

## Poor Representation

Tens of millions of Americans live in poverty, but this book reveals that they receive very little representation in Congress. While a burgeoning literature examines the links between political and economic inequality, this book is the first to comprehensively examine the poor as a distinct constituency. Drawing on three decades of data on political speeches, party platforms, and congressional behavior, Miler first shows that, contrary to what many believe, the poor are highly visible to legislators. Yet, the poor are grossly underrepresented when it comes to legislative activity, both by Congress as a whole and by individual legislators, even those who represent high-poverty districts. To take up their issues in Congress, the poor must rely on a few surrogate champions who have little district connection to poverty but view themselves as broader advocates and often see poverty from a racial or gender-based perspective.

KRISTINA C. MILER'S research focuses on political representation in the US Congress, particularly how different constituents are represented in the policymaking process. Her previous book, *Constituency Representation in Congress: The View from Capitol Hill* (Cambridge, 2010), examined legislators' perceptions of their constituents, and won the Alan Rosenthal Prize from the American Political Science Association. Her research has been funded by the National Science Foundation, the Hewlett Foundation, the Democracy Fund, and the Dirksen Congressional Center. She holds a BA from the College of William and Mary and a PhD from the University of Michigan.

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*Congress and the Politics of Poverty in the  
United States*

KRISTINA C. MILER

*University of Maryland*



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For my father

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Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>List of Tables</i>	xi
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xiii
1 What about the Poor?	I
2 The Political Visibility of the Poor	19
3 Congressional Inaction for the Poor	42
4 Congressional Unresponsiveness to the Poor	64
5 Legislators' Unresponsiveness to the Poor	91
6 Surrogate Champions for the Poor	131
7 Positioned for Legislative Success	162
8 Achieving Better Representation	180
<i>Bibliography</i>	195
<i>Index</i>	219

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-47350-7 — Poor Representation  
Kristina C. Miler  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

---



Figures

2.1	Visibility of economic constituency groups in State of the Union addresses, 1960–2016	<i>page 26</i>
2.2	Consistency of economic constituency visibility in State of the Union addresses, 1960–2016	26
2.3	Annual mentions of economic constituency groups in State of the Union addresses, 1960–2016	27
2.4	Mentions of constituency groups in State of the Union addresses, 1960–2016	28
2.5	Relative visibility of constituency groups in State of the Union addresses, 1960–2016	29
2.6	Visibility of the poor in Democratic party and Republican party platforms, 1960–2016	31
2.7	Visibility of economic constituency groups in party platforms, 1960–2016	32
2.8	Mentions of constituency groups in party platforms, 1960–2016	32
2.9	Poverty policy content in State of the Union addresses, 1961–2016	34
2.10	Average poverty policy content in State of the Union addresses by decade	35
2.11	Average poverty policy content in State of the Union addresses by president	36
2.12	Poverty policy content of party platforms, 1960–2016	36
3.1	Poverty-related laws passed, 1960–2014	53
3.2	Laws passed across issue areas, 1960–2014	54
3.3	Poverty-related hearings held, 1960–2014	57

x	<i>Figures</i>	
3.4	Congressional hearings across issue areas, 1960–2014	58
3.5	Poverty-related bills introduced, 1960–2014	60
3.6	Bills introduced across issue areas, 1960–2014	61
3.7	Poverty-related congressional activity, 1960–2014	63
4.1	National poverty, 1960–2014	70
4.2	Congressional responsiveness to the poor: laws passed, 1960–2014	72
4.3	Congressional responsiveness to the poor: hearings held, 1960–2014	73
4.4	Congressional responsiveness to the poor: bills introduced, 1960–2014	74
4.5	Distribution of poverty across congressional districts, 1983–2014	85
5.1	Distribution of poverty-related bills introduced to the House of Representatives, 1983–2014	101
5.2	Bill introductions by district poverty level, 1983–2014	102
5.3	Predicted effects of selected variables on poverty-related bill introductions	114
5.4	Distribution of poverty scores in the House of Representatives, 2007–2014	120
5.5	Relationship between district poverty level and vote score, 2007–2014	121
5.6	Predicted effects of selected variables on Shriver poverty vote score	125
6.1	Distribution of poverty-related bill introductions	137
6.2	Average characteristics of consistent champions	138
6.3	Average characteristics of occasional champions	156
7.1	Predicted effects of institutional position variables on passage of poverty-related legislation	172
8.1	Diversity among champions in the House of Representatives	185
8.2	Diversity in the House of Representatives over time	186

Tables

2.1	Visibility of the poor in State of the Union addresses, 1961–2016	<i>page</i> 24
3.1	Poverty-related issues	46
4.1	Average annual congressional activity on poverty-related issues by party control of Congress, 1960–2014	75
4.2	Congressional responsiveness to poverty	79
4.3	Responsiveness to the distribution of high poverty districts	87
4.4	Responsiveness to the distribution of significant poverty districts	88
5.1	Poverty-related bill introductions, 1983–2014	109
5.2	Poverty-related bill introductions and high poverty districts, 1983–2014	111
5.3	Poverty-related bill introductions by legislator subgroups, 1983–2014	116
5.4	Voting support for poverty legislation, 2007–2014	122
5.5	High poverty districts and voting support for poverty legislation, 2007–2014	124
5.6	Voting support for poverty legislation by legislator subgroups, 2007–2014	128
6.1	List of consistent champions of the poor	136
6.2	List of Old-School Democrat champions	140
6.3	List of Democratic Women champions	143
6.4	List of Indigo Republican champions	147
6.5	List of Urban Black Democrat champions	149

xii	<i>Tables</i>	
6.6	List of occasional champions of the poor	155
7.1	Poverty-related bill passage, 1983–2014	170
7.2	Alternate approaches to estimating poverty-related bill passage, 1983–2014	175

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