Bureaucratic Constraints on Supporting International Integration: Evidence from Trade Adjustment Assistance*

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Abstract

Scholars have long argued that international integration can be sustained by providing sufficient government compensation to workers harmed by import competition. We argue that the success of such compensation also depends on the bureaucracies tasked with implementing it. Specifically, bureaucratic delays in delivering benefits to affected workers can erode trust in the government's capacity to mitigate the adverse effects of import competition, thereby weakening public support for international integration. We test this theory using the U.S. Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program. Leveraging quasi-random assignment of TAA petitions to individual bureaucrats, we find that bureaucrat-driven delays in processing petitions shift voting behavior and public attitudes in the affected communities against international integration and the government. The effects are stronger where information about TAA delays is more likely to reach citizens. Our findings highlight broader political consequences of bureaucratic performance than previously considered.

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Introduction

What sustains international integration? Scholars have long argued that the government should provide adequate economic compensation to workers adversely affected by import competition (Ruggie 1982; Rickard 2015, 2023). Such compensation addresses the economic grievances of workers laid off due to international economic competition; it also reassures workers who are afraid of losing their jobs due to it. This issue has become increasingly relevant as rising import competition has fueled greater support for economic nationalism and protectionist policies among both the public and legislators (e.g., Margalit 2011; Weymouth, Jensen, and Quinn 2017; Walter 2021). Recent studies suggest that providing sufficient welfare benefits to those harmed by import competition could improve public attitudes toward international integration, underscoring the importance of encouraging workers' participation in redistributive programs (Ritchie and You 2021; Kim and Pelc 2021a, 2021b; Kim 2024).

In contrast to previous research, we highlight the role of bureaucracies that implement welfare provisions. Specifically, we focus on delays in the delivery of welfare benefits due to bureaucrats who administer government redistribution programs.

Bureaucratic delays are prevalent in modern administrative states as a result of understaffing or insufficient political control over bureaucracies. In the United States, for example, workers were able to petition for assistance through the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program if they lost their jobs due to trade. However, they often had to wait several months beyond the statutory 40-day response time to receive a decision. In 2009 it took TAA officers an average of 153 days to process petitions due to insufficient staffing and inadequate administrative oversight (Gao 2012). These delays pose a serious threat to beneficiaries' economic security, as losing even one month of income can push more than half of households into destitution.[1]

[1]See for example: https://www.forbes.com/advisor/banking/living-paycheck-to-paycheck-statistics-2024/.

Similar issues have been observed elsewhere, including: delays in benefits payment under Universal Credit in the UK (Packman 2014); cashless debit card program in Australia (Henriques-Gomes 2020); and anti-poverty workfare programs in India (Das et al. 2023).

We argue that citizens' support for international integration can decline if they are informed that those affected by international trade experience bureaucrat-driven delays in compensation. Citizens can attribute blame to the government for these delays—either through rational inference or feelings of frustration—, losing confidence in its ability to protect them from the adverse effects of international economic competition. As a result, citizens might reduce their supports for international integration and, critically, increase their electoral support for politicians with anti-globalist policy platforms.

To test our theory, we examine the TAA program in the United States—a national government program that assisted workers laid off due to international trade competition. To qualify for TAA benefits, laid-off workers had to submit petitions to the TAA agency. These petitions were centrally collected and quasi-randomly assigned to rank-and-file investigators who determined their eligibility (Hyman 2018; Kim 2024). We hypothesize that, conditional on petitions being submitted, delays attributable to investigators in processing these petitions led to an increased vote share for Trump in the 2016 presidential election—who campaigned on anti-globalization policy platforms. We expect localized effects, as TAA-related information is likely to spread within communities through workers' interactions with their local networks (Bisbee 2024).

In the context of U.S. trade policies, local labor unions have played a central role in disseminating information about trade-related policies and benefits to their members (Kim and Margalit 2017; Becher and Stegmueller 2025). Our interviews with local union representatives further indicate that members actively share information about government benefits at local meetings, workplaces, public union events, and through group chats. We thus hypothesize that the effects of bureaucrat-driven delays in 2016 electoral

outcomes is especially pronounced in localities with strong union organization, where information about the local TAA processes is more likely to be disseminated.

In our empirical analysis, we use petition-level TAA data that include the information about the investigator assigned to each petition, and the time it took her to provide a determination. Investigation time, however, may not directly reflect delays specifically driven by the bureaucrat assigned to the petition, but may also be influenced by other factors, such as local political, social, and economic conditions of the areas where petitions were submitted. If these factors also correlate with local residents' attitudes toward international integration, using these *raw* investigation times yields biased estimates of the effects of these delays.

To estimate the effect of bureaucrat-driven delays, we follow the "examiner design" approach (Chyn, Frandsen, and Leslie 2025). We leverage the quasi-random assignment of petitions to investigators to construct investigators' intrinsic tendencies to delay decisions, and use them as an instrument variable. This measure of TAA investigators' idiosyncratic traits is independent of their positions within the agency and experience, the petition outcome and quality, as well as local socio-demographic, economic, and political characteristics of the locations where petitions are submitted. We aggregate these investigator-specific traits at the county $\times$ year level to capture citizens' quasi-random exposure to bureaucrat-driven TAA delays in their local communities.

