UNDERSTANDING POLITICAL DISCOURSE ON CLIMATE CHANGE IN US CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS

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The research presented in this talk is supported by a grant from the US National Science Foundation (BCS-0826892)
Research Questions

- How are testimonies presented in the US Congress ideologically related?

- How do we understand the ongoing climate change political void in the US?

  - This project uses Discourse Network Analysis (DNA) to analyze the ideological relationship among speakers (and the organizations they represent) providing testimony.
During second term of the Bush Administration

109th Congress (2005-2006)
- Republican Leadership in Both the House of Representatives and the Senate
- 29 relevant Hearings that included 441 testimonies

110th Congress (2007-2008)
- Democratic Leadership in Both the House of Representatives and the Senate
- 42 relevant Hearings that included 446 testimonies
Focus of Analysis: 3 Categories

1) Legislation Should Regulate CO2 emissions;

2) Legislation That Regulates CO2 Emissions Will Not Hurt the Economy;

3) Legislation should establish a market for carbon (Cap and Trade)
# Speakers (and Utterances per person) in the three Categories

## 109\textsuperscript{TH} CONGRESS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>109\textsuperscript{TH}:</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CO2 should be regulated</td>
<td>26 (1.7)</td>
<td>12 (1.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legis will not hurt the economy</td>
<td>22 (1.3)</td>
<td>23 (2.3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legis should create a carbon market</td>
<td>13 (1)</td>
<td>8 (1.3)</td>
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## 110\textsuperscript{TH} CONGRESS

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CO2 should be regulated</td>
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<td>8 (1.4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legis will not hurt the economy</td>
<td>38 (1.3)</td>
<td>13 (2.8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legis should create a carbon market</td>
<td>37 (1.6)</td>
<td>11 (1.9)</td>
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Legislation Should Regulate CO2 Emissions

109th Congress

110th Congress
Legislation That Regulates CO₂ Emissions Will Not Hurt the Economy

109th Congress

110th Congress
Legislation Should Establish a Market for Carbon (Cap and Trade)

109TH CONGRESS

110TH CONGRESS
Hierarchical Cluster Analysis of the 109th Congress (Hierarchical Cluster Analysis)
Hierarchical Cluster Analysis of the 110th

110th Congress (Hierarchical Cluster Analysis)
Next Step...Comparing to Survey Data
Conclusions

By looking at Congressional Hearings, we learn about how the discourse is changing around the issue of climate change.

Polarization around the issue of climate change decreased between the 109th and 110th Congresses.

These findings can help to identify “camps” of supporters and opponents involved in climate politics in the US. They could be used to target likely allies throughout the policy world.

Next step in this project is comparing these analyses to survey responses from the top 100 policy actors in the US climate policy network.