent, is similar to the overall share for NBER papers of 48 percent (Column 1), and similarly for the share published in "Tier A" journals (following the categorization in Heckman and Moktan, 2020). The full list of these papers is in Table A.1b.

Main Sample. We pool the SPID and NBER data sources and apply a set of sample restrictions. First, we keep policies with the last adoption after 1950 since we do not have enough coverage to consider older historical patterns. Second, we consider only adoption in the contiguous 48 states, since coverage of adoptions by Alaska, Hawaii, and Washington DC is spotty. Third, the data set does not include repeals and includes only binary measures of adoption (as opposed to, say, the level of the minimum wage).

As Table 1b shows, the data set includes 676 policies from the SPID data set, with an average of 23 states ultimately adopting each policy, and 57 policies from the NBER data set, with an average of 29 states ultimately adopting. As Table 1c documents, the most common topics, broadly grouped, are public services such as health and education, law and crime (especially in the SPID data set), economics (especially in the NBER data set), and civil rights (especially in the SPID data set). Over time, the topics covered have not changed much (Figure A.1a), and similarly for the speed of adoption (Figure A.1b).

**Outcome Variables.** For 20 of the 57 policies in the NBER sample, we reconstruct the dependent variable studied in the papers, either through the replication files or public data sources. The 10 state-level outcome variables (given that there are repetitions across the papers), such as the private insurance coverage rate and BMI, are summarized in Table A.2a. We supplement these variables with 18 other state-level variables typically used in policy evaluations from the Correlates of State Policy Project (CSPP), such as the statelevel poverty rate or per capita welfare expenditure. We use these variables in Section 5.1.

**COVID and Vaccination Samples.** We collect 76 state policies enacted from October 2019 to August 2021 to deal with the COVID pandemic, such as the requirement to wear masks or school closures, from the COVID-19 U.S. State Policy database (CUSP) (Table A.2b). We record the policy adoption at the weekly level. We also collect information on the introduction of 28 state policies regarding vaccination mandates enacted since 1980 from sources such as the CDC and the Immunization Action Coalition (Table A.2c).

## 4 Evidence on Innovation and Diffusion

### 4.1 Innovation

We first consider whether there are states that are more likely to be innovators or early adopters of state-level policies. One theory is that states with more resources, capacity, or "legislative professionalism" tend to innovate policies (Walker, 1969; Besley and Persson, 2009). If innovating policies requires a substantial fixed cost, then larger and richer states should be more likely to generate new policies (Mulligan and Shleifer, 2005).

We define states that adopt a policy in its first year to be innovators, and sum the number of innovations by state. In Figure 4a-b we present a color-coded map of the U.S. displaying how often a state was an innovator in 1950-89 (Figure 4a) and in 1990-2020 (Figure 4b).<sup>2</sup> The map does not show an obvious pattern. California, the largest U.S. state by population, tops the list of innovators, but other large states such as Florida and Texas are in the middle of the pack and a smaller state such as Connecticut is among the top innovators.

Table 2 presents a statistical comparison between states in the top 20% of this innovation measure, versus states in the bottom 20%.<sup>3</sup> We find little evidence that states larger in population are more likely to be innovators, but some evidence only in the earlier period that states with higher per-capita income or higher "legislative professionalism" (Bowen and Greene, 2014) are more likely to be in the top-innovators group. Furthermore, innovations are not predicted by the pattern of voting in the state, and are not more likely to come from unified Republican or Democratic governments, compared to divided state governments. Innovative states do have a larger share of population in urban areas. Overall, while some states consistently produce new policies (e.g., California) and others less so (e.g., Mississippi), innovation appears to be mostly idiosyncratic on observable state characteristics.

### 4.2 Policy Diffusion

Following innovations, we examine the dimensions of similarity across states—geographic, demographic, and political—that predict the diffusion of policies. We consider first a static analysis of the first 10 states adopting a given policy, comparing their similarity along a particular dimension, relative to a benchmark of random diffusion. This static comparison provides non-parametric evidence but it does not use all the information on the path of diffusion, and it does not lend itself to multivariate comparisons of various determinants. We thus analyze the dynamics of adoption with a logistic hazard model.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>Figure A.2 presents similar plots splitting by the data source, SPID or NBER.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>In Table A.3 we present parallel evidence for the policies from the NBER papers.

Static Evidence. For each law, we consider the first 10 states that adopted (provided that this threshold of adoption was reached), and compute the proximity of these first 10 adopters with respect to the relevant dimension—e.g., geography and politics.

As a measure of clustering along a dimension, we use the Geary's C statistic, which is typically used to measure geographic correlation (Geary, 1954; Barrios et al., 2012). The statistic is a ratio of average pairwise squared differences. The denominator is an unweighted average of the squared differences between all pairs, and the numerator is a weighted average where the weight for each pair increases in their proximity along the specified dimension:

$$C = \frac{\frac{1}{W} \sum_{i=1}^{n} \sum_{j \neq i} w_{ij} (x_i - x_j)^2}{\frac{1}{n(n-1)} \sum_{i=1}^{n} \sum_{j \neq i} (x_i - x_j)^2}$$

where  $x_i \in \{0, 1\}$  is an indicator for whether state *i* has adopted the policy, *n* is the number of states in the sample,  $w_{ij}$  is the weight for the pair *ij*, and *W* is the sum of weights.<sup>4</sup> If the states that are closer in the dimension are similar in policy adoptions, the weighted average of the differences in the numerator should be smaller than the unweighted average in the denominator. Consequently, values of this measure below 1 indicate clustering, values above 1 suggest the opposite, and a value of 1 is the null hypothesis.

To gain intuition, consider 5 states on a line, A, B, C, D, E, with each state contiguous to the nearby ones, that is, A is contiguous to B, B is contiguous to A and C, and compute Geary's C with respect to contiguity. Consider first the case in which the adoption of a policy is (1,1,1,0,0), that is, A, B, and C adopted, but D and E did not. The contiguous pairs are (1,1), (1,1), (1,0), and (0,0), each repeated. We take the difference between each pair, square it, sum the squared differences and average, yielding a numerator of 1/4. The denominator has the average of squared differences between all pairs, which yields 12/20=3/5. This results in a C of  $\frac{1/4}{3/5} = 5/12 < 1$ , indicating substantial correlation among contiguous neighbors. Consider instead the case in which adoption is (1,0,1,0,1), with the same number of adoptions, but none contiguous. The numerator is 1 given that all contiguous pairs are of the type (0,1), while the denominator is the same as before; the overall C is 1/(3/5) = 5/3 > 1, indicating a negative degree of contiguous clustering in adoptions.

In our case, in the numerator we assign equal weight to the third of other states most similar in the dimension of interest—geography or politics—and put zero weight on other states. We display 1-C, so higher values correspond to higher similarity, and 0 corresponds to no clustering. We compare the observed clustering after 10 adoptions to a counterfactual of adoption by 10 random states, from 1000 simulations.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>The weight for pair ij may not equal the weight for the pair ji. For example, Michigan is in the closest third of states for Maine, but Maine is not in the closest third of states for Michigan.

In Figure 5a we display the geographic clustering of policies in the 1950s-70s (112 policies), 1980s-90s (233 policies), and 2000-10s (171 policies), indicating a degree of geographic clustering that is both substantial and persistent over time. For example, in the 1950s-70s the Geary C for the median policy corresponds to the 80th percentile of random policies.

In Figure 5b, we consider the extent of political clustering measured by the vote-share for the Republican presidential candidate, averaged over the two most recent elections. For the 1950s-70s and 1980s-90s, the median policy has a 1-C statistic that is close to 0, implying no measurable political clustering. In the 2000-10s, instead, we observe a clear rightward shift at all quantiles of the distribution, including a thick tail of policies that are heavily politically clustered. For example, at the 90th percentile, the average 1 - C for the 2000-10s is 0.2, indicating substantial correlation, compared to 0.08 for the earlier decades.

Thus we detect both geographic and, increasingly, political clustering in policy diffusion. This finding is robust to measuring the clustering at the 16th adoption (a third of the contiguous states) and at the 24th adoption (a half) (Figure A.3).

A limitation of this analysis is that geography and politics are correlated, which this analysis does not separate. We thus turn to a hazard-type multivariate model.

Hazard Model of Diffusion. For all states *i* that have not yet adopted policy *q* in year *t*, we model the discrete-choice decision to adopt  $(Y_{iqt} = 1)$  with a logit specification:

$$\log\left(\frac{P(Y_{iqt}=1)}{1-P(Y_{iqt}=1)}\right) = \eta_q + \Pi X_{it} + \sum_k \beta_k p\left(A_{-iqt}^k, A_{-iqt}\right) + \varepsilon_{iqt}.$$
 (1)

This specification, with the log odds on the left-hand side, has three right-hand-side variables. The first one,  $\eta_q$ , is a policy-specific baseline hazard rate for each decade, allowing for differences across policies in the overall probability of adoption. The second term,  $\Pi X_{it}$ , is a vector of state-level characteristics that captures the overall impact of state-level features on adoption. The coefficient on the log population term, for example, captures a further test of the state-capacity hypothesis in terms of overall adoption of policies.

The third, key term,  $\sum_{k} \beta_{k} p\left(A_{-iqt}^{k}, A_{-iqt}\right)$ , captures the influence of adoption by other states that are similar along a particular factor k, such as geography, demographics, or politics. We adopt a functional form that measures how likely, or unlikely, the pattern of adoption by similar states  $(A_{-iqt}^{k})$  is, relative to the adoption by all states  $(A_{-iqt})$ , with respect to a particular dimension k. Considering the case of geography (k = g), we first compute the probability of  $a_{-iqt}^{g} \in \{0, ..., 16\}$  adopters within the closest third of states, given the total number of adopters  $A_{-iqt} \in \{1, ..., 47\}$ , under the null of uniform adoption:

$$P(a_{-iqt}^{g}|A_{-iqt}) = \begin{pmatrix} A_{-iqt} \\ a_{-iqt}^{g} \end{pmatrix} \frac{\left(\frac{16!}{(16-a_{-iqt}^{g})!}\right) \left(\frac{31!}{(31-(A_{-iqt}-a_{-iqt}^{g}))!}\right)}{\left(\frac{47!}{(47-A_{-iqt})!}\right)}$$

The measure is then the probability of having fewer adopters in the closest set of states minus the probability of having more adopters in the closest set of states:

$$p\left(a_{-iqt}^{g}, A_{-iqt}, \right) \equiv P(A_{-iqt}^{g} < a_{-iqt}^{g} | A_{-iqt}) - P(A_{-iqt}^{g} > a_{-iqt}^{g} | A_{-iqt})$$
(2)

Consider a state *i* that has yet to adopt a policy that has been adopted by  $A_{-iqt} = 15$  states, of which  $a_{-iqt}^g = 5$  are in the closest third geographically. Under the null, the probability of seeing fewer adoptions in the closest third of 16 states is 0.35, and the probability of more adoptions in the closest third is 0.39. Hence, the measure is  $p(a_{-iqt}^g, A_{-iqt}) = 0.35 - 0.39 = -0.04$ : the adoption by nearby states is in line with the adoption nationwide. Suppose instead that 9 of 15 adoptions had been in the closest third is 0.99, and the probability of seeing more is just 0.002, and  $p(a_{-iqt}^g, A_{-iqt}) = 0.99 - 0.002 = 0.99$ , indicating high diffusion among the neighboring states.

This measure ranges from -1 (states similar to state *i* statistically have been unlikely to adopt a policy) to +1 (states similar to state *i* have proven quite likely to adopt). This functional form captures the strength of clustering along a particular dimension, with a cap; that is, if hypothetically 12 out of the 15 adoptions had been in the contiguous states, instead of 9 out of 15, the measure  $p(a_{-iqt}^g, A_{-iqt})$  would have been essentially the same, as the evidence was already statistically very strong. Later, we consider alternative measures, such as the proportion of the states in the closest third that have adopted. While the results are similar with alternative measures, this benchmark measure performs best on specification checks (discussed in Online Appendix Section A).

We build measures of demographic and political similarity in a parallel way, except that the set of the most similar states is time-varying. To capture demographic similarity, we take the average state-level log population, share of urban residents, and log income per capita over the last two years, standardize each variable within each year, calculate the absolute difference in each dimension, average across the three differences to create the index, and then identify the closest third of states. For the measure of political similarity, we take the third of states with the smallest absolute difference in the average Republican vote-share from the two most recent Presidential elections. Table A.4 shows for each decade pairs of states that are especially close along that dimension, and Figure A.4 displays how often a pair of states that are close along a particular dimension in a given year t are still close in that dimension in year t + 4. The stability is of course 1 for geography, around 0.9 for demographics, and between 0.6 and 0.9 for the politics.

A positive coefficient  $\beta_k$  on the similarity variable indicates that more adoptions by similar states increase the chances of state *i* adopting as well. The three similarity parameters— $\beta_g$ for geographic closeness,  $\beta_d$  for demographic closeness, and  $\beta_p$  for political closeness—are scaled to be comparable. So if  $\beta_g$  is larger than  $\beta_d$ , for example, it implies that on average adoption by geographically similar states matters more than adoption by demographically similar states to predict future adoption by a state.

We estimate specification (1) separately by decade, though we pool the 1950s and 1960s given the more limited coverage for the earliest years. In each year t, only states that have not yet adopted policy q are in the sample. For each policy, we start the model in the first year of adoption and end it in the last year of adoption in the sample, and exclude policies that end with fewer than 5 adopters or span less than 3 years. We cluster the standard errors at the state level to capture autocorrelation, as well as correlations across policies.

We stress that we do not place a causal interpretation on the estimates in (1) (Manski, 1993). For example, the adoption of a policy by a state may be predicted by the adoption of geographic neighbors because of learning and diffusion of information (Banerjee, 1992; Bikhchandani, Hirshleifer, and Welch, 1992), or alternatively because of common demand for a policy or a common shock (e.g., a shared lobbyist). With this in mind, it is still useful to examine which dimensions predict adoption, as they inform us about the most likely nature of common shocks and circulation of ideas. Furthermore, even viewing the results as purely descriptive, they enable one to make predictions about future adoptions, which can be useful, for example, in the econometric evaluation of a difference-in-differences design. In Section 5.2, we provide estimates with a causal interpretation from an event study design for a specific variable, the change in state government control.

Hazard Estimates. As Table 3 shows, we do not find any reliable pattern that statelevel demographics  $X_{it}$ , including state income or population, predict faster adoption. We thus turn to the similarity predictors  $\beta_k$ , starting from demographic similarity, as one would expect demographically similar states to be more likely to share contexts and preferences (with the caveat that our demographic measures may only capture this to an extent).

Demographic similarity is indeed predictive of adoption: in the 1980s we estimate a coefficient of 0.19 (s.e.=0.05), which remains about constant up to the most recent decades, at 0.26 (s.e.=0.07). These estimates are certainly consistent with the impact of similar context and preferences, but can also be interpreted in light of models of competition and

learning, if demographic similarity reflects these margins.<sup>5</sup>

Next, we consider the impact of geographic closeness, which we expect to capture the impact of competition across neighboring states, learning about policies, and similarity in contexts and preferences. Adoption by geographic neighbors clearly matters: in the 1970s we estimate a coefficient of 0.37 (s.e.=0.07), which remains about constant until the most recent decade, at 0.35 (s.e.=0.08). Thus, geographic similarity is highly predictive, with a larger impact than demographic similarity, and with consistent importance over time.

Third, we consider the role of similarity in the state-level Republican vote-share. This captures similarity in political preferences and, to an extent, in the political control of the state (we return to this distinction in Section 5.2). For the first five decades, political similarity is a modest predictor of adoption, with an effect size mostly between a third to a half of the magnitude for geographic similarity: 0.15 (s.e.=0.06) in the 1970s, 0.06 (s.e.=0.05) in the 1980s, and 0.19 (s.e.=0.05) in the 1990s. In the last two decades, however, the impact *triples*, at 0.42 (s.e.=0.05) in the 2000s and 0.51 (s.e.=0.06) in the 2010s. In the last two decades, political similarity has become the most important predictor of policy adoption.

We note that the pseudo R-squared has generally increased over time from 0.13 in the 1970s to 0.19 in the 2010s. Thus, the process of adoption has become more predictable.

Simulated Diffusion. In Figure 6 we present counterfactuals for the 1990s (Figure 6a) versus for the 2010s (Figure 6b). We take a hypothetical policy introduced by California in 2000, and we simulate its diffusion over 20 years or until 10 adopters. For every state that has yet to adopt, we calculate its probability of adopting, and based on that probability, we randomly draw whether it adopts in that year. We assume the same political and demographic variables from the relevant years (2000 onward) across the two plots, and only vary the estimated diffusion coefficients. We color-code the states as function of the probability that a state is among the first ten adopters across 1,000 simulations.

The policy with the estimated 1990s coefficients (Figure 6a) diffuses geographically in the West, as well as in some demographically similar states such as Florida. Meanwhile, with the estimated 2010s coefficients (Figure 6b), the policy is most likely to spread to the states with similar political leaning, such as in the Northeast, while geographically close but politically distanced states such as Nevada, Utah, and Arizona become less likely to adopt.