Using the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections as the baseline comparison—when the incumbent presidents were from different parties—we examine whether delays at the county level affected Trumps vote share in the 2016 presidential election. We find that bureaucrat-driven delays in TAA petitions increased the county-level vote share for Trump.

To examine heterogeneity by local labor unions' strength, we use collective bargaining notices as a measure of their strength. We draw on the long-standing observation that strong unions play a crucial role in negotiating collective bargaining agreements

with firms on behalf of their members. These processes involve ample communication among local union members to meet the legal test of "sufficient community of interested" to be represented by the union, as encoded in the National Labor Relations Act of 1935; these processes determine what is to be negotiated with the employer, and the position of the bargaining unit (Katz, Kochan, and Colvin 2018). In other words, these agreements measure the extent of communication between local union members, who must solve their collective action problems. We use data on collective bargaining notices to proxy the level of local information dissemination about local TAA processes.

We find that the electoral effects of bureaucrat-driven delays in TAA decisions are bigger in counties with more collective bargaining notices. This heterogeneity is robust to controlling for both import competition, automation, the number of workers in TAA petitions, and petition denial rates.

Additionally, we examine individuals' attitudes on international integration and toward the government. To do so, we link our bureaucratic-delays measures with two survey datasets encompassing more than 200,000 respondents in the 2000s and 2010s—Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) and American National Election Studies (ANES)—, and respondents' attitudes. We find that in localities where TAA petitions are assigned to investigators with propensities to delay petition decisions, labor union members express lower support for international involvement of the U.S., for the incumbent president, and lower trust towards the government—specially their ability to not "waste" money—in response to the delays. These effects are not observed among the non-unionized. These results are robust to controlling for factors associated with individuals' self-selection into unions, such as education, race, employment, industry affiliation, and other.

This paper makes key contributions to the existing literature. First, it is the first to document how bureaucratic delays in disbursing redistributive benefits can erode public support for international integration. Previous studies suggest that the recent backlash

against globalization stems from insufficient compensation provided to the losers from international competition (Rodrik 2018; Milner and Solstad 2021); our findings additionally reveal that delays in the bureaucratic delivery of compensation play a critical role in fueling this backlash. This is especially relevant in recent years as far-right politicians advocate for economic nationalism, while seeking to simultaneously dismantle welfare systems and bureaucracies (e.g., Mansfield, Milner, and Rudra 2021; Colantone, Ottaviano, and Stanig 2022; Bauer 2023; Bellodi, Morelli, and Vannoni 2024).

Second, our findings have policy implications beyond the United States, given that many other countries—such as member states of the European Union, Australia, South Korea, Japan, among others—have redistributive programs that assist workers laid off due to economic shocks;[2] many more also have general government programs that offer economic assistance to the unemployed. To sustain international integration, policymakers must not only focus on expanding the benefits provided by redistributive programs to those affected by import competition, but they must also improve the selection and incentive schemes of bureaucrats who implement these programs. This calls for a deeper understanding of problems of adverse selection, moral hazard and other bureaucratic constraints in the context of international integration.

Theory

Providing economic compensation to losers of international economic competition constitutes one of core principles underpinning Embedded Liberalism—the international system established after the World War II to sustain international integration. It advocates, among other things, for enhancing the provision of redistributive benefits through the welfare state (Ruggie 1982). Under the aforementioned principle, workers who are, or are likely to be negatively affected by this competition, oppose freer trade unless they receive, or anticipate compensation in proportion to the associated economic losses.

[2]For a list of Asia-Pacific countries with trade adjustment assistance programs, see https://asiasociety.org/sites/default/files/2018-04/Trade%20Adjustment%20Paper%20FINAL.pdf

A less appreciated aspect of this social contract is whether these welfare benefits can reach their recipients efficiently and timely. In modern administrative states, the delivery of welfare typically involves setting up a government program and delegating its administration to bureaucrats. This delegation can face hurdles that delay the delivery of benefits, threatening the economic security of workers laid off due to import competition. Autor et al. (2017), for instance, find that longer bureaucratic processing times in Social Security Disability Insurance have long-term negative impacts on beneficiaries' employment prospects and income.

Bureaucratic delays can arise from insufficient resources allocated to bureaucracies, which result in low capacity of government programs. But even when the government provides adequate resources to bureaucracies, these delays can persist due to government principals' (e.g., legislators) inability to *fully* control individual bureaucrats. On the basis of canonical principal-agent models, these delays can occur due to individual bureaucrats' lack of skills, them shirking responsibilities, or their idiosyncratic preferences regarding their tasks, which are—by definition—unobservable to the principals (Pepinsky, H. Pierskalla, and Sacks 2017). Institutions such as civil service protections for bureaucrat jobs, can make it even harder for the government to control bureaucrats' performance.

We argue that bureaucratic delegation generates additional information about the extent to which bureaucratic delays in receiving redistributive benefits occurs to those adversely affected by trade. Consequently, citizens exposed to this information update their beliefs about the government's capacity to adequately compensate them for potential or realized economic losses as a result of international economic competition.

