

The crowded plenary

Urgency, logrolls, and the conclusive procedure
in Brazil's Câmara
(*preliminary* work)

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Brazilian committees have little gatekeeping power

- Must report every bill
- Majority can discharge the committee
- All bills (except rejected by all committees) enter the plenary queue

Threat of plenary bottlenecks is real: much easier to delay than accelerate the line

Puzzle: How do you get things done?

Agenda power different than in U.S. House: *ex-ante* vs. *ex-post*
(Cox 2006, Cox&McCub. 2011, Jenkins&Monroe 2016)

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Can **request** urgency (floor majority grants)

- 2/3 of Mesa or referral committee
- 1/3 of plenary
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Executive can give **45-day deadline** (else front of line)

- own bills (and those appended to them)
- since 2001, all *Medidas Provisórias* are urgent

Ignoring → all Câmara business on hold

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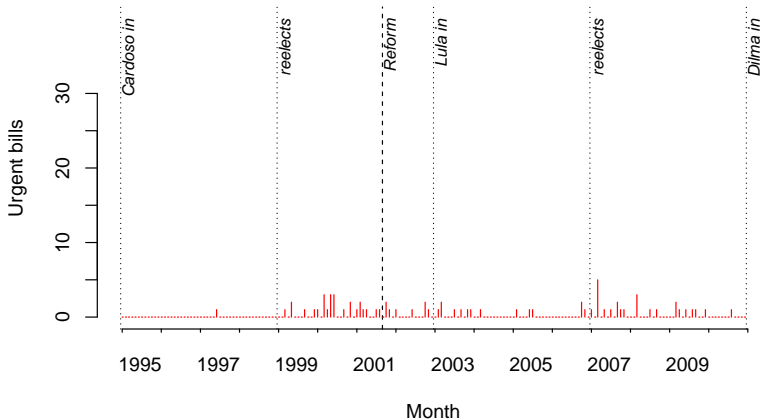
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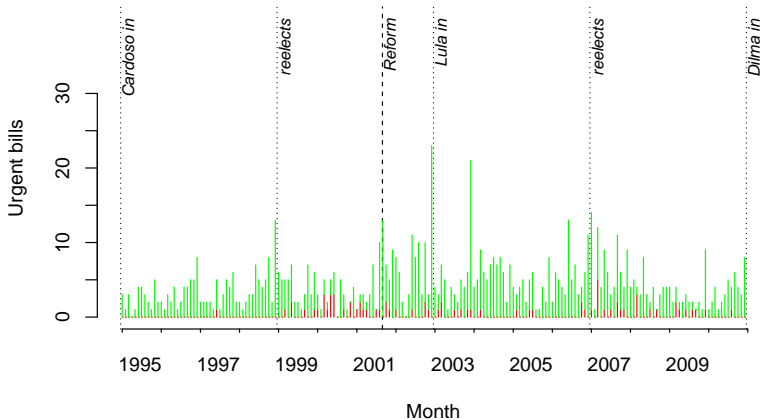
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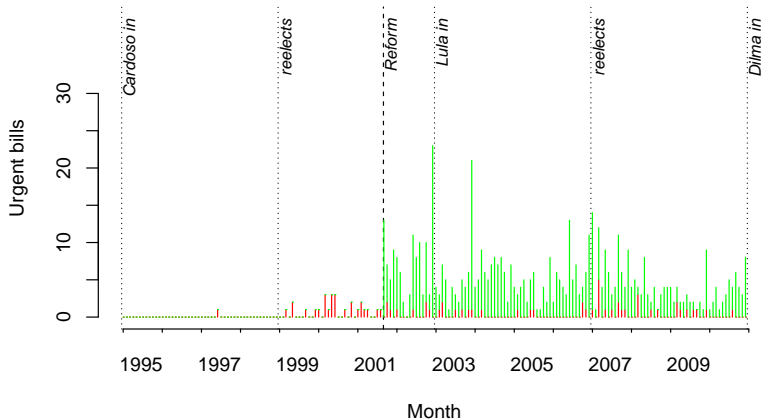
Problem: accelerator is shared



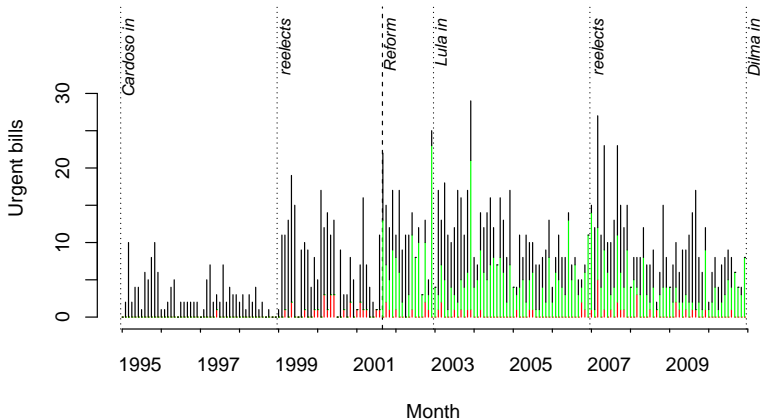
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Puzzle: How do private members get their proposals considered?