In Figures A.5a-f, we document a similar increase in the role of political leaning following an innovation in: (i) Connecticut, a state that is reliably Democratic like California but is smaller and on the other coast (Figure A.5a-b); (ii) Texas, a large, Republican state (Figure A.5c-d); and (iii) Ohio, a Republican-leaning Midwestern state (Figure A.5e-f).

**Robustness.** In Table A.6 we explore the robustness of the results in Table 3 to a range

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>Table A.5 shows the results for diffusion along each of the demographic variables separately.

of alternative specifications. We run the models for the decades 1950-70s, 1980-90s and 2000-10s and report the coefficients on demographic, geographic, and political similarity.

We present the results from (i) a linear probability model instead of a logit specification; (ii) a reweighted version of the baseline model holding the composition of policy areas fixed over decades, (iii) the baseline model with an expanded set of controls;<sup>6</sup> (iv) a parsimonious specification which drops the levels of state characteristics  $X_{it}$  (e.g., the level of urban %), which are typically not significant. The results are similar across these specifications. For comparability, we adopt the parsimonious specification in the panels to follow.

Next, we adopt alternative measures of adoptions among similar states: (i) using thresholds of the closest fifth, fourth, third, or half (Figure A.6) instead of the closest third in Equation 2; (ii) adoption by other states up to year t - 1, instead of up to year t; (iii) a weighted average of the binary adoption status of all other 47 states, with weights proportional to the other state's rank in similarity; e.g., the most distal state carries 1/47th of the weight of the most similar state. These results are very similar to the benchmark.

In rows 8-10, we present further alternative measures, such as the proportion of adoption among states in the closest thirds. These simpler parametrizations, compared to Equation 2, suffer from mis-specification issues detailed in Online Appendix Section A. Nevertheless, all measures point to the increasing role of politics.

Heterogeneity. In Table 4 we estimate the parsimonious specification featured in row 5 of Table A.6 for different subsamples. In the NBER sample of policies studied by economists, the increase in polarization is even larger than in the SPID sample, with a coefficient on political similarity for the most recent two decades as high as 0.63 (s.e.=0.10), compared to 0.40 (s.e.=0.05) in the SPID sample. For Interstate Compacts on which states cooperate to address a common problem, such as the Interstate Wildlife Violator Compact, we see less evidence of party polarization, as expected.

In Panel B we split the sample by policy area. For economic policies, we find a decrease in the role of geography over time, and a fairly constant role of politics. The decrease in the role for geography would seem to run counter to a strong role for competition across neighboring states. For non-economic policies the role of geography is about constant, and we observe an especially strong impact of political polarization, as one would expect given the more polarizing nature of social issues.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>The additional set of controls include the non-white percentage, the unemployment rate, indicators for unified Democratic and Republican state governments; quadratic terms for the proportion of other states adopted, Republican vote-share, log population, income per capita, urban percentage, non-white percentage, and the unemployment rate; adoption measures among the closest third of states in state government partisanship, migration flows, non-white percentage, and the unemployment rate; a flexible policy-specific baseline hazard parametrized as a step function that varies every five years; and state fixed-effects.

In Panel C we separately estimate the results for Republican-voting states, Democraticvoting states, and "battleground" states, by splitting the states into thirds based on their vote-share. The increased importance of politics is driven by the Republican-voting states and especially the Democratic-voting states, and less so by the battleground states. This fits with a party-driven model for the polarization. In the battleground states, the party in control varies from Democratic to Republican, so battleground states do not specifically adopt policies from one another, as opposed to states at the polar opposites that do.

Finally, returning to the "state capacity" model, we may expect a smaller impact of geographical closeness for larger states if state capacity enables them to learn from a broader range of other states. We find only suggestive evidence of such heterogeneity.

Comparison to Results in the Literature. The diffusion of policy along geographical and demographic lines is consistent with the results on tax legislation and competition across U.S. states in Besley and Case (1995) and de Paula, Rasul, and Souza (2020), for example, and with findings in the political science literature as early as Walker (1969) and in Mallinson (2020) who reviews the papers since then. More recently, Caughey, Warshaw, and Xu (2017), Grumbach (2018), and Mallinson (2021) find evidence, as we do, for the increasing importance of political alignment for policy diffusion. Relative to these papers, we compare quantitatively the impact of polarization to the impact of geographic and demographic similarity, we present results for the most recent years, and we document even stronger patterns for the policies studied by economists.

## 5 Evidence Relating to Models of Policy Diffusion

We now relate findings in the previous section to leading models of policy diffusion.

### 5.1 Correlated Environments, Learning, and Competition

A set of explanations stresses the role of correlated preferences and environments, learning across states, or competition among states. While these explanations are distinct, they share the prediction about the importance of demographic and geographic proximity for policy diffusion, whether due to similar contexts, local spread of information, or competition at the borders. The evidence for the 1950s to the 1990s thus fits neatly with these models.

These explanations are a less obvious fit for the patterns from the 2000-10s with the increasing weight on political diffusion. But it could be that the diffusion of information and the extent of competition have recently followed less geographic lines and more political lines. The correlation in preferences or environments across states may have also shifted

from mostly geographical to largely political. In this case, the shift in the policy adoption estimates may still reflect correlated preferences or environments. We present three pieces of evidence to assess these explanations.

Voter Policy Preferences. The first test for *correlated preferences* uses survey measures of voters' policy preferences from the American National Election Studies (ANES) beginning in the 1950s. Specifically, we find the average response to policy preference questions (e.g., whether abortion should be legal) in each state, standardize the ordinal responses across questions, and then calculate the average absolute difference across questions to measure the similarity in voter preferences between each pair of states. Since eleven states including Delaware, Vermont, and Wyoming have little or no representation in ANES until the 2000s (Figure A.7a), we only use the remaining 37 contiguous states (with the closest third now including only 12 other states) throughout the analysis. We provide more detail on the policy preference questions and the sample coverage in Online Appendix Section B.

Migration Flows. The second test uses cross-state migration, one type of interstate flows. If unobserved interstate flow variables such as information and competition are responsible for the diffusion of policies and have recently followed more political lines, then we might expect the observed interstate flow of migration to exhibit similar patterns and to predict policy diffusion. We thus construct measures of similarity identifying the top third of other states with the highest volume of inflow-outflow migration.

In Table 5 we first replicate the result of Table 3 pooling decades in Column 1-3 and including only the 37 states consistently represented in ANES. The results are very similar to the benchmark. Then in Columns 4-6 we add controls for similarity in voter preferences as well as in migration flows. Both have strong predictive power in the earlier period, but less so in the 1980s-90s. In the last two decades, the role of migration reappears, but not voter preferences. The addition of these variables reduces the explanatory power of geography by a third and reduces the impact of demographics by a fifth. These two new dimensions, however, leave the coefficients on political similarity nearly unaffected. In the specification without controls for voter preferences and migration, the political-based similarity coefficients are 0.03 (s.e.=0.05) in the 1980s-90s and 0.48 (s.e.=0.06) in the 2000s-10s; with the added controls, the coefficients are 0.03 (s.e.=0.04) in the 1980s-90s and 0.47 (s.e.=0.06) in the 2000s-10s. The lack of a change in the contribution of political similarity suggests that its growing role is likely driven by alternative factors, which we examine in Section 5.2.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup>We confirm the relevance of voter policy preferences in the earlier periods by computing, for each law, the similarity with respect to ANES policy preference questions that either match or do not match the policy area of the law. For example, we match voter responses to ANES questions on the economy to policies in the Economics policy area. Table A.7a shows the voter preferences that are more pertinent to a policy are also more predictive of its diffusion.

**Evidence from Outcome Variables.** As a final piece of evidence, we consider variables that are typical policy outcomes, such as the state-level opioid mortality rate, income, and poverty rate. If changes in local preferences or environments are driving the increased impact of politics in policy adoption, we would expect these outcomes to have become more correlated among politically similar states. If, instead, other factors are at play, the correlation between the outcomes and politics may not have changed over time.

We compute the Geary's C statistic using the closest third of states by vote-share for these variables, first for the period 1980-85 and then for the period 2005-10. Figure A.8a provides no evidence that these variables have become more politically correlated.<sup>8</sup>

These findings suggest that the increased weight of political variables on policy adoption is not due to patterns of interstate correlation in voter policy preferences, information flows, or competition, but mostly to other factors. We discuss a prominent one next.

### 5.2 Party Discipline

A separate explanation is that in the recent decades *party discipline* increasingly explains the diffusion of state policy, beyond the impact of local preferences or environments, learning, or competition. The evidence thus far does not allow us to distinguish this explanation, as the similarity in vote-share may just be capturing preferences of voters beyond the responses in the ANES survey, and thus correlation in preferences across states.

We thus examine the impact of state political control on policy diffusion, controlling for the state voting patterns. We categorize three types of state governments: unified Democratic (i.e., the governor is Democratic and both state houses have a Democratic majority), unified Republican, and divided state control (which encompasses all the non-unified cases). We construct a measure of similarity which defines the "closest" states in this dimension to be those with the same partisan control of the state government. In Columns 7 to 9 of Table 5, we add this variable to the logit model, considering separately the case of unified control (Republican or Democrat) and the case of divided split-party governments.

This measure yields evidence of an even more striking change over time. In the decades up to the 1990s, we do not find any evidence that similarity in state political control matters: the point estimate is near zero. In contrast, for the 2000-10s period, we estimate that for states under a unified state government, the strongest predictor of adoption is previous adoption by other governments with the same state party control (estimate of 0.48, s.e.=0.07). In contrast, for states with split governments, there is no predictive power of adoption by other states with split governments, which further underscores the role of party control. Thus, the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup>Figure A.8b documents that the outcomes have become less geographically correlated in recent times.

increase in importance of politics is even more striking when measured by partian control, as opposed to political preferences of the electorate.

Figure 7 summarizes the evidence from the hazard regressions, estimated decade by decade (Table A.7b).<sup>9</sup> Similarities in geography, demographics, policy beliefs, and migration across states have consistently predicted the likelihood of a state passing a law, with similar weights over time. On the other hand, similarities in the state-level voting and state government control explained little in the past, but in the last two decades, have become the most important predictor. We interpret the latter change as evidence of a shift in model of state policy-making, with party discipline taking on a newfound key role in the 21st century.

### 5.3 Additional Evidence

#### 5.3.1 Evidence Within Area: Vaccination Policies

A possible confound for the findings thus far is that the composition of policies in the sample has changed over time, for example, to include more politically controversial laws. Reassuringly, Figure A.1a shows that the composition of policy areas has remained fairly stable, except for the last 5 years, and re-weighting to hold the composition of policy areas fixed over the decades does not affect the estimates (Row 3 in Table A.6). Nonetheless, it would be useful to consider a narrower class of policies, for which we can compare adoption patterns in earlier years, versus more recently.

We thus focus on public health policies for preventing infectious diseases, comparing COVID-related state policies adopted since October 2019, such as masking policies and school closures, with earlier vaccination policies adopted since 1980, such as immunizations requirements for schools and hospitals.

For the COVID policies, given the shorter time frame, we estimate the model (1) at the weekly level in Column 1 of Table 6. We estimate a significant impact of demographic, geographic, and political similarity, which is consistent with the estimated patterns in the recent decades for the main sample. In Column 2 we find similarity in state party control to be the most important predictor.<sup>10</sup>For comparison, in Column 3 we estimate (at the yearly level) the adoption of vaccination policies beginning in earlier decades. In this sample, demographic similarity, voter preferences, and migration flows are the strongest predictors, with no impact of political similarity in vote-share or state party control in Column 4.

Even in this narrower topic of infectious disease prevention laws, we reproduce our key result: while geographic and demographic similarity have historically been the most important

 $<sup>^{9}</sup>$ Table A.7c shows the estimates from the same specification but without the measure of voter similarity from the ANES, which allows us to keep the full set of contiguous states.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup>Cui et al. (2021) also provides consistent evidence of partisan spread of COVID policies.

predictors of policy diffusion, recently party politics has become the foremost driver.

#### 5.3.2 Event Study on Party Discipline

The hazard estimates so far provide descriptive evidence on predictors of adoption. We now use an event study to provide causal evidence on the impact of party political control. We focus on the switch to unified party control at the state level, a distinction that the political science literature has found to be a critical threshold. We estimate the model

$$Y_{iqt} = \sum_{s} \sum_{d=-4}^{4} \delta_d \mathbb{1} \left\{ t - e_i^s = d \right\} + \Pi X_{it} + \boldsymbol{\alpha}_i + \gamma_{qt} + \varepsilon_{iqt}$$

where  $e_i^s$  is the year of switch s to unified party control in state i (with the state elections typically occurring late in the prior year,  $t = e_i^s - 1$ ), and the key parameter  $\delta_d$  is allowed to depend on the ideology of the policy q. We categorize the ideology of policies using the vote-share of the states that have adopted the law so far.<sup>11</sup> We control for each state's baseline probability of adopting left-leaning, right-leaning, and neutral policies with  $\alpha_i$ , for state government election years with  $X_{it}$ , and for the different levels of adoption with policyyear fixed effects  $\gamma_{qt}$ . We include all state-year-policy observations for states that have yet to adopt around the event window if at least one state has a switch during that window to identify the baseline parameters, such as the policy-year fixed effects  $\gamma_{at}$ .

Figure 8a displays the event study coefficients with 95% confidence intervals for the period 1990-2020. A switch to a unified state government does not lead to any increase in the passage of neutral-leaning state laws; it does not appear that unified government reduces gridlock. Next, we consider the impact on the probability of adopting a policy that aligns ideologically with the inaugurated unified state government, compared to the adoption of policies leaning in the opposite direction. We detect a statistically significant increase of about 2 percentage points in the 4 years following the switch, compared to the year before the switch. The increase arises already in year t, as one would expect, and appears to be

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup>We take the average 2-party Republican vote-share (demeaned by year) in the latest Presidential election as of the year of adoption, among the states that have adopted the policy by year t - 1. If a policy has been adopted on average by states with a 1 percentage point or higher advantage in the Republican vote-share, we define the policy as Republican-leaning, and conversely for Democratic-leaning policies. If the average vote-share of states adopting a policy is within the 2 percentage-point buffer, we code the policy as neutralleaning. Policies can be classified as neutral in one year but then ideologically aligned with one party in another year when new adoptions occur, but we drop a small fraction of policies that switch from left- to right-leaning or vice versa at some point in their life-cycle. Figure A.9a shows the distribution of average demeaned 2-party Republican vote-share among adopters for the policies over the last 30 years. Figure A.9b follows the ideological evolution of the three most left-, right-, and neutral-leaning policies in 1990 until 2020. Figure A.9c summarizes the number of policies under each ideological classification depending on the threshold used. (The event-study uses a threshold of 1 pp.).

persistent. In contrast, in the earlier 1950-1989 time period (Figure 8b) we do not uncover any change from a switch in party control on the probability of passing laws aligned with that party.<sup>12</sup> We find similar results using the event study estimator from Chaisemartin and D'Haultfœuille (2020) (Figure A.10c-d). Thus, this event study confirms the benchmark findings: partisan support of laws is a recent phenomenon at the level of U.S. states.

## 6 Discussion and Conclusion

We documented a series of facts about the diffusion of state-level policies in the U.S., and related them to different models of policy diffusion. The estimated impact of similarity in geography, demographics, and voter beliefs resonates with models of competition across states, learning from state to state, and underlying similarity of voter preferences. It is difficult to tell these models apart, given that they share several key predictions.

The pattern for the most recent two decades—a significant increase in the importance of political similarity, and especially of state party control—points to the increasing role of another factor: party influence. Thus, policy adoption at the state level increasingly appears to have a top-down influence, in addition to a bottom-up match to voter preferences.

This result runs parallel with other studies on polarization. A key finding in this literature is that politicians in the U.S. Congress have shown polarizing voting patterns since the 1950s. Figure 9 reproduces the trends in the House and the Senate using DW-NOMINATE, one of the commonly-used data sets in the literature. Our results indicate that the polarization of state-level policies did not start until later, in the 2000s. Still, its role is rapidly rising and the results for the COVID policies imply that it has affected even topics for which we do not find evidence of polarization in previous years.<sup>13</sup>

One of the most touted advantages of the U.S. federalist system is the ability of independent states to tailor their policies swiftly and optimally to voter preferences and state-specific needs. Yet the current trends suggest that the adoption of state policies is becoming less responsive to local economic demands, and instead bending more to partian forces. While measuring the welfare implications of such top-down policy choices is beyond the scope of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup>In Figure A.10a-b, we also show the event study estimates with the most plausible confound path (Freyaldenhoven et al., 2021). In Table A.8 we present the separate components of the event study estimates: the impact of a switch to a Republican unified government on the passage of Republican-leaning policies (as per the coding above, Column 2) and of Democratic-leaning policies (Column 3), with the difference in Column 4; the impact on neutral policies (Column 5); and the same specifications, but for switches to unified Democratic state government (Columns 6-9). The findings generally follow the expected patterns, with the largest impacts from switches to Democratic state governments for Democratic-leaning policies. In Column 10 we examine the impact of switches away from unified state governments, which yield smaller impacts.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup>This evidence on state polarization is consistent with the evidence on roll-call state data in Shor and McCarty (2011).

the paper, we note the implications about the quality of the match between policies and state voter preferences, as well as welfare externalities on other states (e.g., Knight, 2013).