The essential premise of our theory is that when citizens are informed of bureaucratic hurdles, they blame the government—along with bureaucrats—for the observed outcomes. On the one hand, blame attribution could be driven by voters' rational inferences: While some studies suggest that politicians can successfully shift blame to

bureaucrats by delegating tasks to them (Mayhew 1974; Fiorina 1982, 1989; Arnold 1990; Schoenbrod 1990), more recent literature indicates that voters hold politicians accountable for bureaucratic outcomes (Fox and Jordan 2011; Almendares 2012; Foarta 2023; Slough 2024). Even if voters are aware that politicians cannot fully control bureaucrats and their performance, they understand that bureaucratic outcomes are affected, to some extent, by the formers' ability to screen them and provide incentives to them. Thus rational voters can blame to the government when they observe adverse bureaucratic outcomes.

On the other hand, blame attribution may simply reflect the need of aggrieved and anxious voters to find someone or something to blame: when citizens become informed of bureaucratic hurdles in disbursing benefits to those who lost their jobs due to import competition, they may view the government, incumbent politicians and their policies, as easy targets to blame. While this idea has been subject to debate (e.g., Ashworth, Mesquita, and Friedenberg 2018), information plays a crucial role because citizens have to learn about bureaucratic hurdles to update their beliefs about the government (e.g., Balcazar and Kennard 2024).

Attitudinal and Behavioral Changes Against International Integration

First, we argue that bureaucratic delays in the provision of redistributive benefits to those harmed by import competition can erode public support for international integration. This opposition may extend beyond economic globalization—such as the free movement of goods, services, and people—to include resistance to broader forms of international cooperation and global community membership (Erskine 2002; Held 2003; Van Den Anker 2010; Gaikwad, Hanson, and Tóth 2024). For instance, recent literature on the backlash against globalization finds that individuals exposed to import competition are more likely to support protectionist measures and to favor reduced participation in international organizations and foreign affairs, endorsing nationalist and isolationist

policies (Walter 2021; Colantone, Ottaviano, and Stanig 2022; Baccini and Weymouth 2022; The Niehaus Center 2022).

Empirical evidence also shows that events undermining public confidence in international integration have led to increased voter support for far-right politicians who espouse anti-globalist platforms (e.g., Ahlquist, Copelovitch, and Walter 2020; Colantone, Ottaviano, and Stanig 2022). However, as Walter (2021) notes, survey-based evidence on attitudinal change is comparatively weaker, suggesting that public attitudes have not shifted as markedly as electoral behavior. One explanation for this disparity is that voters may rely heavily on informational cues from politicians and interest groups to interpret complex events. As a result, they may not form well-defined preferences over specific policy components, but instead support candidates perceived as best equipped to shield them from the purported harms of international integration.

This interpretation aligns with findings from numerous survey experiments showing that different portrayals of international integration can elicit different responses to various forms of global engagement (The Niehaus Center 2022). For example, Wu (2018) and Chaudoin and Mangini (2024) demonstrate that the content of informational cues plays a pivotal role in shaping public opinion: even in response to domestic shocks, attributing blame to foreign actors can activate in-group bias and promote anti-globalization sentiments. Moreover, the preferences of those adversely affected by import competition may depend significantly on the local informational environment in which cues are received (e.g., Mansfield and Mutz 2013; Guisinger 2017a; Ahlquist, Copelovitch, and Walter 2020; Bisbee 2024).

Against this backdrop, we hypothesize that individuals who learn about bureaucrat-driven delays in distributing trade-related benefits will decrease their support towards international integration, but will also increase their support for politicians who are against it. We refrain from predicting shifts in specific policy attitudes, as individuals may lack clearly defined views on such issues unless explicitly primed. Nevertheless, we

expect that those informed about these delays will express opposition to at least some policies that promote international integration.

Empirical Setting: The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

To test our theory we focus on the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program in the United States. Proposed by President Kennedy in 1962, the TAA provides benefits to workers laid off due to trade. To receive these benefits, a group of workers had to submit a petition to the Office of Trade Adjustment Assistance (OTAA)—a federal agency under the Department of Labor (DOL) and the Employment and Training Administration (ETA). As of July 1 of 2022, the program is terminated.[3]

Before the termination, the OTAA comprised one administrator and 20-30 investigators, all of which were career bureaucrats. Each petition was assigned to an investigator who was responsible for determining whether it meets the TAA eligibility criteria. Correspondence with TAA officials indicates that "TAA cases were assigned [to investigators] primarily based on investigator caseload, as well as previous experience with a company or industry. Staff leave or other scheduling issues could be a factor as well [sic]" (Hyman 2018). When asked whether the geographic location of companies affects petition assignments, a TAA investigator responded, "no" (Kim 2024, p.4-5).[4]

For approving or denying petitions to which they were assigned, each investigator collected the necessary information by contacting petitioners, unions, customers of the workers' firm, and others, following detailed guidelines mandated by the DOL. This process placed the burden of providing evidence for (or against) eligibility on the investigators. Workers and companies only need to provide their names, addresses, and phone numbers on the petition forms. Petition forms were available online, from the

