Supplementary/Online Appendix for:

Relative Policy Support and Coincidental Representation

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Appendix 1 Correlated Measurement Error or Correlated Preferences?

Gilens (2012) uses two analytic approaches to deal with the fact that preferences are highly correlated across income groups. The first approach relies on bivariate analysis, so only one group's preferences are analyzed at a time. This is Gilens' preferred approach (Gilens 2005, 786) and it is the approach I follow throughout this article. Gilens' second approach involves multivariate analysis and a correction for correlated measurement error. Since I follow Gilens' first approach, the analyses reported in the main text do not require any correction for correlated measurement error. As I detail below, an additional reason to rely on Gilens' first approach is that there are numerous reasons for why we should be extremely cautious about "correcting" for correlated measurement error.

Gilens and Page (2014, Appendix 2) explain, "Errors affecting both measures in the same way within a particular survey can arise from such factors as sampling, question wording, question order, topics in the news at the time the survey was in the field, and so on." I propose that to the extent these factors influence the expressed preferences of individuals in similar ways, it is not necessarily measurement error. Consider, for example, the potential effects of question wording. It is well know that slight changes to how a survey question is worded (such as asking about "welfare" versus "assisting the poor") can lead to different responses. Yet, Gilens explains how these question wording effects can actually reflect meaningful information (as opposed to measurement error). Specifically, Gilens writes, "the lesser appeal of 'welfare' in comparison to 'assisting the poor' can be understood not as a superficial response to an emotionally laden term, but as a sophisticated differentiation between kinds of government antipoverty programs... much of what passes for question–wording effects are actually differences in responses resulting from differences in the policy that respondents are asked to respond to" (Gilens 2012, 33). From this perspective, if different income groups respond to specific question wording in similar ways, we should *not* view these similarities as measurement error that needs to be corrected. Rather, we should interpret the similar response patterns as evidence that the respondents are responding to the question wording in meaningful and informative ways. The same could be said of question order effects. "Topics in the news" are also likely to represent more than measurement error. If middle– and high–income groups both increased (decreased) support for a policy based on news coverage, not only does this mean both groups received the same news information, but that both groups responded to this news information in the same way. Again, the similar patterns across groups would convey meaningful information, not measurement error.

Another important consideration is that even if some correlated measurement error exists, when politicians use survey data as a measure of group preferences (e.g., Druckman and Jacobs 2011, Heith 1998, Jacobs and Shapiro 1994, Jacobs and Shapiro 1995), this error is part of the signal that politicians receive from the survey marginals. Thus, correcting for correlated measurement error would actually involve changing the input that politicians receive. Since politicians can only respond to the preferences they receive, such a change would be problematic. In sum, "correcting" for correlated measurement error may actually distort meaningful information about respondent preferences and may misrepresent the signals politicians receive about the public's preferences. These conclusions further support the current analytic strategy of analyzing one group's preferences at a time.

Appendix 2 Predicted Probability of Policy Adoption Plotted against the Preferences of the 50th Income Perncentile

Figure 6 in the text plotted the predicted probability of policy adoption based on the preferences of the 90th income percentile and the predicted probability of policy adoption based on the counterfactual scenario of the 50th income percentile receiving the same representation as the 90th income percentile (and the 90th income percentile receiving no representation). The x-axis in Figure 6 reflected the preferences of the 90th income percentile. The fact that the predicted probabilities based on the preferences of the 90th and 50th income percentiles were similar when plotted against the preferences of the 90th income percentile offered evidence that the probability of policy adoption would be similar regardless of whether politicians followed the preferences of the affluent or those in the middle.

Figure A-1 repeats this exercise, this time plotting the predicted probabilities as a function of the preferences of the 50th income percentile. The overall conclusion is exactly the same. The black dots represent the predicted probability of policy adoption if the 50th income percentile received the same representation as the 90th income percentile (and the 90th income percentile receiving no representation). Although the expected values based on the 90th income percentile preferences (grey dots) are always above or below those of the 50th income percentile, the confidence intervals (grey lines) almost always overlap the black dots and both the black and grey dots reflect an increasing probability of policy adoption as support among the 50th income percentile increases.