Our findings raise a number of questions for future work. For one, it would be meaningful to disentangle the sources behind the increasing role of political factors, whether it be lobbyists, party rules, or organizations that provide "copy-and-paste" legislation, such as the American Legislative Exchange Council (e.g., Angelucci, Ash, and Longuet Marx, 2022). It would also be useful to know whether this trend of polarization has reached even lower levels of governments, such as city policy-making, or other decisions in the public interest, such as the content of textbook or medical rules.

Our findings also suggest that researchers can assess the extent to which any particular law diffuses more geographically or politically. As a first approximation, in Figure 10 we plot a scatter plot of our measure of clustering, 1 - Geary's C, computed for every policy along both the geographic and the political dimension. The shaded regions show the 5th to 95th percentile of the 1 - C statistic under the null of random diffusion. Generally, the actual policies fall into three categories. One group has a pattern of diffusion that is largely predicted by politics, such as the Medicaid expansion. A second group has diffusion that is predicted by both geography and politics, such as the ban on employers asking about a prospective employee's past salary. Finally, a third group, which includes Anti-Bullying Laws, appears to be fairly idiosyncratic, at least based on these parsimonious measures.

We envision that this categorization can guide researchers studying a policy change to identify the degree of correlation in the diffusion process of their policy, relative to the average paper of this kind. For example, the presence of geographic versus political diffusion suggests different concerns for identification, a topic which we leave for future work.

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# Figure 1: Three policy examples



(b) 2014 Medicaid expansion (Affordable Care Act)



(c) Initial prescription drug monitoring program







### Figure 2: Case studies of welfare programs

For Figures 2a-2c, the Presidential vote-share is from the most recent election to the year of adoption, and for non-adopters in Figures 2a-2b, the vote-share is from the 2020 election.



Figure 3: Policy sources and representativeness

Figure 3a is reproduced from Boehmke et al. (2020) and shows the correlation of policy areas between the policies in the SPID dataset and in the Pennsylvania Policy Database Project (McLaughlin et al., 2010). The Pennsylvania Policy Database is used as an example of policies in a typical state.

Figure 3b shows the number of active policies with ongoing adoptions for each year by the source of the policy. All sources are from the SPID dataset, except for the NBER policies. The "SPID (extended)" subgroup refers to policies from SPID that this paper extended for further coverage of adoption in recent decades.

## Figure 4: Innovating states

(a) Policies innovated 1950-1989



(b) Policies innovated 1990-2020





Figure 5: Correlation in geography and politics among adopters (random and observed)

(a) Correlation in geographic distance (first 10 adopters)







This figure plots the CDF of the 1–Geary's C statistic for policy adoptions, which measures the correlation of adoptions within a specified dimension. Geary's C is calculated by taking the weighted average of the pairwise squared differences in adoptions, where the weights are increasing in the similarity between the pair of states along the specified dimension. The weighted average is then divided by the unweighted average of the pairwise squared differences across all pairs of states. This figure uses a simple weighting scheme, in which for each state, the other states in the closest third by geographic distance (Figure 5a) or by Republican vote-share (Figure 5b) are given equal weight, and the remaining states outside the closest third are assigned zero weight. The measure is calculated in year that the policy reaches 10 adopters with ties are broken randomly. Under the null of uniformly random adoptions, the expected value of 1 - Geary's C is 0.

## Figure 6: Simulated policy diffusion

(a) Coefficients from 1990s

Start state: California, start year=2000, coefs decade 1990s



(b) Coefficients from 2010s

Start state: California, start year=2000, coefs decade 2010s



These maps show the probability of the diffusion of a policy innovated by California in 2009 for each of the other states based on the model estimated in Table 3. Figure 6a uses estimated coefficients from the 1990s decade, and Figure 6b from the 2010s decade.



Figure 7: Dynamics of policy diffusion dimensions

This figure plots the decade-by-decade estimates from the model in Columns 7-9 of Table 5 for the coefficients on the measure of adoption among the closest states in each dimension. 95% confidence intervals are shown with standard errors clustered by state.





(a) Events during 1990-2020

Policies are included after 5 adoptions. Policies that ever switch ideological categorization from one party to the other (e.g., from left to right) are excluded. 95% confidence intervals are shown with standard errors clustered by state.



Figure 9: Comparison to polarization in DW-NOMINATE



Figure 10: Policy-by-policy diffusion patterns

*Geographic correlation mean:* SPID=0.04, NBER=0.07, diff. *p*=0.10 *Political correlation mean:* SPID=0.02, NBER=0.08, diff. *p*=0.00 Shaded region indicate 5-95th percentiles for placebo policies

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	All (4/12 - 9/21)	Cross-state policy	Meets criteria <sup>*</sup>	Sample
Total	11316	169	91	81
Issue date	2017.3 [2.7]	2017.6 [2.8]	2017.2 [2.8]	2017.5 [2.7]
Field				
% in Labor Studies	23	32	30	28
% in Public Economics	23	40	32	31
% in Economic Fluctuations and Growth	22	7	1	1
% in Health Economics	12	52	62	67
Other	41	15	11	10
Publication				
% Published	48	46	49	46
% Published in "Top General Interest"	9	4	1	0
% Published in "Tier A"	14	15	19	20
Year published	2017.3 [2.4]	2016.9 [2.3]	2016.6 [2.5]	2016.8 [2.6]
% Policy adoption data available	_	—	89	100
% Replication data available	_	_	_	9

### Table 1a: Summary of NBER data set

Working papers numbered 18000-29318 are included. Means are reported with standard deviations in brackets for dates. Working papers can be listed under multiple fields. Papers on the same policy are all included in the sample. \*Criteria: Policy must be binary and active after the 1950s. Covid-19 policies are also excluded.

Table 1b:	Summary	statistics	of	policy	data	sets
	•/			<b>1</b> 1/		

		SPID				NBER		
	Mean (SD)	Min	Median	Max	Mean (SD)	Min	Median	Max
Number of policies	676	_	_	_	57	_	_	_
First year of adoption	1977.27(29.33)	1804	1983	2017	1987.81 (25.34)	1911	1995	2017
Last year of adoption	1998.10(17.13)	1949	2002	2021	2007.30(13.82)	1955	2014	2021
Number of states adopted	23.18(15.07)	1	21	48	29.21(14.68)	6	28	48

Policies with the last adoption before 1949 are dropped. Alaska, Hawaii, and Washington D.C. are excluded.

### Table 1c:Policy areas

			Number of policies (freq.			
Policy area	Main subgroups	Example	SPID	NBER		
Public Services	Health, Education	Medical savings accounts	183 (27%)	28~(49%)		
Law & Crime	Law & Crime	Gun open carry laws	193~(29%)	4(7%)		
Economics	Domestic Commerce, Labor	Bankrupcy laws	120~(18%)	20~(35%)		
Civil Rights	Civil Rights, Immigration	Gender discrimination laws	111 (16%)	2(4%)		
Environment & Energy	Energy, Environment	Renewable energy standards	36~(5%)	2(4%)		
Gvnt. Operations & Foreign Affairs	Government Operations, Defense	Direct democracy	33~(5%)	1(2%)		
	195	50-1990	199	01-2020	Differen	ice (SE)
--------------------------------	------------	---------------	------------	---------------	----------	----------
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(1)-(2)	(3)-(4)
	Top $20\%$	Bottom $20\%$	Top $20\%$	Bottom $20\%$	. , . ,	
Rep. two-party vote-share $\%$	1.17	3.02	1.13	1.10	-1.85	0.03
	[0.42]	[12.82]	[0.53]	[0.48]	(1.62)	(0.19)
Demeaned two-party vote-share	0.61	2.31	0.40	0.34	-1.70	0.06
	[0.74]	[12.53]	[0.33]	[0.30]	(1.58)	(0.11)
Unified Dem. state gvt.	0.22	0.52	0.21	0.15	-0.30	0.06
	[0.42]	[0.50]	[0.41]	[0.36]	(0.14)	(0.08)
Unified Rep. state gvt.	0.22	0.25	0.33	0.37	-0.02	-0.05
	[0.42]	[0.43]	[0.47]	[0.48]	(0.10)	(0.15)
Legislative professionalism	0.81	-0.68	0.35	0.42	1.48	-0.07
	[1.90]	[0.84]	[2.23]	[1.95]	(0.63)	(0.90)
Log(population)	15.17	14.71	14.99	15.16	0.46	-0.17
	[1.07]	[0.98]	[1.05]	[1.08]	(0.45)	(0.46)
Income per capita	0.70	0.58	3.79	3.77	0.11	0.02
	[0.57]	[0.49]	[1.32]	[1.36]	(0.04)	(0.27)
Log(income per cap.)	8.53	8.31	10.48	10.47	0.21	0.01
	[0.80]	[0.86]	[0.35]	[0.37]	(0.06)	(0.07)
Urban pop. $\%$	69.43	54.17	80.92	69.59	15.25	11.33
	[15.55]	[11.03]	[11.60]	[14.69]	(5.51)	(5.66)
Minority %	10.30	16.60	27.55	22.09	-6.30	5.46
	[8.81]	[10.51]	[14.46]	[11.98]	(4.03)	(5.50)
Unemployed %	6.72	6.56	5.27	5.41	0.16	-0.14
	[1.99]	[2.33]	[2.07]	[1.82]	(0.65)	(0.45)
States	11	10	11	11		

**Table 2:** Highest and lowest innovators (20%)

This table compares characteristics of the states in the highest and lowest 20% for first innovations. Averages are taken over the entire time period. Standard deviations are in brackets and standard errors in parentheses. Standard errors for the difference are clustered by state. Hawaii, Washington D.C., and Alaska are excluded.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Dep. var.: Policy adoption (logit)	50-60s	70s	80s	90s	00s	10s
Prop. of states adopted	2.47	0.33	2.09	3.26	2.49	3.14
	(0.25)	(0.46)	(0.24)	(0.19)	(0.23)	(0.27)
Republican vote-share	-0.50	-0.19	-0.60	0.23	0.43	-1.15
	(0.32)	(0.30)	(0.53)	(0.39)	(0.57)	(0.70)
Log(population)	0.03	0.01	0.00	0.04	0.01	0.04
	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.06)
Income per capita (\$10,000s)	2.77	-0.44	-0.16	-0.12	-0.14	-0.07
	(1.09)	(0.44)	(0.13)	(0.13)	(0.07)	(0.09)
Urban pop. $\%$	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Measure of adoption among other states closest	t in:					
Demographic index (pop., income per cap., urban $\%)$	0.42	0.20	0.19	0.18	0.22	0.26
	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.07)
Distance	0.42	0.37	0.25	0.35	0.29	0.35
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.08)
Republican vote-share	0.12	0.15	0.06	0.19	0.42	0.51
	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Baseline $P(Adopt)$	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.05	0.05	0.06
Observations	58814	53370	75259	90169	69305	32602
Policies	162	196	272	380	330	194
Pseudo $R^2$	0.22	0.13	0.14	0.19	0.17	0.19

 Table 3: Policy diffusion predictors by decade

This table shows the coefficients from a logit regression. Standard errors are clustered by state. The baseline hazard for each policy is parametrized by policy fixed effects for each decade. The closest states are defined as the third of all the states with the smallest absolute value difference in each characteristic. The difference in the demographic index is calculated by first standardizing the two-year moving averages of log population, urban %, and log income per capita across all states in each year, then taking the absolute difference in each of the three standardized demographic variables, and finally averaging the three absolute standardized differences. The closest states in terms of distance are the third of states that have the smallest distance calculated using the centroid of the states. For Republic vote-share, the closest states are defined as the third with the smallest absolute difference in the vote-share for the Republican presidential candidate averaged over the most recent two elections. Alaska, Hawaii, and Washington D.C. are excluded from the analyses. The last year in the dataset is 2020, which is included in the 2010s decade. Only policies spanning at least 3 years with at least 5 adopters are included.

Dem	ographic ir	ndex		Distance		Repu	blican vote-	share
1950-70s	1980-90s	2000-10s	1950-70s	1980-90s	2000-10s	1950-70s	1980-90s	2000-10s
Dep. var.	Policy ad	option (logit	:)					
Panel A.	Source of	f policy						
$NBER$ ( $R^2$	: 0.22, 0.25, 0	.19; N <sub>pol.</sub> : 14,3	30, 43)					
0.26	0.28	0.34	0.61	0.33	0.43	0.18	0.26	0.63
(0.17)	(0.11)	(0.08)	(0.18)	(0.11)	(0.09)	(0.17)	(0.12)	(0.10)
$SPID$ ( $R^2$ :	0.16, 0.16, 0.1	17; $N_{\rm pol.}$ : 253,	390, 332)					
0.37	0.22	0.23	0.40	0.30	0.28	0.16	0.12	0.40
(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)
Interstate	Compacts	(within SPI	$D) (R^2: 0.14)$	$, 0.13, 0.21; N_{\rm II}$	$_{\rm pol.}: 22, 26, 15)$			
0.16	0.16	0.42	0.48	0.69	0.05	0.20	-0.01	0.05
(0.11)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.10)	(0.13)	(0.12)	(0.09)	(0.16)	(0.11)
Panel B.	Policy ar	ea						
Economic	$s \ (R^2: \ 0.10, 0)$	.21, 0.18; $N_{\text{pol.}}$	: 48, 63, 71)					
0.37	0.18	0.31	0.63	0.38	0.20	0.17	0.13	0.20
(0.11)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.10)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.12)	(0.07)	(0.08)
Non-Econ	omics $(R^2)$ :	0.17, 0.16, 0.17;	$N_{\text{pol.}}$ : 219, 3	57, 304)				
0.36	0.23	0.24	0.35	0.28	0.33	0.16	0.14	0.49
(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)
Den el C	D+-+-	-1	_4.					
Third of a	by state	characteri	sucs blican vota	ahama (D2	0 1 0 0 1 5 0 1 5	N 007 4	00, 075)	
		nynesi nepi	0.26	$-shure (R^-:$	0.16, 0.17, 0.17	; N <sub>pol.</sub> : 267, 4	20, 375)	0.41
(0.07)	(0.19)	(0.06)	(0.20)	(0.06)	(0.29)	(0.13)	(0.08)	(0.41)
(0.01)	(0.00) tatae with a	(0.00) moet neutrai	(0.09) Lvota chara	(0.00)	(0.08)	(0.11)	(0.08)	(0.08)
0.31	0.26	0 19	0 30	0.20	0.26	0.12	0.05	0.19
(0.01)	(0.20)	(0.12)	(0.03)	(0.23)	(0.20)	(0.12)	(0.06)	(0.13)
Third of s	tates with 1	(0.00) highest Dem	ocratic vot	(0.00) e-share (B <sup>2</sup> .	0.16.0.17.0.1	(0.00) 7: N . · 267	(0.00)	(0.00)
0.42	0.22	0.26	0.58	0.31	0.33	0.17	0.24	0.66
(0.08)	(0.22)	(0.11)	(0.08)	(0.01)	(0.08)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.10)
Third of s	tates with l	hiahest nonu	lation $(B^2)$		(0.00)	20 375)	(0.00)	(0.10)
0.48	0.31	0.38	0.39	0.22	0.25	0.27	0.05	0.39
(0.11)	(0.09)	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.08)
Third of s	tates with l	lowest popul	$ation$ ( $R^2$ : 0	.16, 0.17, 0.17:	$N_{\rm pol}: 267.42$	0,375)	()	()
0.25	0.20	0.11	0.46	0.36	0.39	0.10	0.17	0.45
(0.08)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.07)	(0.04)	(0.07)

#### Table 4: Heterogeneity in policy diffusion

This table predicts the diffusion of policies along geographic and political lines in several subsets of the data set. For each subset and time period (1950-70s, 1980-90s, and 2000-10s), a parsimonious diffusion model is estimated, which includes only (i) policy fixed effects, (ii) the proportion of adopters in all states, and the measure of adoption among the closest third of states in (iii) a demographic index combining population, income per capita, and urban % (see notes in Table 3 for details), (iv) geography, and (v) Republican vote-share in the most recent presidential election. The table shows coefficients on (iii), (iv), and (v) from the logit regression with standard errors clustered by state below in parentheses. The pseudo- $R^2$  and number of policies are reported in parentheses in chronological order corresponding to the three time periods.

In Panel A, the model is estimated separately for policies in NBER working papers, the SPID data set, and the Interstate Compacts source from the SPID data set. The Interstate Compacts are policies on which states cooperate to address a common problem.

In Panel B, the results are reported separately for policies in the "Economics" policy area and all other policies.