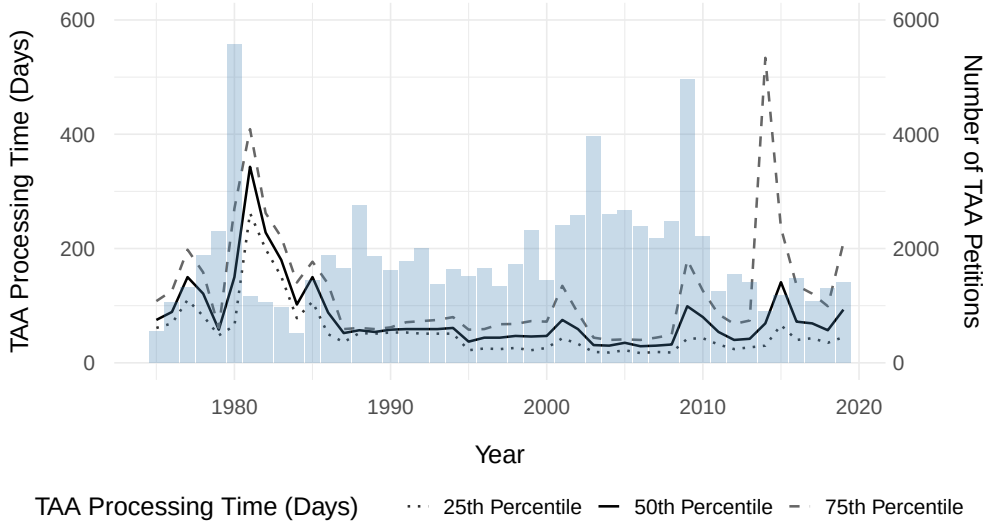
[3]The Department of Labor of the US has not issued any determinations nor accepted any new petitions or requests for reconsideration for any workers who were certified and separated from their job after June 30, 2022.

[4]We tried conducting additional interviews with TAA officials by submitting a formal request to the OTAA. However, all TAA investigators were reassigned to new posts after the program's termination. Further, few former investigators have profiles on LinkedIn, limiting our ability to contact them directly.

DOL, local State Employment Security Agencies, or any agency designated by the governor to provide reemployment services under the TAA program. Additionally, any group of at least three workers, a union, or an authorized state agency representative could submit a petition, reducing the burden on laid-off workers.

The efficient functioning of the OTAA was crucial for assisting workers in need.[5] TAA investigators, however, often exceeded the statutory limit of 40 days for providing determinations on petitions (Section 223(a) of the Trade Act of 1974), with processing times sometimes extending to a year or more: Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of TAA petition processing times and the number of TAA petitions investigated each year. The figure indicates that processing times frequently exceed the 40-day limit.

Figure 1: TAA Processing Time (Left Axis, Lines) and the Number of TAA Petitions (Right Axis, Bar Plots), 1975-2019



Source: The TAA petition data obtained from the Department of Labor website.

Delays in processing petitions were partly attributable to the understaffing of the OTAA. As one labor union leader noted, "I don't want to say that people aren't trying, [...] but [...] I think they're overwhelmed" (Sun 2012). These delays were also linked to administrative procedures that made petition processing heavily dependent

[5]See TAA's termination fact sheet: https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ETA/tradeact/pdfs/TAA_Termination_Fact_Sheet.pdf

on individual investigators. Since investigators, rather than petitioners, were responsible for gathering all the necessary information to determine petition eligibility, delays in obtaining information from third parties resulted in longer waiting times for petition determinations.

Both government agencies and legislators made efforts to shorten the average processing time for TAA petitions. DOL employees consistently strove to meet the statutory time limits, and the DOL publicly reported the average processing times by state on its website. In 2003 for instance, during the Bush administration, the agency successfully reduced the average processing time for TAA petitions, prompting praise from legislators: "the Department of Labor has reduced its average petition processing time from 107 days in 2002 to 38 days in 2003 [...] it is evident that the funds available under TAA are beginning to be administered more effectively." (Grassley 2004). Despite these efforts, processing times still took substantial time.

These bureaucratic delays imposed additional economic burdens on workers affected by import competition. Since unemployment benefits became available only 60 days after a petition was approved, many officials and staff expressed concerns that "the delay in petition approvals ... will mean that some workers will run out of Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA) benefits before they finish their retraining [sic]" (Wandner 2013).

Understanding Unions' Role

In the context of international economic competition, scholars have documented that unions provide information to their members in the aftermath of economic and policy changes (Freeman and Medoff 1984; Ahlquist and Levi 2013; Rosenfeld 2014; Kim and Margalit 2017). This occurred through union meetings, pamphlets, newspapers, grassroots mobilization, assistance, and a host of other means. Local labor unions, especially, played a vital role in sustaining the TAA program and helping their members obtaining benefits.

Local labor unions pressured politicians and federal officials to improve the implementation of TAA. For example, in response to rising import competition in 2007, the AFL-CIO—the largest union federation in the United States—declared that "America's workers deserve a well-funded, intelligently designed and competently administered dislocated worker adjustment assistance program."[6] They also assisted their members in securing TAA benefits that they might not otherwise receive.[7] Indeed, we confirm that among the 56,777 TAA petitions investigated from 1991 to 2019, for instance, 12% were directly submitted by local labor union chapters on behalf of laid-off workers, and many more may received technical assistance from them.[8]

Information about TAA can also be disseminated through active communication among local union members. To gain a better understanding of how labor union members in local communities share information with one another, we conducted interviews with local union representatives and union members. Appendix I details the procedures used to select and contact the local unions we interviewed.