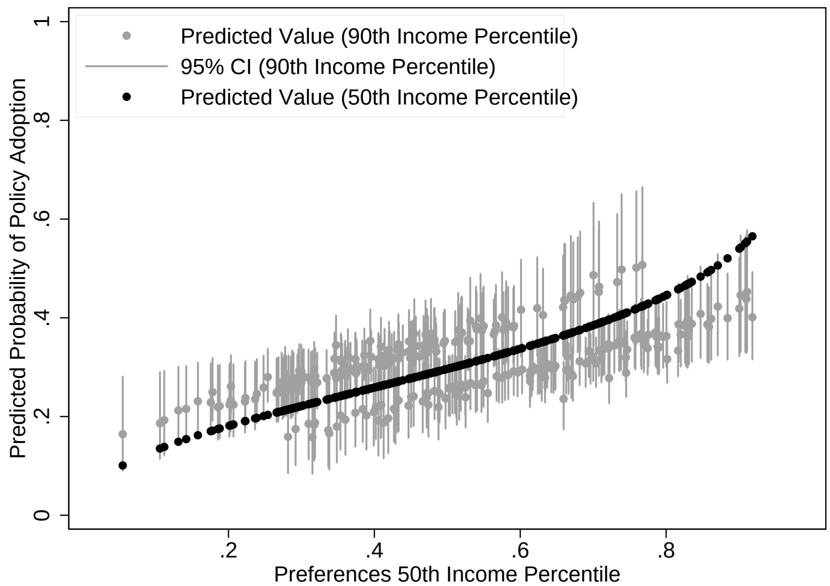

Figure A-1: The Expected Probability of Policy Adoption Based on the Preferences of the 90th Income Percentile *and* the Expected Probability if the 50th Income Percentile Received the *Same* Amount of Representation as the 90th Income Percentile (and the 90th Income Percentile Received No Representation) (The X-Axis Corresponds with the Preferences of the 50th Income Percentile.)

Appendix 3 Only Analyzing Economic Policies

Theories of economic–elite domination suggest that elite dominance will be particularly pronounced among policies that relate to economic issues and redistribution (Domhoff 2002, 124-125; Ferguson 1995, 43; Winters and Page 2009, 731). Thus, one potential concern with the analyses reported in the text is that stronger differences would emerge between middle– and high–income groups if the analysis was limited to these issue areas. To test this possibility, I replicated the analysis that was used to produce Figure 6, only including economic and social welfare issues.[19] The results appear in Figure A-2. Even when focusing only on these issue areas, the expected probability of policy adoption is roughly the same, regardless of whether policy follows the preferences of the affluent or those in the middle. In fact, if anything, the similarities are even stronger. Eighty–two percent of the predicted values based on the preferences of the 50th income percentile (black dots) fall within the 95 percent confidence intervals based on the 90th income percentile.

[19]Economic policy questions include issues like taxes, the minimum wage, unemployment benefits, and corporate regulation (Gilens 2012, 114). Social welfare includes questions about welfare reform, health care, social security, and education (Gilens 2012, 118).

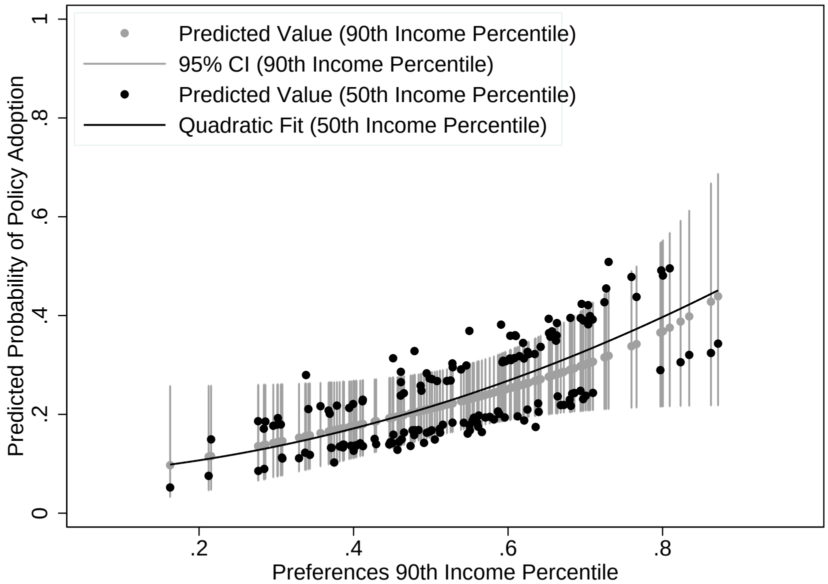

Figure A-2: The Expected Probability of Policy Adoption (*Economic and Social Welfare Policy Issues Only*) Based on the Preferences of the 90th Income Percentile *and* the Expected Probability if the 50th Income Percentile Received the *Same* Amount of Representation as the 90th Income Percentile (and the 90th Income Percentile Received No Representation)

Appendix 4 Results Based on Gilens and Page's (2014) Model

The analysis of income groups reported in the text is based on Gilens (2012, Ch.3). More recently, Gilens and Page (2014) have estimated models that include the preferences of organized interest groups (see also Gilens 2012, Ch.5). Below, I assess whether using Gilens and Page's (2014) more recent approach would lead to different inferences. It turns out, this is not the case. The similar patterns in the left and right panels of Figure A-3 indicate that the conclusions from the main text hold even when we consider the influence of organized interests groups.