In Panel C, the states are first partitioned into thirds each year based on a characteristic (e.g., Republican vote-share in the most recent presidential election). The coefficients are then allowed to differ and reported separately for each third. The exercise is implemented for two characteristics: Republican vote-share and population. \$38\$

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Dep. var.: Policy adoption (logit)	60-70s	80-90s	00-10s	60-70s	80-90s	00-10s	60-70s	80-90s	00-10s
Prop. of states adopted	1.34	1.97	1.95	1.34	1.96	1.97	1.32	1.96	2.00
	(0.19)	(0.11)	(0.15)	(0.20)	(0.11)	(0.15)	(0.20)	(0.11)	(0.16)
Divided state government							0.09	0.05	-0.14
							(0.09)	(0.05)	(0.07)
Measure of adoption among other states closest in:									
Demographic index (pop., income per cap., urban %)	0.34	0.16	0.21	0.27	0.14	0.18	0.27	0.14	0.17
	(0.09)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.06)	(0.07)
Distance	0.37	0.22	0.21	0.19	0.18	0.13	0.20	0.18	0.13
	(0.08)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Republican vote-share	0.11	0.03	0.48	0.08	0.03	0.47	0.08	0.02	0.40
	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.04)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.04)	(0.05)
Migration flows				0.26	0.08	0.20	0.26	0.08	0.20
				(0.12)	(0.10)	(0.07)	(0.12)	(0.10)	(0.07)
ANES voter preferences				0.32	0.09	0.08	0.31	0.08	0.05
				(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.05)
State gvnt. partisanship (unified Dem./unified Rep./divided)							-0.13	0.03	0.48
							(0.08)	(0.06)	(0.07)
Divided gvnt.×State gvnt. party							0.17	0.05	-0.72
							(0.15)	(0.11)	(0.12)
Observations	73524	117436	75298	73524	117436	75298	73504	117405	75298
Policies	242	414	358	242	414	358	242	414	358
Pseudo $R^2$	0.15	0.16	0.17	0.16	0.16	0.17	0.16	0.16	0.18

#### Table 5: Models of policy diffusion: Migration, voter preferences, and state party control

This table shows the correlation in policy adoption among states that are closer in demographics, distance, Republican vote-share, migration flows, voter preferences on the ANES survey, and state government partisanship. See Table 3 for the definition of the states closest in demographics, distance, and Republican vote-share. For migration flows, the closest states are defined as the third with the highest sum of in- and out-migration. For ANES voter preferences, the closest states are those with the smallest average difference in standardized responses on ANES questions regarding policy preferences. For state government partisanship, the closest states are defined as those with the same party control of state government (unified Republican, unified Democratic, or divided). We assign Nebraska, which has a unicameral nonpartisan state legislature, to the party of its governor. Each column reports a separate logit regression within the time period indicated in the header. The baseline hazard for each policy is parametrized by policy fixed effects within each time period. Standard errors clustered by states are in parentheses below.

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	CC	OVID	Vaccir	ne laws
Dep. var.: Policy adoption (logit)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Prop. of states adopted	3.32	2.48	1.42	1.19
	(0.23)	(0.20)	(0.47)	(0.42)
Divided state government		0.16		0.10
		(0.18)		(0.21)
Measure of adoption among other states closest in:				
Demographic index (pop., income per cap., urban $\%$ )	0.22	0.22	0.36	0.18
	(0.08)	(0.10)	(0.11)	(0.11)
Distance	0.31	0.35	0.18	-0.09
	(0.05)	(0.11)	(0.09)	(0.13)
Republican vote-share	0.42	0.04	0.04	-0.11
	(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Migration flows		0.14		0.21
		(0.18)		(0.15)
ANES voter preferences		0.12		0.36
		(0.09)		(0.10)
State gvnt. partisanship (unified Dem./unified Rep./divided)		0.38		-0.18
		(0.12)		(0.14)
Divided gvnt.×State gvnt. party		-0.37		0.20
		(0.26)		(0.33)
Observations	27751	12864	22515	15331
Policies	76	64	28	28
Pseudo $R^2$	0.32	0.32	0.17	0.18
Time unit	Weeks (Mo-Su)	Weeks (Mo-Su)	Years	Years
Time range	10/2019-8/2021	10/2019-12/2020	1980-2020	1980-2020

## Table 6: Vaccine regulations and COVID-19 policies

This table shows the coefficients from a logit regression. Standard errors are clustered by state. The baseline hazard is parametrized by policydecade fixed effects for vaccine laws and policy-month fixed effects for COVID policies. See Tables 3 and 5 for the definition of closest states in each characteristic. Alaska, Hawaii, and Washington D.C. are excluded from the analyses. Only policies spanning at least 3 time periods with at least 5 adopters are included.

#### 40

# **Online Appendix**

# A Alternate measures of correlated adoptions

In the hazard model analysis (Section 4.2), we use a two-sided "likelihood" as the baseline measure of how concentrated the adoption of a policy has been among states that are (dis)similar in each dimension. We tried other measures that may be simpler but did not perform as well in specification checks. In this section, we define three alternate measures and discuss their shortcomings. Reassuringly, as shown in Table A.6, we find that the dynamic patterns of policy diffusion remain similar regardless of the measure used.

We assess two attributes of each measure. First, we consider its range of possible values as a function of the number of total adopters. Drastic variation in the range may lead to mis-specification when entering the measure as a linear term in the logit, as done in the main analysis of Table 3, since this assumes that the same coefficient applies to early as well as to late adopters of the policy. In the second assessment, we check directly for this mis-specification by allowing the coefficient on the measure to vary by the number of total adopters so far: for the first five adopters (1-5), the second five adopters (6-10), the third five adopters (11-15), and the later adopters (>15). Stable coefficients are encouraging, but coefficients that systematically differ between the early and the later adopters indicate that the estimates from the model under- or over-estimate the responsiveness to adoption among similar states at some stage of the policy's life-cycle.

To start with the baseline likelihood measure, Figure A.11a shows that its range goes from -1 to 1 and is fairly consistent across the domain of total adopters. Figure A.11e then plots the coefficients on the first three groups of 5 adopters and on the following adopters for the two dimensions of interest, distance and Republican vote-share. There does not appear to be any systematic ordering or reversals in the coefficients across the bins, and the coefficients generally remain within each other's confidence intervals. These checks return a favorable evaluation of the baseline measure.

Now for the three alternate measures below, we notate  $a^k \in \{0, 1, ..., 16\}$  as the number of adopters among the 16 states that compose the closest third in dimension k, and  $A \in \{0, 1, ..., 47\}, A \ge a^k$ , as the number of adopters among all other 47 contiguous states.

**Proportion of states in the closest third that are adopters**  $(a^k/16)$ . As Figure A.11b shows, the range of this measure is limited in both the early and late stages of a policy's lifecycle. For instance, if there are 5 total adopters of the policy, then the measure can range only from 0/16 to 5/16. From 16 to 31 total adopters, the measure ranges from 0 to 1. After 32 total adopters, the range shrinks toward the upper region. Another downside is that this measure

does not incorporate information about the total number of adopters, though intuitively, we should consider a case when there are 10 total adopters of a policy and all 10 are in the closest third as a stronger sign of correlated adoptions than the case when there are 30 total adopters of which 10 are in the closest third. In light of these drawbacks, Figure A.11f finds that the coefficients on the first bin of 5 adopters are significantly lower, and even becomes negative, compared to the coefficients for the rest of the bins. Hence using this measure in the main specification would lead to a poor fit of the early stage diffusion process.

**Proportion of all adopters that are in the closest third**  $(a^k/A)$ .<sup>14</sup> As shown in Figure A.11c, this measure ranges from 0 to 1 until there are 17 total adopters, at which point there must be more total adopters than adopters in the closest third and thus the upper bound of the range decreases. From 32 total adopters, the lower bound of the range becomes strictly positive, since there must be at least one adopter in the closest third, and continues to increase. Given this narrowing range, similar concerns arise as with the previous measure. Figure A.11g confirms these issues, and shows that the coefficients are systematically increasing in the bins. For this measure, a single coefficient in the specification would be overly sensitive for the early adopters and too unresponsive for the later adopters.

Proportion of states in the closest third that adopters minus proportion of all states that are adopters  $\left(\frac{a^k}{16} - \frac{A}{47}\right)$ . Figure A.11d plots the range of this measure. The difference between the upper and lower bounds linearly increases in the number of total adopters and is maximized at 1 while the number of total adopters is between 16 and 31. After 32 total adopters, the range begins to linearly decrease. Figure A.11h shows that this measure is not as poorly behaved as the previous two in the logit model, but the coefficients do seem to systematically decrease across the bins in the distance dimension. The pseudo- $R^2$  from row 10 of Table A.6 also indicates that this measure provides a poorer fit of the data compared to the baseline measure (row 5 of Table A.6).

# **B** Measuring voter preferences using the ANES survey

In Section 5.1, we measure the similarity between states in voter preferences using survey data from the American National Election Studies (ANES), which are national surveys of American voters frequently featured in political research. The surveys collect demographic information about voters, their views on political issues, knowledge about politics, and voting behavior. We use the latest Time Series Cumulative Data File that includes all surveys conducted over

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup>Another interpretation of this measure is the ratio of the proportion of states in the closest third that are adopters to the proportion of all states that are adopters, or  $(a^k/16)/(A/47)$ , multiplied by a constant (16/47).

1948-2020.

We filter through all the survey items to identify 53 questions that asked voters about their preference for a specific policy on an ordinal response scale. For example, these include:

- There is much concern about the rapid rise in medical and hospital costs. Some people feel there should be a government insurance plan which would cover all medical and hospital expenses for everyone. Others feel that all medical expenses should be paid by individuals, and through private insurance plans like Blue Cross or other company paid plans. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this? (7-POINT SCALE SHOWN TO RESPONDENT)
- There has been some discussion about abortion during recent years. Which one of the opinions on this page best agrees with your view?
  - 1. By law, abortion should never be permitted.
  - 2. The law should permit abortion only in case of rape, incest, or when the woman's life is in danger.
  - 3. The law should permit abortion for reasons other than rape, incest, or danger to the woman's life, but only after the need for the abortion has been clearly established.
  - 4. By law, a woman should always be able to obtain an abortion as a matter of personal choice.
- Do you think homosexuals should be allowed to serve in the United States Armed Forces or don't you think so? (5-POINT SCALE SHOWN TO RESPONDENT)
- Should federal spending on financial aid for college students be increased, decreased or kept about the same?
  - 1. Increased
  - 2. Same
  - 3. Decreased or cut out entirely
- Some people think it is all right for the public schools to start each day with a prayer. Others feel that religion does not belong in the public schools but should be taken care of by the family and the church. Have you been interested enough in this to favor one side over the other? (5-POINT SCALE SHOWN TO RESPONDENT)
- Do you favor or oppose the death penalty for persons convicted of murder? (2-POINT SCALE SHOWN TO RESPONDENT)

We then restrict the final sample to 44 questions that have been asked for at least 10 years, to ensure the responses reflect voter preferences on longstanding, key issues and to reduce noise from compositional changes in the sample. For example, this restriction drops whether the respondent thought the United States should cooperate more with the Soviet Union, which was asked only from 1980-88. As Figure A.7b shows, there are typically over 10 questions represented each year in the measure from the 1960s, and over 20 from the 1980s.

One downside of the ANES, depicted in Figure A.7a, is that not all states are sufficiently represented in every wave of the survey. In fact, there are 11 states (Delaware, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming) that are missing for the majority of decades until the 2000s. To prevent the results after the 2000s being contaminated from the addition of these states, we drop them entirely when we use the ANES measure of voter preference similarity.

The construction of the measure takes several steps. First, we calculate state-level yearly averages of the responses to each question using weights provided by ANES. We then standardize the state average responses for each question in each year, subtracting by the mean and dividing by the standard deviation, to bring all responses (e.g., 5-point Likert vs. 2-point Likert) to the same scale. For every pair of states in each year of the survey, we compute the absolute difference in the standardized state average response to each question, and then take the average of the absolute differences across questions. At this point, we have a measure between every pair of states for how similarly their average voter responded to the policy preference questions. To smooth the measure, we use a 5-year moving average of the average standardized difference between each pair of states. Finally, for each state, we consider the third of other states (i.e., 12 out of the other 36) with the smallest average standardized difference in the responses to be the closest in voter preferences for that year.

In addition to questions about specific laws, we constructed a broader set of questions to also capture voter sentiment that could be relevant for their policy positions. These add questions such as "thermometers" about specific groups, (e.g., on a scale of 0-100, how the respondent feels about labor unions, homosexuals, or people on welfare), whether society should make sure that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed, and whether it matters that the respondent votes or not. As shown in Figure A.7b, this broader measure including voter sentiment uses almost double the number of questions than the voter preference measure alone does. Reassuringly, in Table A.5, the broader measure finds almost identical results.



Figure A.1: Summary statistics: Policy area composition and adoption speed



(b) Speed of adoption by time period



95% confidence intervals shown

Figure A.2: Innovating states

(a) SPID policies



(b) NBER policies



Figure A.3: Correlation in geography and politics among adopters (alternate thresholds)

(a) Correlation in geographic distance (first 16 adopters)



(c) Correlation in geographic distance (first 24 adopters)

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This figure replicates the analysis in Figures 5a-5b, but instead uses a threshold of the first 16 (Figures A.3a-A.3b) and of the first 24 (Figures A.3c-A.3d) adopters of a policy. The assignment of each policy to a decade is held constant at the year in which it reached 10 adopters. The sample of policies shrinks with higher thresholds as there are fewer policies that reach those thresholds.

(b) Correlation in Republican vote-share (first 16 adopters)



4 policies with a correlation less than -0.2 or greater than 0.5 have been ce

(d) Correlation in Republican vote-share (first 24



Figure A.4: Stability of closest thirds in each dimension

48

## Figure A.5: Simulated policy diffusion

#### (a) Coefficients from 1990s (Connecticut)

Start state: Connecticut, start year=2000, coefs decade 1990s



(b) Coefficients from 2010s (Connecticut)

Start state: Connecticut, start year=2000, coefs decade 2010s



## Figure A.5: Simulated policy diffusion

(c) Coefficients from 1990s (Texas)

Start state: Texas, start year=2000, coefs decade 1990s



(d) Coefficients from 2010s (Texas)

Start state: Texas, start year=2000, coefs decade 2010s



## Figure A.5: Simulated policy diffusion

## (e) Coefficients from 1990s (Ohio)

Start state: Ohio, start year=2000, coefs decade 1990s



(f) Coefficients from 2010s (Ohio)

Start state: Ohio, start year=2000, coefs decade 2010s





- 25 - 25 - 20 20 - 15 10 adobters)% 10

Starting state



Figure A.6: Robustness checks: Threshold of closest states



(b) Dimension: Distance









Figure A.7: Measuring voter policy preference from ANES

(a) State representation in ANES

(b) Number of questions





Figure A.8: Correlation of policy outcomes: 1980-85 vs. 2005-10

(a) Political correlation



Figure A.9: Categorizing the ideology of policies for event study analysis



(a) Distribution of policy ideologies

(b) Ideology of most extreme and neutral policies over time





(c) Number of policies under each ideology as a function of the threshold



Figure A.10: Event study from switches in state government party control

(a) Events during 1990-2020

These figures show the event studies estimates from Figures 8a-8b with the most plausible confound path (Freyaldenhoven et al., 2021) traced in the gray curve.

Figure A.10: Event study from switches in state government party control (de Chaisemartin and D'Haultfœuille estimator)



(c) Events during 1990-2020

These figures show the event study estimates for switches to unified party control of state governments from the de Chaisemartin and D'Haultfœuille (2020) estimator. Spells of unified state party control are defined as the 4 years prior to and after the switch to the unified government. During these spells for each state, policies are categorized as aligning with the party in control, not aligning, or neither, based on the procedure described in Footnote 10. For example, the policy of medical marijuana legalization is a left-learning policy based on the standardized vote-share of past adopters. In 2011, Alabama had a unified Republican state government, and thus medical marijuana legalization is categorized as a policy not in alignment with the party in control. On the other hand, Massachusetts had a unified Democratic state government, and thus the policy is categorized as being aligned with the party in control. Outside these event windows of unified state governments, all policies for that state are categorized as neutral. To run the event study using the de Chaisemartin and D'Haultfœuille estimator, the state-policy-year panel is collapsed to the state-year average rates of adoption for aligned, not aligned, and neutral policies. The treated effects from switching to unified state governments are estimated separately for these three types of policies. 95% confidence intervals are shown from bootstrap standard errors resampling at the state level.

Neutral policies

Own - other party-leaning diff.