Interviews revealed that union members share information about government benefit applications through various channels. For example, during a regular monthly meeting in April attended by 40-50 members from different local unions in the greater Tampa area, participants discussed issues related to unemployment benefits and encouraged others to share this information, including via social media.[9]

Information dissemination can also occur among local union members at their worksites, as groups of workers often belong to the same union and interact regularly. These interactions allow members to learn how others have fared in obtaining government benefits. One representative described a recent experience applying for government assistance after hurricanes, expressing frustration with the process that both they and their

[6] See https://aflcio.org/about/leadership/statements/trade-and-manufacturing-real-change-needed

[7] See for instance how local chapters of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) assisted T-Mobile USA workers in 2012.https://cwa-union.org/news/entry/cwa_gains_taa_benefits_for_workers_laid_off_at_seven_call_centers

[8] See for instance http://iam751.org/triumph/2020/TAA%20One-Pager%202019.pdf

[9] Interview conducted on April 1st, 2025, in Florida.

union members had to navigate to receive those benefits.[10]

Second, nearly all union representatives and members we interviewed emphasized a strong sense of solidarity, especially when helping fellow members in need, even across different industry sectors. One representative noted that unions often provide relief and other forms of support when members face hardship. This solidarity helps unite local union members and promotes information sharing: "If you come and help me out, I go and help you out."[11] Another union member mentioned regularly receiving text messages and email alerts, and said that attending union events offers chances to talk with others and stay informed about current issues.[12]

With the context of the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program in mind—and the prominent role of local unions in disseminating TAA-related information—we test the following empirical hypothesis: Conditional on TAA petitions being submitted, bureaucratic delays in processing these petitions are expected to increase electoral support for anti-globalist candidates, particularly in localities with stronger labor unions.

For our empirical tests, we focus on the 2016 U.S. presidential election, during which Donald Trump prominently campaigned on an anti-globalist platform.

Data

Dependent Variables: County-Level Electoral Outcomes

In the United States, Donald Trump prominently foregrounded an economic nationalist agenda during his 2016 campaign. We use county-level vote shares for Trump in the presidential election. We additionally collect county-level vote share data for 2008 and 2012 presidential elections. The 2008 and 2012 outcomes serve as the baseline for comparison with the 2016 results, respectively. Note that the 2012 and 2016 elections had the Democratic Party as the incumbent president's party, while the 2008 election had the

[10] Interview conducted on March 25th, 2025, in Florida.
[11] Interview conducted on April 17th, 2025, in California.
[12] Interview conducted on April 11th, 2025, in California.

Republican Party as the incumbent president's party.

Main Independent Variable: TAA Bureaucrats' Propensities to Delay Petition Decisions

We obtained data on TAA petitions from the Department of Labor (DOL) website. This dataset covers all petitions submitted since 1975 and includes detailed information such as the principal investigator assigned to each petition; the geolocation and Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) code of the employer; the estimated number of workers covered by the petition; and the decision (approval or denial). It also provides the dates when investigators began working on petitions ("institution date") and when the agency made its initial decision ("determination date"). We focus our analysis prior to the COVID-19 pandemic to avoid contamination from the event, on all 56,777 petitions with institution dates between 1991 and 2019.

Table 1 shows that during the period of analysis, TAA investigators in each Congress session were responsible for an average of 137 petitions, spanning 26 states and 15 two-digit SIC industries. This distribution indicates that petition assignments to TAA investigators were not influenced by specific connections to particular states or industries, consistent with interviews done with TAA investigators by Hyman (2018) and Kim (2024).

Table 1: Petition Assignment to TAA Bureaucrats, 1991-2019

	Mean (25th Perc., 75th Perc.)	SD	Min	Max	N
Number of States	25.9 (13, 38)	14.6	1	49	411
Number of Industries	15.2 (1, 26)	12.6	1	39	411
Number of Petitions	136.9 (22, 237.5)	128.7	1	856	411

Note: The unit of observation is TAA investigator×Congress session. Industries are categorized based on two-digit SIC code.

For each petition, we calculate processing time as the difference between the peti-

tion's institution date and its determination date. However, this raw measure of processing time does not accurately capture delays caused specifically by bureaucrats, as it can also be influenced by various political and socioeconomic characteristics of the areas from which petitions are submitted. These factors may also correlate with the policy preferences of local residents, potentially leading to biased estimates of the effect of local bureaucratic delays in TAA petitions on citizens' political attitudes and behavior.

To address this endogeneity issue and identify delays driven by TAA investigators, we adopt an "examiner design" that exploits the quasi-random assignment of petitions to bureaucrats (e.g., Chyn, Frandsen, and Leslie 2025). The idea is to recover bureaucrats' idiosyncratic traits concerning petition processing times from the first-stage regression, and use them as an instrumental variable in the second-stage regression.