- 1 Urgência (arms race)
- 2 Delegate to executive (agency costs)
- 3 Logrolls (*projetos apensados*)
- 4 **Conclusive procedure** (*apreciação conclusiva*)

“[O]ne generalization holds universally: important bills can only pass pursuant to motions formally stated and voted upon in the plenary session”—Cox (2006)

Bills are considered in one of two ways:

- 1 **plenary consideration**: committee reports to the floor
- 2 **conclusive consideration**: committee deliberates and approves legislation *in stead* of the full chamber

Floor can discharge bills (even after conc. approval, 10% members)

Institution avoids depleting scarce plenary time

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4 sources combined

- 1 Figueiredo&Limongi's Projetos (all introductions)
- 2 Web Câmara: bill histories (logrolls)
- 3 Web Câmara: *pauta* (incl. dates of procedural requests)
- 4 F&L roll call data (agenda power indicators)

HTML code scraping (Câmara's API lacks key information)
followed by searches with regular expressions

```

1 hit <- grep(pattern = artigo 24, (?:inciso )?II|art.
  (?:24|58) (?:do )?(?:RI|Reglamento)|(?:Apreciação|
  Decisão|Poder) Conclusiv[ao], x = pauta$mocion,
  ignore.case = TRUE, perl = TRUE)
2 if (length(hit)>0) pauta$dconclu[hit] <- 1

```

False positives? — partial validation

- 1995–2010 period (Cardoso and Lula)
- Pre- and post-2001 reform (Power, Pereira & Rennó 2008)

Proposal type	% by proposer			% by period				Total	
	exec.	coal. dep.	other dep.	50	51	52	53	%	N
Statutory bill	3	61	36	17	26	28	29	100	27,451
Complementary law bill	10	58	32	44	49	3	4	100	548
<i>Medida provisória</i>	100	0	0	20	26	31	23	100	784
All	6	59	35	18	27	27	28	100	28,783

- Bill(s) often appended to some another for joint consideration
- Mitigate opportunism (Cain, Ferejohn & Fiorina 1987)
- But also save plenary time

Bill's form of consideration	Introduced	Considered	% passed	
			dep.	exec.
individually	.63	.90	4	59
with bills appended	.07	.10	1	16
appended to bill	.30	(dropped)	—	—
Number of obs.	27,999	19,556		

Logrolls used to kill rather than pass

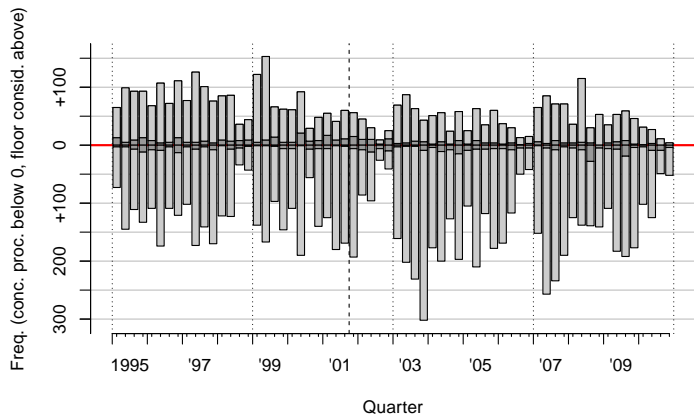
	Proposals by			% passed		
	exec.	coal. dep.	other dep.	exec.	coal. dep.	other dep.
Part A. Consideration regime						
Some urgency	.68	.04	.04	79	17	14
No urgency	.32	.96	.96	48	4	3
<i>N</i>	1,597	11,794	6,949			
Part B. Consideration regime (urgent proposals only)						
Urgent MP	.72	—	—	80	—	—
Exec. urgency	.05	.02	.02	75	10	29
Leg. urgency high	.20	.91	.90	73	18	13
Leg. urgency low	.03	.07	.08	85	6	17
<i>N</i>	1,081	496	312			

	Proposals by			% passed		
	exec.	coal. dep.	other dep.	exec.	coal. dep.	other dep.
Part C. Consideration mode (excluding MPs)						
Conc. procedure	.42	.68	.68	55	5	4
Discharged	.08	.03	.02	79	2	3
Plenary	.50	.29	.30	57	3	3
<i>N</i>	813	11,794	6,949			

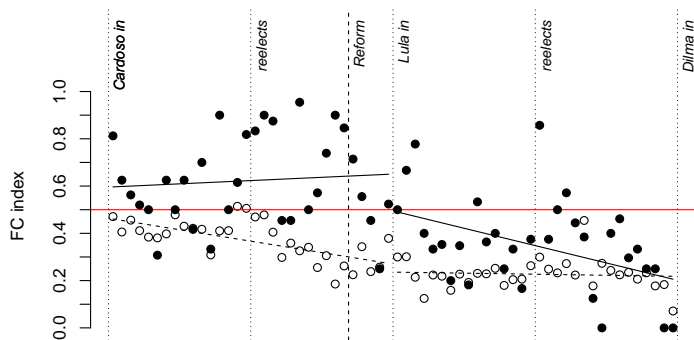
Surprisingly high — 62 % bills!