#### Figure A.11: Specification checks: Range of measure by number of adopters

(a) Baseline two-sided likelihood measure

(b) Proportion of states in the closest third that are adopters

(c) Proportion of all adopters that are in the closest third of all states (excluding own) that are adopters

(d) Proportion of closest third that are adopters – Proportion of all states (excluding own) that are adopters





#### Figure A.11: Specification checks: Stability in coefficients by number of adopters

- (e) Baseline two-sided likelihood measure
- (f) Proportion of states in the closest third that are adopters

(g) Proportion of all adopters that are in the closest third of all states (excluding own) that are adopters

(h) Proportion of closest third that are adopters – Proportion of all states (excluding own) that are adopters



# Table A.1a: SPID sample examples

4Bochmke-SkinnerAbortion Pre-RocCivil Rights161966197244BiggersRequest Any Id For VotingCivil Rights322972201349Uniform LawProvides Judicial Facilitation Of Private Dispute ResolutionFakilitation Of Private Dispute ResolutionFakilitation Of Private Dispute Resolution1aw and Crime192001201840WalkerFull Stocking Ban Is BareFakilitation Of Private Dispute ResolutionFakilitation Of Private Dispute Resolution1aw and Crime19201941BoosheyShort-Terne Privagenes For Incarcerelati Youth (Sinilar To Military School)Law and Crime211982200543KarchSystem For Bas Fleet Owners To Pro-Rate Alcual Controversies Concerning Legal Rights And Datiss EvenLaw and Crime211984200544Uniform LawAuthorizes ControlFakilitation Of France ResolutionFakilitation171986200945Uniform LawAuthorizes ControlFakilitation Of Scottform on Chasen to Cha	Number	Source	Description	Area	Adoptions	First year	Last year
44         Biggers         Request Any Id For Varing         Civil Rights         32         1972         2013           44         Uniform Law         Provides Judicial Facilitation Of Private Dispute Resolution         Law and Crime         19         2010           64         Sheprd         Public Services         43         1992         2010           65         Walker         Automobile Safety Compact         2010         Public Services         43         1903         2010           68         Walker         Aud To The Blind (Social Socially 2010         Law and Crime         21         1922         1932         1933         2000           78         Koritzer         No-Fronies Zona Around Abortion Clinic         Law and Crime         41         2022         2000           188         Korch         No-Fronies Zona Around Abortion Clinic         Law and Crime         41         2002         2008           176         Lacy         Comprehensive Remediation Reform         Law and Crime         41         1932         2000           177         Other         Notification Of Soc Offenders & A atheority 'S Discretion         Law and Crime         8         1997         2001           177         Other         Notification Of Soc Offenders & A atheority 'S	4	Boehmke-Skinner	Abortion Pre-Roe	Civil Rights	16	1966	1972
40         Uniform Law         Provides Judicial Facilitation Of Private Dispute Resolution         Law and Crime         10         2001         2008           64         Waher         Automobile Steles (Compact         Public Services         24         1990         2010           64         Waher         Auto To The Bind (Social Security)         Public Services         24         1990         1990           71         Boushey         Skort-Term Programs For Incarcented Youth (Smillar to Altitary School)         Law and Crime         22         1982         1993           100         Kreitzer         No-Frotes Zone Around Abortion Clinic         Skort-Term Programs For Pro-Rate Millege In Multiple States         Clinit Rult         Law and Crime         10         198         2005           115         Karch         No-Frotes Zone Around Abortion Clinic         Law and Crime         10         198         2005           126         Uniform Law         Through Troditional Romadies For Donages Or Equitable Relief Are Not Avallable.         Law and Crime         1         198         2006           127         Clangbes-Warshew         Is Legal To Use Marijaans For Medical Purposes?         1         1990         2001           127         Congebes-Varshew         Is Legal To Use Marijaans For Medical Purposes?         1	44	Biggers	Request Any Id For Voting	Civil Rights	32	1972	2013
61WalkerAutonoble Safety CompactPublic Services431962196564SheprdFull Snoking Ban In BarsPublic Services481936193370KarkerAid To The Blind (Social Security)Public Services51933193371RouskeyShort-Term Programs For Incerested Youth (Similar To Military School)Law and Crime211983193370KarchSystem For Bus Fleet Owners To Pro-Rate Mileage In Multiple StatsPublic Services5198319932002718KarchProvides All The Benefit Of Adoption Stubidy Agreement, Regardles Of StateLaw and Crime2119842002718KarchProvides All The Benefit Of Adoption Stubidy Agreement, Regardles Of StateLaw and Crime119822002719LacyComprehensive Remediation ReformPlatic Bervices1719882006719LacyPlacement Policies (Placement Examination, Changes To Flacement CriteriaPublic Services319972008710Otherpe-WashingH Liatal OT Schoffmanes H At Autority S DerevicionPublic Services319972008710Comprehensive Remediation ReformCrime Reciprocity To Other States Licenses1019962018721Dochmic-StinneState Entreprise Zons71991199219962014722Caughey-WashingState Entreprise Zons71991199619962014723Caughey-Washing </td <td>49</td> <td>Uniform Law</td> <td>Provides Judicial Facilitation Of Private Dispute Resolution</td> <td>Law and Crime</td> <td>19</td> <td>2001</td> <td>2018</td>	49	Uniform Law	Provides Judicial Facilitation Of Private Dispute Resolution	Law and Crime	19	2001	2018
64     Sheprd     Full Smaking Ban In Bais     Public Services     24     1980     2010       68     Walker     Aid To The Blind (Social Security)     Public Services     48     1035       71     Botshey     Short-Term Programs For Incarcented Vouth (Similar To Military School)     Law and Crime     22     1982       108     Kreitzer     No-Protest Zone Around Abortion Clinic     Civil Rights     16     1973     2005       118     Karch     No-Protest Zone Around Abortion Clinic     Eaw and Crime     21     1982       118     Karch     Provides AII The Benefit Or Adoption Subidy Agreement, Regardless Of State     Law and Crime     21     1922     2005       118     Karch     Phongh Taditional Remeties For Damages Or Equitable Ridde Ara Not Available.     Public Services     17     2006       117     Other     Notification Of Seo Offenderes Is At Authority's Discretion     Public Services     18     1995     2006       117     Coughey-Warshaw     Is Legal To Use Marijaans For Medical Purpose?     Public Services     37     1981     1982       218     Lador Mariba     East Exterptices Provides     17     2007     2016       219     Boelmke-Skinner     State Exterptices Provides     17     1991     1980       221     Caug	61	Walker	Automobile Safety Compact	Public Services	43	1962	1965
68     Walker     Alt To The Dind (Social Scenrity)     Public Services     48     1036     1037       71     Bousbyy     Short-Term Programs For Incarcented (volth (Similar To Military School)     Law and Crime     22     1982     1989       70     Karch     System For Bus Fleet Owners To Pro-Rate Mileage In Multiple States     Civil Rights     16     1073     2005       118     Karch     Provides All The Benefit Of Adoption Subsidy Agreement, Regardless Of State     Law and Crime     21     1984     2002       128     Lary     Comprohensity Remediation Reform     Provides All The Benefit Of Adoption Subsidy Agreement, Regardles Of State     Law and Crime     21     1984     2009       167     Lacy     Comprohensity Remediation Reform     Public Services     17     1988     2009       167     Lacy     Placement Folicies (Flacement Examination, Changes To Placement Criteria     Public Services     19     1999     201       176     Congbey-Warshw     Is the Legal To Use Marijuma For Melical Purpose?     Give Reciprocity To Other States Licenses     17     2008       201     Defmines/Stimer     State Have A Recycling Program For Electronic Waste?     Environment and Energy     28     2000       218     Caugbey-Warshw     Is Est Have Allow Provides Maring Abeclanergy     Give Reciprocity     1981 <td>64</td> <td>Sheprd</td> <td>Full Smoking Ban In Bars</td> <td>Public Services</td> <td>24</td> <td>1980</td> <td>2010</td>	64	Sheprd	Full Smoking Ban In Bars	Public Services	24	1980	2010
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79KarchSystem For Bus Fleet Owners To Pro-Rate Mileage In Multiple StatesPublic Services519651983103KreitzerNo-Protest Zone Around Abortion ClinicContro Adoption Subsidy Agreement, Regardless Of StateLaw and Crime2119842005118KarchProvides All The Benefit Of Adoption Subsidy Agreement, Regardless Of StateLaw and Crime2119842005128LacyComprehensive Remediation ReformPublic Services1719882009167LacyComprehensive Remediation ReformLaw and Crime819952006177OtherNotification Of Sex Offendense Is At Authority's DiscretionLaw and Crime819952006187Caughey-WarshawIs Legal To Use Marijunan For Medical Purposes?Public Services1919962021129Boehnke-SkinneIs Legal To Use Marijunan For Medical Purposes?Public Services1720072018213Uniforn LawDoes The State Have A Recycling Program For Electronic Waste?Environment and Energy2820002012220Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Alex PerprenalesFor Head Rights Amendment?Civil Rights2019111992214Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Alex PerprenalesFor Head Rights Share?Law and Crime1820012014215Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Alex PerprenalesFor Head Rights Share?Civil Rights1820012014216Caugh	71	Boushey	Short-Term Programs For Incarcerated Youth (Similar To Military School)	Law and Crime	22	1982	1999
1018       Kreitzer       No-Protest Zone Around Abortion Clinic       Civil Rights       16       1973       2005         118       Karch       Provides AI The Benefit Of Adoption Subsidy Agreement, Regardless Of State       Law and Crime       41       1922       2008         158       Uniform Law       Authorizes Courts To Adjudicate Actual Controverses Concerning Legal Rights And Duties Even       Law and Crime       41       1922       2008         167       Lacy       Comprehensive Remediation Reform       Public Services       17       1988       2009         177       Other       Notification Of Sex Offenders Is At Authority'S Discretion       Law and Crime       8       1995       2006         187       Caughey-Warshaw       Is It Legal To Use Marijuana For Medical Purposes?       Public Services       37       208       2006         213       Uniform Law       Allows State Enterprise Zones       Doe Emtessite State Have A Recycling Program For Electronic Wate?       Public Services       37       1981       1992         224       Caughey-Warshaw       Does The State Have A Recycling Program For Heagun Rights Amendment?       Crivit Rights       20       1971       1999         231       Walker       Gaughey-Warshaw       Does The State Alow In Aster Theagun Rights For Local Teachers?       Law and C	79	Karch	System For Bus Fleet Owners To Pro-Rate Mileage In Multiple States	Public Services	5	1965	1983
118KarchProvides All The Benefit Of Adoption Subisity Agreement, Regardles Of StateLaw and Crime2119842002108Muthorizes Courts To Adiptidicate Actual Controversites Concerning Legal Rights And Duise EvenPublic Services1719882006107LacyComprehensive Remediation ReformPublic Services319972008107OtherNotification Of Sex Offenders Is At Authority's DiscretionLaw and Crime819952006118Caughey-WarshawIs Legal To Use Marijuana For Medical Purposes'Public Services1919962021129Boelmake-SkinneState Ederement Examination, Changency For Give Reciprocity To Other States Licenses719811992219Boelmake-SkinneState Enterprise ZonesPublic Services3719811992225Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Have A Recycling Program For Electronic Waste?Environment and Energy2820002012211WalkerEqual Payr For FennelesCrivit Rights2019711996224Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Reque Eagleround Checks For Private Rife Sales?Crivit Rights1820012014234Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Reque Readigmound Checks For Private Rife Sales?Crivit Rights1820012014235Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Reque Readigmound Checks For Private Rife Sales?Economics3119601973236Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Reque Readigmou	103	Kreitzer	No-Protest Zone Around Abortion Clinic	Civil Rights	16	1973	2005
158     Uniform Law     Authorizes Courts To Adjudicate Actual Controversies Concerning Legal Rights And Duties Even Though Traditional Remediation Reform     Law and Crime     41     1922     2008       167     Lacy     Comprehensive Remediation Reform     Public Services     17     1988     2006       167     Lacy     Placement Examination, Changes To Placement Criteria     Public Services     18     1995     2008       177     Other     Notification Of Sex Offenders Is At Authority'S Discretion     Law and Crime     8     1995     2001       213     Uniform Law     Is It Legal To Use Maripinaa For Medical Purposes?     Public Services     17     1981     2002       219     Boehmke-Skinner     State Enterprise Zomes     State Enterprise Zomes     2012     2012       221     Walker     Eagal Pay For Fornales     Civit Rights     20     1912     1966       221     Caughey-Warshaw     Does The State Lave A Recycling Program For Electronic Waste?     Environment and Energy     28     2000     2012       231     Walker     Does The State Allow In State Jave And Chine For Date Marker     1980     1966     2014       244     Caughey-Warshaw     Does The State Allow In State Allow In State Allow In State Allow In State Marker     1980     1981       241     Caughey-Warshaw	118	Karch	Provides All The Benefit Of Adoption Subsidy Agreement, Regardless Of State	Law and Crime	21	1984	2002
International Romedies For Damages Or Equitable Rolief Are Not Available.         Public Services         17         9188         2009           167         Lacy         Placement Policis (Placement Examination, Changes To Placement Criteria         Public Services         3         1997         2008           177         Other         Notification Of Sex Offenders Is At Autontry'S Discretion         Law and Crime         8         1995         2006           187         Caughey-Warshaw         Is Legal To Use Marijuana For Medical Purposes?         Public Services         19         1906         2012           213         Unform Law         Allows State Governments During A Declared Emergency To Give Reciprocity To Other State Locements         1902         2012           214         Boelmake-Skinner         State Eaterprise Zones         1919         1960           225         Caughey-Warshaw         Does The State Asset A State-Level Equivalent To The Equal Rights Amendment?         Civil Rights         20         1971         1919           231         Walker         Does The State Alson Foste To The Equal Rights Amendment?         Civil Rights         18         2001         2014           233         Uniform Law         Does The State Alson Foste Private Rife Sales?         Law and Crime         1         1985         1985	158	Uniform Law	Authorizes Courts To Adjudicate Actual Controversies Concerning Legal Rights And Duties Even	Law and Crime	41	1922	2008
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284Caughey-WarshawHas The State Passed A State-Level Equivalent To The Equal Rights Amendment?Civil Rights2019711999291Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Require Background Checks For Private Rifle Sales?Law and Crime91062014334Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Allow In-State Tuition For Ilegal Immigrants?Civil Rights1820012014337Uniform LawProvides Cognitive Test For Determining InsanityLaw and Crime119851985382Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Have Collective Bargaining Rights For Local Teachers?Economics3119601987433Uniform LawProvides That A Student Loan Is Enforceable Against DebtorLaw and Crime4819351951522WalkerParolees And Probationers SupervisionLaw and Crime4819351951524Uniform LawRequires Prudent And Diverse Investments Of State FundsGovernment Operations4720072012556Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Have A Law Permitting Individuals Control Over The Use Of Heroic MedicalPublic Services4819351951569Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Have A Law Rent That Acts As The City'S Basic Governing DocumentGovernment Operations291855598Uniform LawRegulates Offer And Sale Of SecuritiesEconomics1319872004598Uniform LawRegulates Offer And Sale Of SecuritiesEconomics1319872004598 <td>231</td> <td>Walker</td> <td>Equal Pay For Females</td> <td>Civil Rights</td> <td>27</td> <td>1919</td> <td>1966</td>	231	Walker	Equal Pay For Females	Civil Rights	27	1919	1966
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560Caughey-WarshawTreatment In The Event Of A Terminal Illness?2918751960560Caughey-WarshawEnables Cities To Adopt A Home Rule Charter That Acts As The City'S Basic Governing DocumentGovernment Operations2918751960569Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Have Anti-Sedition Laws?Civil Rights3019351955598Uniform LawRegulates Offer And Sale Of SecuritiesEconomics1820032016632BousheyLaws Establishing State Exchanges For Used NeedlesPublic Services1319872004659Uniform LawAttempts To Standardize Negotiable Instruments In StatesEconomics4719912008678Uniform LawGoverns All Unincorporated Nonprofit Associations That Are Formed Or Operate In A StateEconomics1219932008687Uniform LawProtect The Purchaser Of Real Estate Where There Is A Binding Contract Of SaleEconomics1219971997694Uniform LawRegulating Satisfaction Of Losses Suffered From Victims Of CrimeLaw and Crime119951995704Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Approve For A Local Tax Credit For Residential Solar Installations?Environment and Energy819752007	556	Caughey-Warshaw	Does The State Have A Law Permitting Individuals Control Over The Use Of Heroic Medical	Public Services	48	1976	1992
560Caughey-WarshawEnables Cities To Adopt A Home Rule Charter That Acts As The City'S Basic Governing DocumentGovernment Operations2918751960569Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Have Anti-Sedition Laws?Civil Rights3019351955598Uniform LawRegulates Offer And Sale Of SecuritiesEconomics1820032016632BousheyLaws Establishing State Exchanges For Used NeedlesPublic Services1319872004659Uniform LawAttempts To Standardize Negotiable Instruments In StatesEconomics4719912008678Uniform LawGoverns All Unincorporated Nonprofit Associations That Are Formed Or Operate In A StateEconomics1219371997687Uniform LawProtect The Purchaser Of Real Estate Where There Is A Binding Contract Of SaleEconomics1219371997694Uniform LawRegulating Satisfaction Of Losses Suffered From Victims Of CrimeLaw and Crime119951995704Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Approve For A Local Tax Credit For Residential Solar Installations?Environment and Energy819752007			Treatment In The Event Of A Terminal Illness?				
Over Local Issues.Over Local Issues.SightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSightsSights	560	Caughey-Warshaw	Enables Cities To Adopt A Home Rule Charter That Acts As The City'S Basic Governing Document	Government Operations	29	1875	1960
569Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Have Anti-Sedition Laws?Civil Rights3019351955598Uniform LawRegulates Offer And Sale Of SecuritiesEconomics1820032016632BousheyLaws Establishing State Exchanges For Used NeedlesPublic Services1319872004659Uniform LawAttempts To Standardize Negotiable Instruments In StatesEconomics4719912008678Uniform LawGoverns All Unincorporated Nonprofit Associations That Are Formed Or Operate In A StateEconomics1219372008687Uniform LawProtect The Purchaser Of Real Estate Where There Is A Binding Contract Of SaleEconomics1219371997694Uniform LawRegulating Satisfaction Of Losses Suffered From Victims Of CrimeLaw and Crime119951995704Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Approve For A Local Tax Credit For Residential Solar Installations?Environment and Energy819752007			Over Local Issues.				
598Uniform LawRegulates Offer And Sale Of SecuritiesEconomics1820032016632BousheyLaws Establishing State Exchanges For Used NeedlesPublic Services1319872004659Uniform LawAttempts To Standardize Negotiable Instruments In StatesEconomics4719912008678Uniform LawGoverns All Unincorporated Nonprofit Associations That Are Formed Or Operate In A StateEconomics1219932008687Uniform LawProtect The Purchaser Of Real Estate Where There Is A Binding Contract Of SaleEconomics1219371997694Uniform LawRegulating Satisfaction Of Losses Suffered From Victims Of CrimeLaw and Crime119951995704Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Approve For A Local Tax Credit For Residential Solar Installations?Environment and Energy819752007	569	Caughey-Warshaw	Does The State Have Anti-Sedition Laws?	Civil Rights	30	1935	1955
632BousheyLaws Establishing State Exchanges For Used NeedlesPublic Services1319872004659Uniform LawAttempts To Standardize Negotiable Instruments In StatesEconomics4719912008678Uniform LawGoverns All Unincorporated Nonprofit Associations That Are Formed Or Operate In A StateEconomics1219932008687Uniform LawProtect The Purchaser Of Real Estate Where There Is A Binding Contract Of SaleEconomics1219371997694Uniform LawRegulating Satisfaction Of Losses Suffered From Victims Of CrimeLaw and Crime119951995704Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Approve For A Local Tax Credit For Residential Solar Installations?Environment and Energy819752007	598	Uniform Law	Regulates Offer And Sale Of Securities	Economics	18	2003	2016
659Uniform LawAttempts To Standardize Negotiable Instruments In StatesEconomics4719912008678Uniform LawGoverns All Unincorporated Nonprofit Associations That Are Formed Or Operate In A StateEconomics1219932008687Uniform LawProtect The Purchaser Of Real Estate Where There Is A Binding Contract Of SaleEconomics1219371997694Uniform LawRegulating Satisfaction Of Losses Suffered From Victims Of CrimeLaw and Crime119951995704Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Approve For A Local Tax Credit For Residential Solar Installations?Environment and Energy819752007	632	Boushey	Laws Establishing State Exchanges For Used Needles	Public Services	13	1987	2004
678Uniform LawGoverns All Unincorporated Nonprofit Associations That Are Formed Or Operate In A StateEconomics1219932008687Uniform LawProtect The Purchaser Of Real Estate Where There Is A Binding Contract Of SaleEconomics1219371997694Uniform LawRegulating Satisfaction Of Losses Suffered From Victims Of CrimeLaw and Crime119951995704Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Approve For A Local Tax Credit For Residential Solar Installations?Environment and Energy819752007	659	Uniform Law	Attempts To Standardize Negotiable Instruments In States	Economics	47	1991	2008
687Uniform LawProtect The Purchaser Of Real Estate Where There Is A Binding Contract Of SaleEconomics1219371997694Uniform LawRegulating Satisfaction Of Losses Suffered From Victims Of CrimeLaw and Crime119951995704Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Approve For A Local Tax Credit For Residential Solar Installations?Environment and Energy819752007	678	Uniform Law	Governs All Unincorporated Nonprofit Associations That Are Formed Or Operate In A State	Economics	12	1993	2008
694Uniform LawRegulating Satisfaction Of Losses Suffered From Victims Of CrimeLaw and Crime119951995704Caughey-WarshawDoes The State Approve For A Local Tax Credit For Residential Solar Installations?Environment and Energy819752007	687	Uniform Law	Protect The Purchaser Of Real Estate Where There Is A Binding Contract Of Sale	Economics	12	1937	1997
704 Caughey-Warshaw Does The State Approve For A Local Tax Credit For Residential Solar Installations? Environment and Energy 8 1975 2007	694	Uniform Law	Regulating Satisfaction Of Losses Suffered From Victims Of Crime	Law and Crime	1	1995	1995
	704	Caughey-Warshaw	Does The State Approve For A Local Tax Credit For Residential Solar Installations?	Environment and Energy	8	1975	2007
726SheprdLaw That Establishes Legal Bac Limit Of .02 For Underage DriversPublic Services4819831998	726	Sheprd	Law That Establishes Legal Bac Limit Of .02 For Underage Drivers	Public Services	48	1983	1998