We begin by estimating the following first-stage linear regression model using the petition data:

$$ProcessingTime_{pbtis} = \alpha_b + \delta_t + \tau_i + \phi_s + X'_{pbtis}\theta + \epsilon_{pbtis} \tag{1}$$

where p denotes the petition, b the TAA investigator, t the year, i the SIC two-digit industry, and s the state. $ProcessingTime_{pbtis}$ is the number of days between the petition's institution date and initial determination date.[13] X_{pbtis} includes the characteristics of the petition (e.g., petition approval, the number of TAA affected workers) and the TAA investigator assigned to it;[14] the investigator's workload at the time the petition was submitted;[15] the characteristics of the House representative for the district where the petition was submitted;[16] and whether the petition was submitted from swing states

[13]Only 4% of petitions were re-investigated and revised during our period of analysis.

[14]We submitted Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the DOL, to obtain additional information about TAA investigators' education, pay grade, and salary. The agencies do not retain such records.

[15]Controlling for this variable can induce post-treatment bias if investigators with a higher (lower) propensity to delay petitions work on fewer (more) petitions during a given period. Nevertheless, we find that including this variable does not alter the estimates of α_b.

[16]Since the petition data does not include congressional district information, we matched petitions to congressional districts based on their zip code—see Appendix B.

or core states. δ_t, τ_i, and ϕ_s are year, industry, and state fixed effects;[17] ϵ_{pbtis} is an idiosyncratic error term. α_b represents the TAA investigator fixed effects, which capture the bureaucrats' idiosyncratic propensity to delay petition processing.

Table A1 provides the descriptions of the variables included in the regression model. Table A2 shows the regression results and related discussions. We additionally report the F-statistic for the exclusion of the TAA investigator fixed effects (α_b), which is greater than 20 with a p-value of 1.01e-12 using appropriate clustering and degrees-of-freedom adjustments, as well as bootstrapping (Lal et al. 2024). Accordingly, we reject the null hypothesis that our instrument is statistically weak.

For the estimated investigator fixed effects to reflect bureaucrats' idiosyncratic traits, the assignment of TAA petitions must be quasi-random. Interviews with TAA officials by Hyman (2018) and Kim (2024), along with petition assignment patterns shown in Table 1, support this assumption. Nevertheless, we conduct additional robustness checks to confirm the quasi-random assignment: First, we check whether including or excluding our control variables—such as demographics and local economic and political characteristics associated with the petitions—affects the distribution of the estimates for α_b. Figure A1 indicates that they do not. Figures A2 and A3 show that including additional congressional district characteristics from the American Community Survey (ACS)—such as unemployment, household median income, manufacturing sector population, and many others—, or variables on whether House representatives contacted the DOL regarding specific TAA petitions (Ritchie and You 2019), does not affect the estimates for α_b.[18]

Second, we examine whether petitions that are expected to take longer to investigate by the OTAA (e.g., petitions submitted by unions) are systematically assigned to TAA

[17] Using congressional fixed effects is unwarranted since congressional districts undergo redistricting every ten years, meaning districts before and after redistricting are not necessarily comparable.

[18] We do not include these variables as control variables in Equation (1) because they are not available for the whole period of our analysis. The American Community Survey (ACS), which provides congressional district-level demographic and economic data, is available only after 2005; data on legislators' contact with the DOL regarding TAA petitions are available only for 2005-2012. Although we submitted a FOIA request to the DOL for the data covering the remainder of the period, the data are unavailable due to the termination of the record-retention period.

investigators who are more capable of handling them promptly. If this is the case, it would reduce the variation in the estimates of α_b and, consequently, our empirical results would underestimate the true effect of TAA bureaucrat-driven delays. We find that the estimates are not affected by excluding or including the indicator of whether petitions are submitted by unions.

With our procedure, we obtain the estimates of TAA investigator fixed effects for 192 investigators who worked in the TAA program from 1991-2019. These are measured in standardized processing-time units as a result of the procedure. Figure 2(a) displays the distribution of these estimates, indicating that there is significant variation in their individual traits related to petition processing times. One standard deviation of the estimated fixed effects is approximately 120 days: a TAA petition assigned to an investigator at the 75th percentile of the distribution would take 120 more days to process than if assigned to an investigator at the 25th percentile.

The variation in the estimates of α_b can stem from political principals' imperfect screening of individuals' types when hiring them, or the inability to discipline them. Our theory, however, is agnostic about the sources of the variation, whether it comes from different capacities or distinct preferences of TAA investigators. For our theory, it is sufficient that citizens dislike bureaucratic delays in delivering redistributive benefits because such delays negatively impact beneficiaries' welfare.[19]

For our main analysis, we aggregate our investigator fixed-effect estimates at the county level. To aggregate the measure, we first identify the petitions investigated within each county during a given period, and the corresponding TAA investigator fixed-effect estimates for these petitions. Then, we calculate the average of the investigator fixed-effect estimates, weighted by the estimated number of workers included in each petition.

By construction, this measure is uncorrelated with both the number of affected workers in a petition and the petition denial rate at the county level. Moreover, our first-stage

[19]We examine whether the TAA investigator fixed-effect estimates predict whether petitions are later revised, but we find no such relationship (Table A3).

regression results show that local sociodemographic and political characteristics associated with petitions are uncorrelated with the estimated TAA investigator fixed effects. We also confirm that our aggregated delay measure is not correlated with the number of unique TAA investigators assigned to petitions submitted in a given county and year, which might be related to county-level delays in TAA decisions.