Analyze $Pr[\text{bill conclusively considered}]$

Coalition statutory input



Floor Consideration index



$$FC_{it} = \frac{\text{plenary-considered}_{it}}{\text{plenary-considered}_{it} + \text{committee-considered}_{it}} \in [0, 1]$$

All bill introductions

$p = Pr[\text{bill conclusively considered}]$

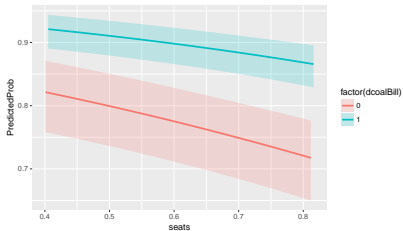
$t - 1$ is past month's aggregate/rate

$\text{logit}(p) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 nUrgencies_{t-1} + \beta_2 \text{Neg. AgendaRate}_{t-1} + \beta_3 \text{Pos. AgendaRate}_{t-1} + \beta_4 \text{Coal. Seats} * \text{Rate} + \beta_5 \text{Elec. Cycle} +$
controls

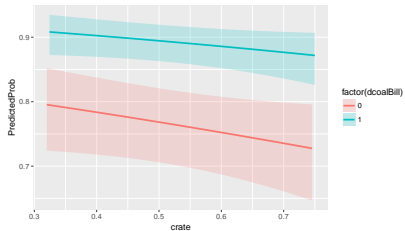
	Busy plenary measure			
	SLI _{t-1}		UrgentBusiness _{t-1}	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
BusyPlenary	.03*** (.00)	.00 (.80)	.00 (.14)	.01*** (.00)
ExecutiveBill	-.81*** (.00)	-.84*** (.00)	-.80*** (.00)	-.83*** (.00)
CoalitionBill	.11*** (.00)	.10*** (.00)	.12*** (.00)	.10*** (.00)
Neg.AgendaRate _{t-1}	-.59 (.13)	-.85** (.03)	-.59 (.13)	-.71* (.07)
Pos.AgendaRate _{t-1}	-.84*** (.00)	-.73*** (.00)	-.79*** (.00)	-.67*** (.00)
CoalitionSeats	7.28*** (.00)	4.49*** (.01)	6.86*** (.00)	4.54*** (.01)
CoalitionalRate	7.05*** (.00)	5.94*** (.00)	6.49*** (.00)	6.04*** (.00)
Coal.Seats × Rate	-13.19*** (.00)	-1.04*** (.00)	-12.42*** (.00)	-1.15*** (.00)
ElectionProximity		-.03*** (.00)		-.03*** (.00)
ElectionProximity ²		-.00*** (.00)		-.00*** (.00)
Logroll	-.19*** (.00)	-.17*** (.00)	-.19*** (.00)	-.17*** (.00)
PostReform	.64*** (.00)	.55*** (.00)	.59*** (.00)	.48*** (.00)
Intercept	-2.01** (.03)	-.73 (.46)	-1.75* (.06)	-.99 (.31)
<i>N</i>	19,556	19,556	19,556	19,556
log <i>L</i>	-11,663	-11,634	-11,666	-11,629

* $p < .1$, ** $p < .05$, and *** $p < .01$ (p values in parentheses).

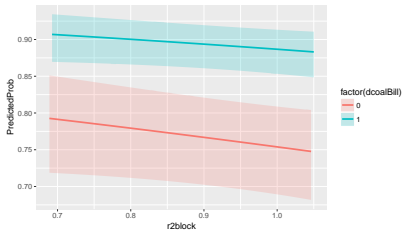
Seats



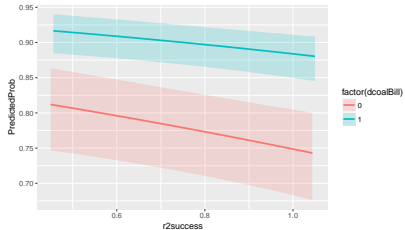
CoalitionalRate



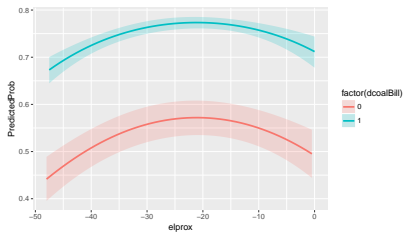
Neg. AgendaPower



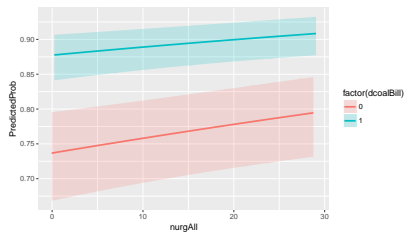
Pos. AgendaPower



ElectionProximity



UrgentBusiness



- Much left to do
- Is there fire or just smoke?
- Theory of instruments with a time constraint
- Critiques/suggestions most welcome

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