How Well Do Republican Delegates Represent Other Utah Republicans

Matthew D. Frei
mattfrei27@gmail.com

Quin J. Monson

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How Well do Republican Delegates Represent Other Utah Republicans?

INTRODUCTION

Utah gives more power to nominating convention delegates than does any other state. In May 2010, Senator Robert Bennett was removed from office without facing a primary. Could the outcome have been different if another system were in place?

METHODOLOGY

Using original survey data, I compare the demographics of Republican delegates to primary and general election Republicans. Then, I compare their issue positions using an index created from the following issues:

- Reauthorizing the State Children’s Health Insurance Program
- The 2009 stimulus package
- Health insurance reform
- The 2008 Troubled Asset Relief Package
- Funding for a troop increase in Afghanistan

The resulting “National Issue Index” ranges from −5 to 5 with higher values representing Republican positions.

IMPLICATIONS

Delegates are neither demographically nor substantively representative of Utah Republican voters.

While our data does not speak specifically to the ousting of Senator Robert Bennett, it is clear that a more representative nomination system could lead to very different results.

Matthew D. Frei
Mentor: Dr. J. Quin Monson
Department of Political Science