To generate Figure A-3, I began with the results in Model 4 of Table 3 in Gilens and Page (2014, 571), which estimates the relationship between the preferences of average citizens, the preferences of economic elites, the alignment of interest groups, and the probability of policy response. Gilens and Page estimate the influence on policy adoption to be 0.03 for the average citizen, 0.76 for economic elites, and 0.56 for interest groups. I used these values and the actual values in the data (i.e., the preferences of the average citizen, economic elites, and interest groups) to estimate the predicted probability of policy adoption.[20] The left panel plots these predicted values as a function of relative policy support among the 90th income percentile. As support for a policy among the 90th income percentile increases, the expected probability of policy adoption also increases.

To generate the values in the right panel, the relationship between interest group alignment and the probability of policy adoption remained the same. The relationships between the preferences of the average citizens and economic elites, however, were reversed. Thus, these predicted values are based on the counterfactual scenario where the relationship between the preferences of those in the middle and the probability of policy adoption is 0.76 and the corresponding relationship for economic elites is 0.03. Despite this change, the expected values in the right panel closely mirror the expected values in the left panel. These similarities indicate that even when the analysis incorporates the potential influence of interest groups, we would expect the probability of policy adoption to look about the same regardless of whether politicians followed economic elites or the average citizen.

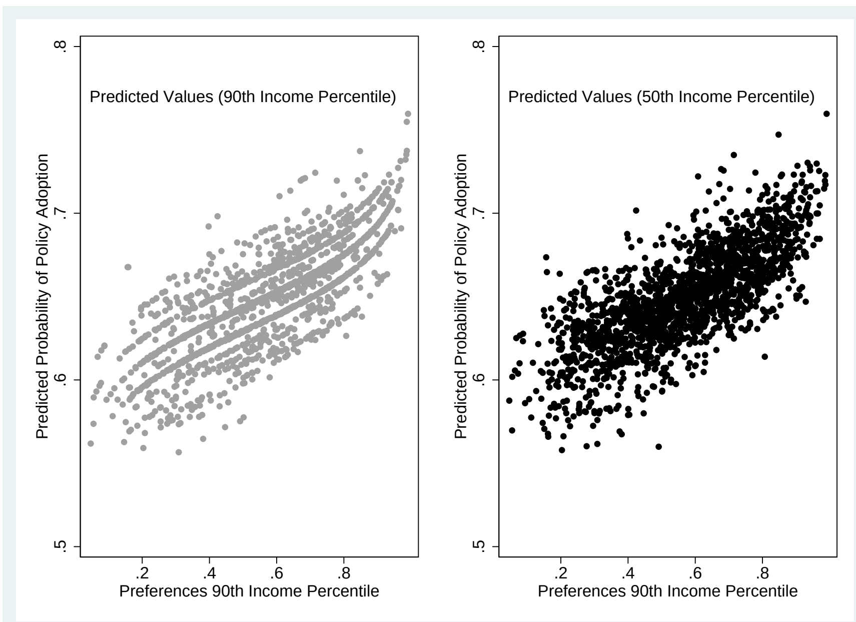

Figure A-3: The Expected Probability of Policy Adoption Based on Model 4 of Table 3 in Gilens and Page (2014, 571) [*left panel*] *and* the Expected Probability of Policy Adoption if the 50th Income Percentile Received the *Same* Amount of Representation as the 90th Income Percentile [*right panel*]

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[20]Following Gilens and Page (2014) all predictors are scaled from 0 to 1, policy preferences reflect the log odds ratio of the proportion in support of the policy, and interest group alignment reflects net interest group alignment as defined in Gilens and Page (2014, 569).

Appendix 5 The Relationship between Strong Partisan Preferences and the Probability of Policy Change

The text reported the estimated relationships between the preferences of Strong Democrats and Strong Republicans and the probability of policy response. Those estimates were used to generate the predicted probabilities reported in Figure 7. Table A-1, below, reports the full results from the strong partisan analysis.

Table A-1: Policy Responsiveness to Strong Republicans and Strong Democrats when Preferences Differ by at Least 10 Percentage Points, 2000 to 2004

	Strong Republicans	Strong Democrats
Policy Support	0.79*	0.10
	(0.25)	(0.17)
Intercept	-1.01*	-0.64*
	(0.28)	(0.22)
N	92	92
Pseudo R^2	0.11	0.00

Notes: Cell entries represent logistic regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. The dependent variable is coded 1 if the policy was adopted within 4 years and 0 otherwise. Policy Support reflects the the log odds ratio of the percent favoring the policy. $*$ = $p<.05$ (two–tailed tests)