# Table A.1b: NBER working paper sample

Number	Policy	Title	Area	Adoptions	First year	Last year
18187	Stand Your Ground laws	Stand Your Ground Laws, Homicides, and Injuries	Law and Crime	25	1994	2009
18299	Leave for state employee organ donors	Removing Financial Barriers to Organ and Bone Marrow	Public Services	29	1989	2007
		Donation: The Effect of Leave and Tax Legislation in the U.S.				
18341	Physical education requirement	The Impact of Physical Education on Obesity among	Public Services	38	1940	2007
		Elementary School Children				
18516	Wrongful discharge laws	Wrongful Discharge Laws and Innovation	Economics	45	1970	1998
18773	Bicycle helmet laws	Effects of Bicycle Helmet Laws on Children's Injuries	Public Services	19	1987	2006
18887	AFDC waiver	Effects of Welfare Reform on Women's Crime	Economics	27	1992	1996
18887	TANF	Effects of Welfare Reform on Women's Crime	Economics	48	1996	1998
19294	Biotech tax incentives	State Incentives for Innovation, Star Scientists and Jobs: Evidence from Biotech	Economics	11	1984	2003
19904	Community rating regulations	Regulatory Redistribution in the Market for Health Insurance	Public Services	7	1993	1997
20149	Interstate bank branching laws	Does Financing Spur Small Business Productivity? Evidence	Economics	48	1995	1997
		from a Natural Experiment				
20565	Medical record copy fee cap	Expanding Patients' Property Rights In Their Medical Becords	Public Services	42	1972	2007
20808	NOx cap-and-trade	Who Loses Under Power Plant Cap-and-Trade Programs?	Environment and Energy	20	2003	2007
21170	Commonsonso Consumption Acts	Do $\hat{\Lambda} \neq \hat{\Lambda} \neq \hat{\Lambda}^{-1}$ Chooseburger Bills $\hat{\Lambda} \neq \hat{\Lambda} \neq \hat{\Lambda}^{-1}$ Work? Effects of	Economics	20	2003	2001
21170		Tort Reform for Fast Food	Economics	20	2005	2015
21345	Medical marijuana laws	Do Medical Marijuana Laws Reduce Addictions and Deaths	Public Services	21	1996	2014
01979	Te dia i deel in come deer	Related to Pain Killers?	F	40	1011	1071
21373	Individual income tax	Broadening State Capacity	Economics	42	1911	1971
21373	Norma Lisensen Comment	Broadening State Capacity	Economics Dash lia Canadana	43	1911	1971
22344	Nurse Licensure Compact	Labor Supply Effects of Occupational Regulation: Evidence	Public Services	25	1999	2015
22200	Initial Madiavid implementation	The Leng Dup Effects of Childhood Incurrence Course and	Dublic Comrises	10	1066	1099
22099	initial Medicald Implementation	Medicaid Implementation Adult Health and Labor Merket	Fublic Services	40	1900	1982
		Outcomes				
02171	Cood Someritan Law	With a Little Help from My Eviender The Effects of Nelevone	Dublia Somiaco	45	2007	2010
25171	Good Samantan Law	Access and Cood Semanitan Laws on Onicid Polated Deetha	Fublic Services	40	2007	2019
02171	Nalawara Access Low	With a Little Help from Mr. Friender The Effects of Nelsurene	Dublic Comrises	10	2001	9017
25171	Naloxone Access Law	Access and Cood Sementian Lang on Origid Polated Deetha	Fublic Services	40	2001	2017
09919	E aigenette minimum age law	The Effects of E Cigorotte Minimum Logal Sale Age Lowe on	Dublia Somiaco	19	2010	2016
20010	E-cigarette inininum age iaw	Vouth Substance Use	F ublic Services	40	2010	2010
00000	Substance use disender novity laws	Health Incurrence and Theffe Fatalities. The Effects of	Dublic Comises	10	1004	2000
20000	Substance use disorder parity laws	Substance Use Disorder Parity Laws	Fublic Services	12	1994	2009
23510	Concooled handgun carry law	Bight to Corry Laws and Violent Crime: A Comprehensive	Low and Crimo	41	1050	2014
25510	Concealed handgun carry law	Aggeggment Using Danel Date and a State Level Surthetic	Law and Onnie	41	1959	2014
		Assessment Using Panel Data and a State-Level Synthetic				
22005	Smolring han	Impact of Comprehensive Smalling Dans on the Health of	Dublia Somiaga	94	1004	2012
25995	Smoking ban	Impact of Comprehensive Smoking Bans on the Health of	Fublic Services	54	1994	2012
94159	Interstate terr andit info aboving	Internet and Onliden	Communet Or motions	41	1050	1055
24100	Dight to more lang	Energy the Degration Table to the Dellet Degraded	Government Operations	41	1950	1955
24259	Right-to-work laws	From the Bargaining Table to the Ballot Box: Political Effects of Right to Work Laws	Economics	21	1943	2017
24381	Ban-the-box laws	Do Ban the Box Laws Increase Crime?	Economics	11	2009	2014
24651	Same-sex marriage	Effects of Access to Legal Same-Sex Marriage on Marriage	Civil Rights	33	2000	2014
21001	Samo Sex marriage	and Health. Evidence from BRESS	01411 161 <u>6</u> 1103	00	2004	2014
24662	Merit-aid programs	State Merit Aid Programs and Youth Labor Market	Public Services	24	1988	2005
21002	Trout and brokramo	Attachment		<b>1</b>	1000	2000
24782	Duty-to-bargain laws	The Long-run Effects of Teacher Collective Bargaining	Economics	31	1960	1987
		o		~+		

# Table A.1b: NBER working paper sample

Number	Policy	Title	Area	Adoptions	First year	Last year
24986	Community eligibility provision	School Nutrition and Student Discipline: Effects of	Public Services	10	2012	2014
		Schoolwide Free Meals				
25209	Child gun access prevention laws	Child Access Prevention Laws and Juvenile Firearm-Related Homicides	Law and Crime	25	1989	2001
25369	Age anti-discrimination	Do State Laws Protecting Older Workers from	Economics	45	1934	1997
		Discrimination Reduce Age Discrimination in Hiring?				
		Evidence from a Field Experiment				
25369	Disability anti-discrimination	Do State Laws Protecting Older Workers from	Economics	46	1971	1988
		Discrimination Reduce Age Discrimination in Hiring?				
25200	Wind onergy incentives	Evidence from a Field Experiment Technological Spillover Effects of State Renewable Energy	Environment and Energy	48	2000	2011
20090	while energy incentives	Policy: Evidence from Patent Counts	Environment and Energy	40	2000	2011
25758	Minor abortion parental consent	The Impact of Parental Involvement Laws on Minor Abortion	Public Services	37	1974	2013
25974	Initial prescription drug monitoring	Can Policy Affect Initiation of Addictive Substance Use?	Public Services	24	1988	2018
20011	initial prosoniption and monitoring	Evidence from Opioid Prescribing			1000	2010
25974	Must-access prescription drug monitoring	Can Policy Affect Initiation of Addictive Substance Use?	Public Services	29	2007	2019
		Evidence from Opioid Prescribing				
26017	E-cigarette tax	The Effects of Traditional Cigarette and E-Cigarette Taxes	Public Services	7	2010	2017
		on Adult Tobacco Product Use				
26135	Pill mill laws	Mortality and Socioeconomic Consequences of Prescription	Public Services	8	2005	2014
2 2 4 4 2	ND GGEDD	Opioids: Evidence from State Policies		10	1001	1000
26140	NBCCEDP cancer screenings	Effects of Direct Care Provision to the Uninsured: Evidence	Public Services	48	1991	1999
96906	Christenster ID	from Federal Breast and Cervical Cancer Programs	Circil Dislate	11	2004	2016
26206	Strict voter ID	Outcomes	Civil Rights	11	2004	2016
26405	State EITC	The EITC and the Extensive Margin: A Reappraisal	Economics	28	1986	2018
26500	Triplicate prescription	Origins of the Opioid Crisis and Its Enduring Impacts	Public Services	7	1939	1988
26676	E-verify for employment	States Taking the Reins? Employment Verification	Economics	22	2006	2015
		Requirements and Local Labor Market Outcomes				
26749	Modern prescription drug monitoring	Effect of Prescription Opioids and Prescription Opioid	Public Services	47	1999	2017
		Control Policies on Infant Health				
26777	Anti-bullying laws	Anti-Bullying Laws and Suicidal Behaviors among Teenagers	Law and Crime	48	2001	2015
26832	Mandated sick pay	Mandated Sick Pay: Coverage, Utilization, and Welfare	Economics	10	2011	2018
		Effects	-			
27054	Salary history ban	Information and the Persistence of the Gender Wage Gap:	Economics	12	2017	2021
97900	Medievid enversion	Early Evidence from California's Salary History Ban	Dahlia Camiana	20	2014	2001
27306	Medicaid expansion	Students	Public Services	30	2014	2021
27520	Tramadol as Schedule IV drug	Competitive Effects of Federal and State Opioid Restrictions:	Public Services	19	2007	2014
21020	Trainador as Schedule IV drug	Evidence from the Controlled Substance Laws	i ubile bervices	12	2001	2014
27728	2003 standard certificate of live birth implementation	Heterogeneous Effects Of Health Insurance On Birth Related	Public Services	48	2003	2016
		Outcomes: Unpacking Compositional Vs. Direct Changes				
27788	Paid family leave	Paid Leave Pays Off: The Effects of Paid Family Leave on	Economics	6	2002	2018
	·	Firm Performance				
28173	Tobacco 21 laws	Do State Tobacco 21 Laws Work?	Public Services	15	2016	2019
28903	Right of workers to talk law	Equilibrium Effects of Pay Transparency	Economics	12	2004	2016
29087	Recreational marijuana legalization	Recreational Marijuana Laws and the Use of Opioids:	Public Services	17	2012	2021
		Evidence from NSDUH Microdata	-			
29318	CPA 150-hour rule	Occupational Licensing and Accountant Quality: Evidence	Economics	48	1983	2015
		from the 150-Hour Rule				

Table A.2a:	Summary statistics:	Policy outcomes	from	NBER	papers
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Outcome	Coverage	Example NBER policy	NBER WP numbers
Log(income per capita)	1950-2020	Partial paid leave for pregnancy	26416, 19294
Voter turnout rate	1980-2019	Strict voter ID	26206, 24259
Log(opioid mortality rate)	1968-2014	Naloxone Access Law	23171, 25974, 26135, 26500,
			27520, 29087
Employment rate in energy-intensive industry	1975 - 2018	NOx cap-and-trade	20808
Private insurance coverage rate	1987 - 2006	Community rating regulations	19904
Log(state revenue per capita)	1950-2016	Tax audit info sharing	21373, 24153
Log(state expenditure per capita)	1950-2016	State income and corporate taxes	21373, 24153
Average BMI	1987 - 2020	Physical education requirements	18341, 21170
Firearm mortality rate	1968-2016	Stand Your Ground laws	18187, 23510, 25209
Alcohol-induced traffic mortality rate	1975 - 2015	Substance use disorder parity laws	23388

## Table A.2b: COVID-19 policies

Example policy	Coverage (MM/DD/YYYY)	Num. adopted states
Modify Medicaid requirements with 1135 waivers (date of CMS approval)	3/16/2020-4/22/2020	48
SNAP Waiver - Pandemic EBT during school year 2020-2021	12/15/2020-3/23/2021	25
Late Fee Ban Start	2/29/2020-5/22/2020	11
Date K-12 school employees became eligible for COVID-19 vaccination	1/8/2021-4/5/2021	48
Date banned visitors to nursing homes	3/9/2020-8/13/2020	30
Stopped visitation in state prisons x2	7/15/2020-12/30/2020	9
Date adults ages 55+ became eligible for COVID-19 vaccination	3/1/2021-4/19/2021	48
SNAP Waiver - Emergency Allotments to Current SNAP Households	3/24/2020-4/15/2020	48
Reopened bars $(x2)$	8/11/2020-5/7/2021	18
Face mask mandate in public spaces	4/8/2020-12/9/2020	38
SNAP Waiver - Temporary Suspension of Claims Collection	4/2/2020-5/13/2020	24
Face mask mandate in schools for 2021-22 school year	5/1/2020-4/16/2021	15
Closed movie theaters $(x2)$	6/29/2020-12/12/2020	6
Closed gyms (x2)	6/29/2020-12/12/2020	7
State of emergency issued	2/29/2020-3/16/2020	48
Reopened ACA enrollment using a special enrollment period	3/10/2020-4/1/2020	11
Date closed K-12 public schools	3/16/2020-4/3/2020	47
First eviction enforcement ban start	3/16/2020-4/30/2020	27
Utilities reconnection start	3/4/2020-4/13/2020	8
Date adults ages 75+ became eligible for COVID-19 vaccination	12/23/2020-2/15/2021	48
SNAP Waiver - Pandemic EBT during school year 2019-2020	4/9/2020-8/13/2020	48
Allowed restaurants to sell takeout alcohol	3/16/2020-5/8/2020	42
Allow audio-only telehealth	1/1/2020-6/22/2020	45
Exceptions to emergency oral prescriptions	3/11/2020-4/6/2020	6
Closed restaurants except take out	3/16/2020-4/3/2020	47
Date adults ages 40+ became eligible for COVID-19 vaccination	3/16/2021-4/19/2021	48
Reopened hair salons/barber shops	4/24/2020-8/28/2020	47
Date adults ages 50+ became eligible for COVID-19 vaccination	3/3/2021-4/19/2021	48
Reopened religious gatherings	4/26/2020-6/22/2020	34
Closed gyms	3/16/2020-4/3/2020	47
Average (all 76 policies)	6/30/2020-9/27/2020	30.62