Figure 2(b) displays the distribution of this measure for petitions investigated between 2009 and 2016. During this period, 1,620 out of 3,231 U.S. counties had at least one TAA petition under investigation. The figure reveals substantial variation in bureaucratic delays across counties. We also observe considerable within-state variation in county-level delays, indicating that our measure captures rich geographic heterogeneity.

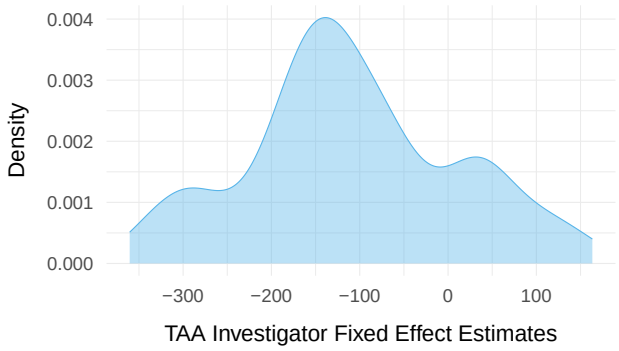
Moderating Variable: Local Labor Union Strength

We measure local labor union strength using collective bargaining mediation records, with data obtained from the U.S. Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. In the U.S., employers and labor unions are legally required to bargain collectively when disagreements arise, including over the duration of a contract. Collective bargaining agreements allow workers (and employers) to negotiate over wages, staffing, production decisions, and other employment terms. Unions are more likely to engage in collective bargaining when they are strong and their members are unified (Aidt and Tzannatos 2002). For each county, we calculate the average annual number of collective bargaining agreements negotiated by labor unions in TAA-relevant sectors such as manufacturing.

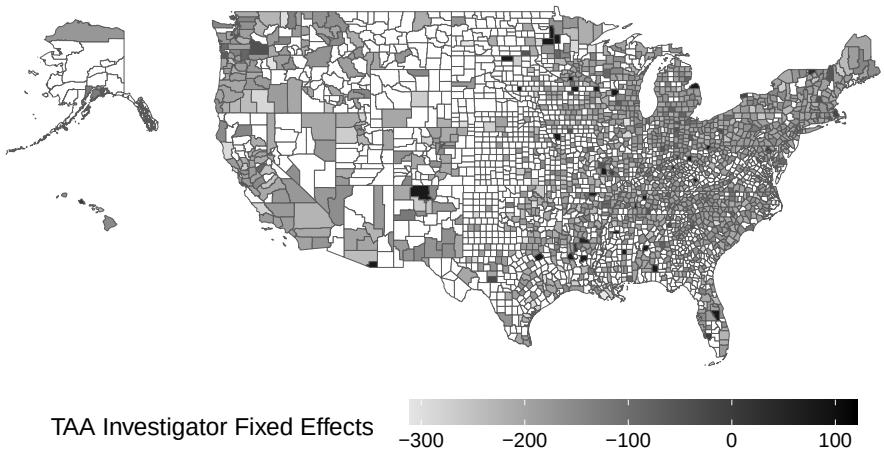
Our rationale for using collective bargaining records is that they serve as a proxy for unions' capacity to disseminate information to their members. In the U.S., the collective bargaining process involves substantial internal communication among union members to satisfy the legal requirement of a "sufficient community of interest," as encoded in the National Labor Relations Act of 1935. During this process, union members determine which issues to negotiate with employers and formulate the position of the bargaining

Figure 2: Distribution of Estimated TAA Investigator Fixed Effects

(a) Individual Investigator Level (N=192)



(b) County×Year Level, Year 2016 (N=1,620)



Notes: Counties colored as white do not have petitions investigated from 2009 and 2016 and, thus, bureaucratic delays in TAA petitions cannot be measured.

unit (Katz, Kochan, and Colvin 2018). A lack of communication may hinder the resolution of collective action problems, which is essential for successful bargaining (Aidt and Tzannatos 2002).

We test this claim in Appendix C. To do so, we use the 2006 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES), which asks respondents whether they know how their senators voted on the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA)—bill H.R. 3045. We find a strong association between the number of collective bargaining agreements at the county level in 2006 and respondents' awareness of how their senators voted on

CAFTA in a given county. In contrast, we do not find strong evidence that other commonly cited sources of political information—such as news media reports—have similar effects.

Furthermore, as shown in Table C1, our measure is negatively correlated with the adoption of statewide right-to-work laws—known to weaken union activity—and positively correlated with the number of union members at the congressional district-by-year level, as compiled by Becher, Stegmueller, and Käppner (2018). Thus, it exhibits a strong and consistent relationship with broader dimensions of organized labor.