This table shows 30 randomly selected COVID-19 policies in the data set as well as the overall average. Policies are kept in data set until the first repeal. Source: COVID-19 US State Policies (CUSP)

Table A.2c: Va	ccine regulations
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Policy	Coverage	Num. adopted states
Hepatitis A Vaccine Mandates for Child Care	1998-2021	22
Hepatitis A Vaccine Mandates for K-12	1988-2021	15
Hepatitis B Vaccine Mandates for Child Care	1993-2018	43
Hepatitis B Vaccine Mandates for Colleges and Universities	1992 - 2011	15
Hepatitis B Vaccine Mandates for elementary	1994-2008	44
Hepatitis B Vaccine Mandates for secondary	1995 - 2014	41
Influenza Vaccine Mandates for Child Care and Pre-K	1999-2020	7
MenACWY Vaccine Mandates for Colleges and Universities	2001-2020	23
MenACWY Vaccine Mandates for Elementary and Secondary Schools	2005 - 2021	33
PCV Vaccine Mandates for Childcare	2001-2018	39
Rotavirus Vaccine Mandates for Child Care and Pre-K	1999-2021	8
Tdap Vaccine Mandates for Elementary and Secondary Schools	2006-2017	48
Varicella Vaccine Mandates for Child Care	1997 - 2016	47
Varicella Vaccine Mandates for Elementary School	1998-2015	48
Varicella Vaccine Mandates for Middle/junior/senior high	1999-2015	39
Hep B vaccine is either offered or mandated in hospitals	1993-2016	8
Hep B vaccine is either offered or mandated in long-term care facilities	1993-2018	9
Hep B vaccine is either offered or mandated in ambulatory care facilities	1993-2016	12
Any of the MMR vaccines are either offered or mandated in hospitals	1980-2014	14
Any of the MMR vaccines are either offered or mandated in long-term care facilities	1981 - 2020	10
Any of the MMR vaccines are either offered or mandated in ambulatory care facilities	1992 - 2022	12
Pertussis vaccine is either offered or mandated in hospitals	2002-2013	5
Pneumococcal vaccine is either offered or mandated in hospitals	2002 - 2017	13
Pneumococcal vaccine is either offered or mandated in long-term care facilities	1991 - 2015	26
Varicella vaccine is either offered or mandated in ambulatory care facilities	1995 - 2017	5
Influenza vaccine is either offered or mandated in hospitals	1995 - 2019	24
Influenza vaccine is either offered or mandated in long-term care facilities	1995 - 2020	33
Influenza vaccine is either offered or mandated in ambulatory care facilities	1998-2021	12
Average (28 policies)	1996-2017	23.39

This table lists all 28 policies in the vaccine regulations data set.

	199	01-2020	Difference (SE)
	(1)	(2)	(1)-(2)
	Top $20\%$	Bottom $20\%$	~ / ~ /
Rep. two-party vote-share $\%$	44.74	55.89	-11.15
	[8.61]	[6.51]	(2.59)
Demeaned two-party vote-share	9.14	6.11	3.02
	[5.05]	[4.36]	(1.49)
Unified Dem. state gvt.	0.30	0.13	0.17
	[0.46]	[0.34]	(0.07)
Unified Rep. state gvt.	0.16	0.40	-0.24
	[0.37]	[0.49]	(0.11)
Legislative professionalism	1.00	-0.84	1.84
	[2.11]	[0.45]	(0.63)
Log(population)	15.42	14.90	0.52
	[1.00]	[0.89]	(0.39)
Income per capita	40569.71	33051.67	7518.04
	[13543.22]	[11052.03]	(1987.49)
Log(income per cap.)	10.55	10.35	0.21
	[0.34]	[0.34]	(0.05)
Urban pop. %	85.05	61.06	23.99
	[7.27]	[7.83]	(2.95)
Minority %	27.91	23.25	4.66
	[12.19]	[11.45]	(4.66)
Unemployed %	5.69	5.28	0.41
	[2.09]	[1.79]	(0.40)
States	12	12	

Table A.3: Highest and lowest innovators of NBER policies (20%)

This table compares characteristics of the states in the highest and lowest 20% for first innovations for the NBER policies. Averages are taken over the entire time period. Standard deviations are in brackets and standard errors in parentheses. Standard errors for the difference are clustered by state. Hawaii, Washington D.C., and Alaska are excluded.

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Decade	Demographics	Distance	Vote-share	Migration	ANES	State party
1960s	$AZ \leftarrow OK$ ,	$CT \leftarrow MD$ ,	$PA \leftarrow MD$ ,	$KY \leftarrow OH,$	$SD \leftarrow UT$ ,	$LA \leftarrow MS$ ,
	$\mathrm{TX} \gets \mathrm{MI},$	$WI \leftarrow TN$ ,	$CT \leftarrow MD$ ,	$IN \leftarrow NY,$	$OH \leftarrow IA,$	$\mathrm{TX} \gets \mathrm{LA},$
	$\mathrm{KS} \leftarrow \mathrm{CO},$	$\mathrm{LA} \leftarrow \mathrm{GA},$	$\mathrm{IA} \leftarrow \mathrm{CO},$	$UT \leftarrow AZ$ ,	$AR \leftarrow TX,$	$AL \leftarrow TX$ ,
	$\mathrm{IA} \gets \mathrm{OK},$	$\text{MD} \leftarrow \text{IN},$	$GA \leftarrow NC$ ,	$\mathrm{IA} \leftarrow \mathrm{SD},$	$\mathrm{IA} \leftarrow \mathrm{OH},$	$\mathrm{LA} \leftarrow \mathrm{GA},$
	$\mathrm{ME} \leftarrow \mathrm{NE}$	$\mathbf{CA} \leftarrow \mathbf{WA}$	$\mathrm{IA} \leftarrow \mathrm{IN}$	$\mathrm{WI} \leftarrow \mathrm{CA}$	$\rm NJ \leftarrow \rm MI$	$\mathrm{MS} \leftarrow \mathrm{AL}$
1970s	$\text{KS} \leftarrow \text{IN},$	$OK \leftarrow IA$ ,	$AZ \leftarrow SC$ ,	$NE \leftarrow IA$ ,	$NJ \leftarrow PA$ ,	$MD \leftarrow MS$ ,
	$WA \leftarrow OR$ ,	$OK \leftarrow CO$ ,	$OK \leftarrow CO$ ,	$MA \leftarrow NJ$ ,	$\mathrm{KS} \leftarrow \mathrm{TN},$	$LA \leftarrow AL$ ,
	$OK \leftarrow IN$ ,	$KY \leftarrow GA$ ,	$VA \leftarrow CO$ ,	$NY \leftarrow NJ$ ,	$GA \leftarrow MO$ ,	$MI \leftarrow VA$ ,
	$OR \leftarrow WI$ ,	$IN \leftarrow VA$ ,	$GA \leftarrow MO$ ,	$AR \leftarrow TN$ ,	$\mathrm{TN} \leftarrow \mathrm{NC},$	$CO \leftarrow NY$ ,
	$IN \leftarrow GA$	$MS \leftarrow SC$	$OH \leftarrow PA$	$WI \leftarrow IL$	$NE \leftarrow OH$	$\mathrm{GA} \leftarrow \mathrm{MD}$
1020-	MNL / INI	DA / IN	ML / MO	NT / MA		FL C
19808	$MIN \leftarrow IN,$	$FA \leftarrow IN,$ MN $\downarrow$ SD	$MI \leftarrow MO,$	$NJ \leftarrow MA,$ $MD \leftarrow NC$	$IA \leftarrow SO,$	$FL \leftarrow SC,$
	$An \leftarrow AL,$	$MN \leftarrow SD,$	$LA \leftarrow OII,$	$MD \leftarrow NC,$	$SD \leftarrow IA,$	$IN \leftarrow ON,$
	$MC \leftarrow MI,$	$NC \leftarrow NJ,$	$N I \leftarrow MIN,$ $VV \leftarrow TN$	$1N \leftarrow AL,$ ML $\downarrow$ II	$ME \leftarrow MI,$	$\Pi \leftarrow NI$ ,
	$NC \leftarrow KI$ , $OB \leftarrow OV$	$AR \leftarrow OR,$	$KI \leftarrow IN,$	$MI \leftarrow IL,$ TN / MI	$NJ \leftarrow U\Pi,$	$AL \leftarrow \Gamma L,$ ME / WI
	$OR \leftarrow OR$	$C1 \leftarrow N1$	$LA \leftarrow C1$	$1 \text{ IV} \leftarrow \text{IVII}$	$50 \leftarrow 1A$	$ME \leftarrow WI$
1990s	$GA \leftarrow MO$ ,	$OH \leftarrow KY$ ,	$NE \leftarrow MS$ ,	$GA \leftarrow AL$ ,	$MS \leftarrow WA$ ,	$ME \leftarrow NY$ ,
	$MI \leftarrow WA$	$WI \leftarrow IL$ ,	$MS \leftarrow NC$ ,	$NE \leftarrow OK$ ,	$KS \leftarrow MN$ ,	$NC \leftarrow AL$
	$CA \leftarrow MA$ ,	$SD \leftarrow MI$ ,	$FL \leftarrow AZ$	$MO \leftarrow TX$ ,	$AL \leftarrow PA$	$MD \leftarrow GA$ ,
	$OK \leftarrow OR$ ,	$KY \leftarrow OH$ ,	$OK \leftarrow NC$ ,	$OH \leftarrow NY$ ,	$SC \leftarrow CO$ ,	$SC \leftarrow IN$ ,
	$KY \leftarrow TN$	$GA \leftarrow IN$	$OH \leftarrow NJ$	$NY \leftarrow PA$	$MA \leftarrow VA$	$OR \leftarrow CT$
2000s	$MS \leftarrow AL$ ,	$CT \leftarrow ME$ ,	$\mathrm{IA} \leftarrow \mathrm{MI},$	$MN \leftarrow SD$ ,	$CO \leftarrow FL$ ,	$UT \leftarrow NE$ ,
	$GA \leftarrow IN$ ,	$SD \leftarrow MO$ ,	$WI \leftarrow PA$ ,	$AR \leftarrow OK$ ,	$KY \leftarrow TX$ ,	$CA \leftarrow MS$ ,
	$WI \leftarrow MO$ ,	$WA \leftarrow SD$ ,	$NY \leftarrow WA$ ,	$\mathrm{KY} \gets \mathrm{FL},$	$MN \leftarrow IA$ ,	$\mathrm{IA} \leftarrow \mathrm{AR},$
	$SC \leftarrow MS$ ,	$GA \leftarrow VA$ ,	$MN \leftarrow ME$ ,	$TX \leftarrow CA$ ,	$CO \leftarrow CA$ ,	$CT \leftarrow KY$ ,
	$\mathrm{TX} \leftarrow \mathrm{AZ}$	$\mathbf{CT} \leftarrow \mathbf{MA}$	$\mathrm{SD} \leftarrow \mathrm{KS}$	$\mathrm{KS} \leftarrow \mathrm{CO}$	$\mathrm{NE} \leftarrow \mathrm{VA}$	$\mathbf{AR} \leftarrow \mathbf{MA}$
$9010_{\pi}$	$OV \leftarrow MO$	TT / TA		NC / FI	SD ( WI	
2010S	$OK \leftarrow MO,$	$1L \leftarrow 1A,$	$WII \leftarrow PA,$	$MD \leftarrow FL,$	$SD \leftarrow WI,$	$\cup I \leftarrow NE,$
	$MA \leftarrow PA,$	$MO \leftarrow AL,$	$VVI \leftarrow IVII,$	$MD \leftarrow NC,$	$01 \leftarrow FL,$	$AL \leftarrow UI,$
	$MIN \leftarrow VA,$	$AZ \leftarrow WA,$	$MIN \leftarrow MII,$	$UT \leftarrow AZ,$	$OK \leftarrow SC,$	$OK \leftarrow OH$ ,
	$MS \leftarrow AR,$	$VA \leftarrow GA$ ,	$MO \leftarrow IN$ ,	$SC \leftarrow GA$ ,	$IIN \leftarrow MI,$	$NE \leftarrow SD$ ,
	$AL \leftarrow SC$	$IN \leftarrow WI$	$TN \leftarrow AR$	$PA \leftarrow MD$	$MI \leftarrow FL$	$TN \leftarrow IN$

Table A.4: Examples of states in closest thirds

 $XX \leftarrow YY$  means state YY is in the third of states closest to state XX for the decade. Pairs of states are randomly selected.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)			
Dep. var.: Policy adoption (logit)	50-60s	70s	80s	90s	00s	10s			
Proportion of states adopted	2.21	0.30	1.46	2.25	1.89	2.48			
	(0.29)	(0.19)	(0.17)	(0.13)	(0.20)	(0.28)			
Unified Democratic state gvnt.	-0.37	0.07	-0.10	-0.00	0.18	0.12			
	(0.19)	(0.12)	(0.06)	(0.08)	(0.11)	(0.14)			
Unified Republican state gvnt.	-0.31	0.39	-0.16	-0.01	0.11	0.08			
	(0.20)	(0.15)	(0.14)	(0.10)	(0.08)	(0.13)			
Presidential election year	-0.65	-0.06	-0.06	0.06	-0.18	-0.33			
	(0.18)	(0.13)	(0.08)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.13)			
State legislature/governor election year	0.27	-0.02	0.12	0.03	0.02	0.09			
	(0.25)	(0.13)	(0.06)	(0.08)	(0.09)	(0.10)			
Measure of adoption among other states closest in: Geography									
Distance	0.27	0.15	0.06	0.24	0.14	0.09			
	(0.10)	(0.12)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.07)			
Ideology	. ,	· /	· /	· /	· /	· /			
Republican vote-share	0.07	-0.04	-0.12	0.08	0.31	0.33			
	(0.10)	(0.08)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.10)			
State government partisanship	0.00	-0.09	-0.04	-0.09	0.35	0.34			
о́	(0.21)	(0.17)	(0.14)	(0.12)	(0.15)	(0.14)			
State gynt. party×Divided gynt.	0.13	-0.05	0.08	-0.14	-0.46	-0.78			
	(0.25)	(0.24)	(0.17)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.18)			
State gynt. party×Pres. elec. year	-0.15	-0.08	0.07	0.24	0.04	0.08			
	(0.22)	(0.17)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.13)	(0.11)			
State gynt. party×State elec. vear	-0.06	0.07	0.23	0.14	-0.10	-0.32			
	(0.24)	(0.16)	(0.11)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.16)			
Citizen ideology score	0.38	0.32	0.04	0.09	0.21	0.05			
0,	(0.12)	(0.08)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.11)			
Legislative ideology score	-0.15	-0.01	0.03	-0.06	-0.02	0.26			
0	(0.10)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.09)			
ANES voter preferences & sentiment	0.33	0.18	0.14	0.07	-0.03	0.15			
1	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.08)			
Demographics and Migration	( )	( )		× /	( )	( )			
Log(population)	-0.08	0.01	-0.01	0.00	-0.05	-0.16			
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.07)			
Log(income per capita)	0.17	-0.25	-0.52	-0.19	-0.00	-0.61			
	(0.35)	(0.27)	(0.23)	(0.19)	(0.19)	(0.26)			
Urban pop. %	0.27	0.00	-0.03	0.07	0.16	0.30			
	(0.12)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.07)			
Migration flows	0.07	0.17	0.23	0.04	0.18	0.17			
0	(0.14)	(0.15)	(0.11)	(0.12)	(0.09)	(0.10)			
Non-white %	(0.12-1)	0.10	-0.02	-0.09	-0.05	-0.06			
		(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.07)			
Unemployed %		(0.00)	0.03	-0.06	-0.04	-0.05			
e			(0.07)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.07)			
Baseline $P(Adopt)$	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.05	0.05	0.06			
Observations	20766	38731	51669	56573	47664	17436			
Policies	119	185	260	364	306	170			
Pseudo $R^2$	0.25	0.12	0.14	0.18	0.18	0.24			

 Table A.5: Policy diffusion predictors by decade (expanded)

This table shows the coefficients from a logit regression. Standard errors are clustered by state. The baseline hazard for each policy is assumed to be constant within a decade and is captured by policy fixed effects. The closest states are defined as the third of all the states with the smallest absolute value difference in each characteristic. The states closest in State gvnt. partisanship are those with the same party in control of the state government (either unified Democratic, unified Republican, or divided). Citizen and legislative ideology scores are taken from the updated version of Berry et al. (1998). The measure of ANES voter preferences & sentiment uses a broader set of questions from the ANES survey than in Table 3 to also include questions on voter sentiment. See Online Appendix Section B for details. Alaska, Hawaii, and Washington D.C. are excluded from the analyses. Only policies spanning at least 3 years with at least 5 adopters are included.

Den	nographic in	ndex		Distance		Republican vote-share		
1950-70s	1980-90s	2000-10s	1950-70s	1980-90s	2000-10s	1950-70s	1980-90s	2000-10s
Dep. var.	: Policy ad	option (all l	ogit except	(2))				
(1) Basela	ine $(R^2: 0.16)$	$, 0.17, 0.17; N_{\rm p}$	ol.: 267, 420, 3	575)				
0.31	0.19	0.23	0.42	0.31	0.31	0.15	0.13	0.45
(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.05)
(2) Basela	ine linear p	robability m	odel (coeffic	cients and S	SEs  imes 100) (	$R^2: 0.17, 0.17$	$, 0.17; N_{\rm pol.}: 26$	59, 425, 379)
0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.02
(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
(3) Contr	olling for p	olicy area co	pmposition	over decade	$es~(R^2:~0.18, 0)$	$.17, 0.17; N_{pol}$	: 267, 420, 375)	)
0.31	0.19	0.22	0.44	0.30	0.33	0.14	0.12	0.46
(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.05)
(4) Expan	aded state-le	evel controls	$(R^2: 0.18, 0.1)$	$18, 0.19; N_{\text{pol.}}$	: 265, 420, 375)			
0.27	0.17	0.20	0.21	0.21	0.17	0.13	0.14	0.38
(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)
(5) Parsir	nonious ma	$odel \ (R^2: \ 0.16)$	, 0.17, 0.17; N	pol.: $267, 420,$	375)			
0.36	0.22	0.25	0.41	0.31	0.31	0.16	0.13	0.44
(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)
(6) Adopt	ion measur	e: Lagged b	y one year	$(R^2: 0.14, 0.15)$	$5, 0.15; N_{\text{pol.}}: 2$	267, 420, 375)		
0.27	0.21	0.19	0.34	0.27	0.23	0.07	0.13	0.38
(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.05)
(7) Adopt	ion measur	e: Rank-inv	erse weight	ed average	$(R^2: 0.16, 0.17)$	$N_{\rm pol.}:2$	267, 420, 375)	
1.73	1.22	1.30	2.63	1.86	1.76	0.26	0.78	1.95
(0.30)	(0.22)	(0.23)	(0.27)	(0.23)	(0.31)	(0.23)	(0.17)	(0.24)
(8) Adopt	ion measur	e: Proportio	on of closes	t third that	are adopter	$CS \ (R^2: \ 0.16, 0)$	$0.17, 0.17; N_{\text{pol.}}$	267, 420, 375)
2.28	1.45	1.21	2.45	1.83	1.62	0.89	1.01	2.60
(0.39)	(0.30)	(0.31)	(0.32)	(0.29)	(0.30)	(0.34)	(0.24)	(0.25)
(9) Adopt	ion measur	e: Proportio	on of all ad	opters in th	e closest the	<i>ird</i> $(R^2: 0.14$	$, 0.14, 0.14; N_{po}$	$_{1.}: 267, 420, 375)$
0.54	0.26	0.53	0.57	0.57	0.77	-0.07	-0.01	1.01
(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.09)
(10) Adop	otion measu	re: $P(Adop$	t) closest ti	hird-P(Add)	opt) all stat	$es \ (R^2: \ 0.15,$	$0.15, 0.15; N_{pol}$	: 267, 420, 375)
2.42	1.50	1.30	2.34	1.78	1.64	0.86	1.02	2.63
(0.39)	(0.28)	(0.31)	(0.34)	(0.28)	(0.30)	(0.37)	(0.26)	(0.25)

Table A.6: Robustness checks

This table presents results from alternate specifications of the policy diffusion model. The table shows coefficients on the measure of adopters among the "closest" states (i.e., the closest third unless otherwise noted) in terms of an index for demographic characteristics (see notes in Table 3 for details), distance, and the average Republication vote-share in the two most recent presidential election. Standard errors clustered by state are in parentheses. Each model is estimated over three separate time periods (1950-70s, 1980-90s, and 2000-10s). The (pseudo-) $R^2$  and number of policies are reported in parentheses in chronological order corresponding to the three time periods.

Baseline: replicates the specification from Table 3 over the longer time periods.

Baseline linear probability model: uses the same covariates in the Baseline specification but estimates the coefficients using a linear probability model.

Controlling for policy area composition over decades: reweights policies in each decade to match the composition of policy areas in the 1980s.

*Expanded state-level controls*: takes the specification from Table 3 and adds: non-white % and unemployed %; quadratic terms for the proportion of all other states adopted, Republican vote-share, log population, income per capita, urban %, non-white %, and unemployed %; adoption measures among the closest third of states in migration flows, non-white %, and unemployed %; a more flexible policy-specific baseline hazard parametrized as a step function that can vary every five years; and state fixed-effects.

*Parsimonious model*: includes only policy fixed effects and the proportion of adopters among all other states, and the adoption measure among the closest third of other states in geography, Republican vote-share in the most recent presidential election, and the demographic index.

The following specifications use alternate measures of concentrated adoptions among the similar states, in place of the baseline two-sided likelihood measure. Each specification is "parsimonious" in that the only controls included are policy fixed effects and, except for specifications (8) and (9), the proportion of adopters among all other states.

Lagged by one year: uses the Parsimonious model but takes the adoption measure among the closest other states up to the prior (not current) year.

*Rank-inverse weighted average*: instead of defining the closest states as the third with smallest absolute difference, this measure weights the other states' adoptions by the inverse of their rank in absolute distance, where the closest state is is ranked 1 and the furthest state is ranked 47.

Proportion of closest third that are adopters: uses the proportion of states in the closest third that have adopted.

Proportion of all adopters in the closest third: uses the proportion of all adopters that are in the closest third of states.

P(Adopt) closest third-P(Adopt) all states: uses the proportion of states in the closest third that have adopted minus the proportion of all states (excluding one's own) that have adopted.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Dep. var.: Policy adoption (logit)	50-60s	70s	80s	90s	00s	10s
Prop. of states adopted	2.14	0.12	1.43	2.21	1.95	2.01
	(0.28)	(0.19)	(0.17)	(0.13)	(0.18)	(0.24)
Divided state government	0.31	-0.12	0.13	0.01	-0.14	-0.18
	(0.13)	(0.10)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.09)
		_				
Measure of adoption among oth	er state	s closest	t in:			
Demographic index	0.45	0.11	0.17	0.10	0.14	0.20
	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Distance	0.21	0.21	0.10	0.24	0.16	0.13
	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.09)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.08)
Republican vote-share	0.16	-0.00	-0.12	0.10	0.42	0.37
	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.08)
Migration flows	0.32	0.22	0.12	0.00	0.16	0.13
	(0.13)	(0.16)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.08)	(0.09)
Matched ANES voter preferences	0.14	0.20	0.02	0.06	0.03	0.22
	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.07)
Other ANES voter preferences	0.07	0.11	0.07	0.06	-0.04	0.06
	(0.10)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.08)
State gvnt. partisanship	-0.25	0.01	0.08	0.08	0.35	0.47
	(0.11)	(0.13)	(0.09)	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.09)
Divided gvnt.×State gvnt. party	0.45	-0.22	0.02	-0.14	-0.48	-0.75
• •	(0.22)	(0.24)	(0.18)	(0.16)	(0.15)	(0.16)
Observations	28550	38731	51669	56573	47664	22948
Policies	136	185	260	364	306	181
Pseudo $R^2$	0.23	0.12	0.13	0.18	0.17	0.21

 Table A.7a:
 Models of policy diffusion:
 Matching ANES voter preferences to pertinent policies

This table estimates the specification in Table 5, but separating the ANES voter preferences into those that are or are not pertinent to each policy. We first partition the set of ANES questions into those concerning the economy (e.g., about jobs and government spending) versus all others (e.g., about abortion or civil rights). For the "Matched ANES voter preferences" measure, we take the adoption among the third of states that are closest in voter preferences using the pertinent subset of ANES questions: i.e., for policies in the Economics policy area, the measure takes ANES questions concerning the economy, and for policies in non-Economics policy areas, the measure uses the non-economics ANES questions. The "Other ANES voter preferences" measure performs the opposite match, using the economics ANES questions for non-Economics policies (and vice versa). Standard errors clustered by states are in parentheses below.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Dep. var.: Policy adoption (logit)	50-60s	70s	80s	90s	00s	10s
Prop. of states adopted	2.14	0.11	1.43	2.22	1.94	2.02
	(0.28)	(0.19)	(0.17)	(0.13)	(0.18)	(0.24)
Divided state government	0.30	-0.13	0.13	0.01	-0.14	-0.18
	(0.13)	(0.10)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.09)
Measure of adoption among oth	er state	s closes	t in:			
Demographic index	0.43	0.11	0.16	0.11	0.14	0.21
	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.08)
Distance	0.19	0.21	0.10	0.24	0.17	0.13
	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.09)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.08)
Republican vote-share	0.15	-0.00	-0.12	0.11	0.42	0.39
	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.08)
Migration flows	0.30	0.21	0.11	0.02	0.16	0.13
	(0.13)	(0.16)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.08)	(0.09)
ANES voter preferences	0.31	0.26	0.11	0.03	-0.01	0.17
	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.08)
State gvnt. partisanship	-0.27	0.00	0.08	0.08	0.36	0.49
	(0.11)	(0.14)	(0.09)	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.09)
Divided gvnt.×State gvnt. party	0.46	-0.22	0.03	-0.14	-0.48	-0.76
	(0.22)	(0.24)	(0.18)	(0.16)	(0.15)	(0.16)
Baseline $P(Adopt)$	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.05	0.05	0.06
Observations	28550	38731	51669	56573	47664	22948
Policies	136	185	260	364	306	181
Pseudo $R^2$	0.24	0.12	0.13	0.18	0.17	0.21

**Table A.7b:** Models of policy diffusion: Migration, voter preferences, and state partycontrol (by decade)

This table estimates the specification in Table 5 by decade. Standard errors clustered by states are in parentheses below.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)		
Dep. var.: Policy adoption (logit)	50-60s	70s	80s	90s	00s	10s		
Prop. of states adopted	2.98	-0.05	1.79	3.11	2.32	3.00		
	(0.23)	(0.22)	(0.17)	(0.13)	(0.19)	(0.23)		
Divided state government	0.20	-0.14	0.11	-0.01	-0.15	-0.06		
	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.09)		
Measure of adoption among oth	Measure of adoption among other states closest in:							
Demographic index	0.47	0.18	0.20	0.20	0.23	0.22		
	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.07)		
Distance	0.20	0.21	0.15	0.22	0.16	0.23		
	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.04)	(0.07)		
Republican vote-share	0.12	0.15	0.07	0.18	0.36	0.36		
-	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)		
Migration flows	0.45	0.31	0.17	0.23	0.30	0.24		
ő	(0.09)	(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.07)		
State gynt. partisanship	-0.01	0.14	0.11	0.08	0.41	0.54		
	(0.08)	(0.11)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.07)		
Divided gvnt.×State gvnt. party	0.19	-0.39	-0.02	0.05	-0.48	-0.84		
0 0 1 0	(0.16)	(0.24)	(0.15)	(0.14)	(0.12)	(0.13)		
Baseline $P(Adopt)$	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.05	0.05	0.06		
Observations	58756	53268	75259	90165	69305	32602		
Policies	162	196	272	380	330	194		
Pseudo $R^2$	0.22	0.13	0.14	0.19	0.18	0.20		

Table A.7c:	Models of	policy	diffusion:	Migration	and state	party	control
		•				• • /	

This table estimates the specification in Table 5 by decade without the ANES measure of voter similarity, keeping the full set of contiguous states. Standard errors clustered by states are in parentheses below.
	Uni. st. gvnt.	Unified Republican state government				Unified Democratic state government				Loss of uni.
	(1) Diff.	(2) Right-lean. policy	(3) Left-lean. policy	(4) Diff. (2-3)	(5) Neutral policy	(6) Left-lean. policy	(7) Right-lean. policy	(8) Diff. (6-7)	(9) Neutral policy	(10) Diff.
Events during years	s 1950 to 1989									
4 years pre-event	-0.021 (0.008)	-0.012 (0.009)	0.009(0.007)	-0.021 (0.014)	0.001 (0.011)	-0.007 (0.007)	0.018(0.009)	-0.025 (0.013)	-0.005 (0.007)	0.001 (0.007)
3 years pre-event	-0.014 (0.006)	-0.006 (0.005)	0.002(0.008)	-0.008 (0.008)	0.023(0.010)	-0.013 (0.005)	0.003 (0.006)	-0.016 (0.007)	-0.002 (0.006)	-0.001 (0.007)
2 years pre-event	-0.014 (0.009)	-0.014 (0.011)	0.009(0.010)	-0.023 (0.020)	0.016(0.012)	-0.005 (0.006)	0.006 (0.006)	-0.011 (0.009)	0.007 (0.009)	-0.003 (0.008)
1 year pre-event	— (-)	— (-)	— (-)	— (-)	— (-)	— (-)	— (-)	— (-)	- (-)	— (-)
Year of event	0.009(0.008)	0.001 (0.011)	-0.015 (0.010)	0.017 (0.016)	0.022(0.017)	0.003 (0.006)	0.001 (0.007)	0.003 (0.010)	0.012(0.007)	0.002 (0.011)
1 year post-event	0.005 (0.008)	0.014 (0.008)	-0.004 (0.010)	0.018 (0.017)	0.009(0.010)	-0.002 (0.006)	-0.004 (0.005)	0.002 (0.008)	-0.002 (0.008)	0.012 (0.008)
2 years post-event	-0.004 (0.011)	0.008 (0.015)	0.004 (0.014)	0.005 (0.022)	-0.008 (0.017)	0.003 (0.007)	0.012 (0.009)	-0.009(0.013)	0.006 (0.011)	0.003 (0.010)
3 years post-event	0.002 (0.007)	0.009(0.011)	0.003 (0.009)	0.006 (0.017)	-0.010 (0.012)	$0.001 \ (0.007)$	-0.001 (0.006)	0.002 (0.008)	$0.011 \ (0.009)$	-0.008 (0.008)
4 years post-event	0.003 (0.009)	-0.012 (0.010)	0.003 (0.009)	-0.015 (0.014)	0.018(0.019)	0.002 (0.009)	-0.007 (0.009)	0.009 (0.012)	$0.044 \ (0.015)$	-0.006 (0.010)
Observations	82041	82041	82041	82041	82041	82041	82041	82041	82041	83774
Policies	234	234	234	234	234	234	234	234	234	242
Events	139	55	55	55	55	84	84	84	84	157
Events during years 1990 to 2020										
4 years pre-event	0.006 (0.007)	0.000(0.008)	-0.007 (0.007)	0.007 (0.014)	-0.006 (0.009)	0.006 (0.005)	-0.001 (0.005)	0.007 (0.007)	0.010(0.006)	0.020 (0.008)
3 years pre-event	-0.004 (0.007)	0.000(0.008)	-0.004 (0.007)	0.004 (0.014)	$0.011 \ (0.006)$	-0.005 (0.006)	$0.001 \ (0.005)$	-0.007 (0.007)	0.003 (0.005)	$0.013 \ (0.007)$
2 years pre-event	-0.004 (0.007)	-0.001 (0.007)	$0.011 \ (0.007)$	-0.011 (0.011)	$0.021 \ (0.007)$	-0.001 (0.006)	-0.009 (0.006)	0.008 (0.010)	-0.007 (0.006)	0.017 (0.008)
1 year pre-event	— (-)	— (—)	— (-)	— (–)	— (—)	— (—)	— (–)	— (-)	— (-)	- (-)
Year of event	0.017 (0.007)	0.012 (0.008)	$0.004 \ (0.005)$	0.008 (0.008)	0.009(0.010)	0.022 (0.008)	-0.004 (0.007)	0.027 (0.011)	0.006(0.007)	0.001 (0.010)
1 year post-event	0.017 (0.008)	0.008 (0.007)	$0.001 \ (0.005)$	0.007 (0.010)	0.009(0.008)	$0.016 \ (0.008)$	-0.008 (0.005)	0.024 (0.010)	-0.003 (0.005)	$0.015 \ (0.009)$
2 years post-event	0.028 (0.009)	$0.011 \ (0.009)$	-0.008 (0.008)	0.019 (0.015)	-0.002 (0.013)	0.024 (0.010)	-0.011 (0.007)	0.035 (0.013)	-0.005 (0.007)	0.008 (0.010)
3 years post-event	0.018 (0.007)	0.011 (0.009)	-0.003 (0.007)	0.014 (0.013)	0.007 (0.011)	$0.013 \ (0.007)$	-0.008 (0.007)	0.021 (0.011)	0.000(0.009)	0.005 (0.008)
4 years post-event	0.030(0.014)	-0.009 (0.006)	-0.008 (0.008)	-0.001 (0.011)	0.006(0.009)	$0.042 \ (0.021)$	-0.030 (0.009)	0.072 (0.027)	0.003 (0.008)	-0.003 (0.009)
Observations	133314	133314	133314	133314	133314	133314	133314	133314	133314	121453
Policies	416	416	416	416	416	416	416	416	416	425
Events	115	51	51	51	51	64	64	64	64	99

Table A.8: Event studies

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