Empirical Strategy

To estimate the impact of bureacrat-driven TAA petition on electoral support for Trump, we run the following regression model using the county-level data:

$$\begin{aligned} RepVoteShare_{it} =& \beta_1 Delays_{it} + \beta_2 Delays_{it} \times ln(CBA_{it}+1) + \beta_3 ln(CBA_{it}+1) && (2) \\ &+ X'_{it}\omega_1 + X_{it}\omega_2 + (Delays_{it} \times X_{it})\omega_3 + (Delays_{it} \times Z_i)\omega_4 && (3) \\ &+ \psi_i + \lambda_t + \varepsilon_{it} \end{aligned}$$

where i denotes the county and t denotes presidential election years—either 2008 and 2016, or 2012 and 2016, depending on which preceding election is used as the baseline. $RepVoteShare_{it}$ is the vote share for the Republican presidential candidate. $Delays_{it}$ represents our measure of TAA bureaucratic delays, calculated as the average of bureaucrat fixed effect estimates for petitions investigated between year $t-7$ and year t and submitted in county i, weighted by the number of workers affected by each petition. We standardize this measure to have a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one. CBA_{it} is our measure of union strength, measured by collective bargaining notices and based on collective bargaining records reported in the fiscal years from $t-8$ to $t-7$.

For our control variables, we include county-level total population, the number of

individuals employed in the manufacturing industry, the white population, and the unemployed population. For covariates relevant to the 2016 election, we use the American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates from 2005-2009; for covariates relevant to the 2008 and 2012 elections, we use Census 2000 data. We also include the total number of TAA-affected workers and the petition denial rate, based on petitions investigated between year $t-7$ and year t and submitted in county i (denoted as X_{it}), to account for variation in the aggregation weights used in constructing the delay measure. Z_i includes lagged measures of the China Shock and the robot adoption shock, both of which have been shown to affect union strength and electoral outcomes (Balcazar 2023; Becher and Stegmueller 2025).[20]

Including X_{it} and Z_i, along with their interaction terms with the delay measures, allows us to rule out alternative explanations related to these competing mechanisms. Summary statistics of variables are available in Appendix E.

β_1 is the effect of an increase in TAA bureaucratic delays by one standard deviation, when there are no collective bargaining processes: $ln(CBA_{it}+1)=0$. $\beta_1+\beta_2\times ln(CBA_{it}+1)$ is the effect of an increase in TAA bureaucratic delays by one standard deviation, when $ln(CBA_{it}+1)$ takes some value in its support. We focus on the latter expression; we expect that $\beta_2>0$, consistent with our main hypothesis.

Importantly, our estimates are not subject to the negative weights issue highlighted in the two-way fixed effects literature: Borusyak and Hull (2024) demonstrates that negative weights are not a concern in two-stage design-based specifications when there is a monotonic relationship between the weights and the treatment dosage; we show in Figure D1 that this condition is satisfied in our case.

For inference, we cluster the standard errors at the county level. Moreover, standard errors are adjusted for the uncertainty stemming from the estimation of bureaucrat fixed

[20]Both variables are measured as standard shift-share, where the share is given by the share of employed in a given industry in the county in 1990, and the shift is the percentage change in Chinese imports or robots, respectively, between 2000 and 2014 (e.g., Acemoglu and Restrepo 2020).

effects using a bootstrapping procedure.[21]

Main Results

Delays Increased Voter Support for Trump

We report our main results in Figure 3, which presents the marginal effect of a one-standard-deviation increase in bureaucratic delays on the Republican vote share in the 2008-2016 and 2012-2016 presidential elections. Full results, including all covariates, are reported in Table E2. In addition to presenting marginal effects based on the continuous measure of union strength, we also report results from a separate specification using a quartile-based measure of local union strength. The latter approach relaxes the linearity assumption implied by the continuous specification.

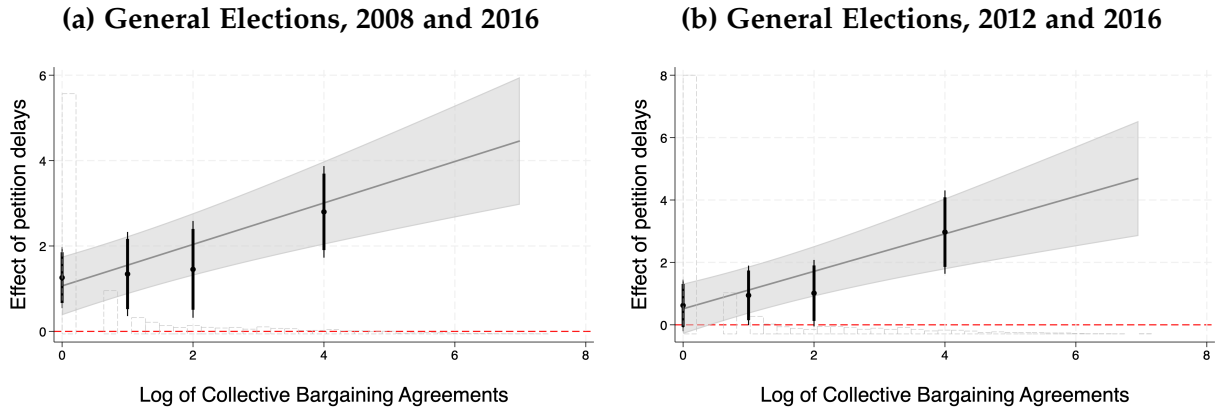
Figure 3 shows positive and statistically significant effects, particularly in counties with the highest levels of union strength. Specifically, in counties where local union strength is at or above the 75th percentile (i.e., the fourth quartile), a one-standard-deviation increase in bureaucratic delays in TAA petitions (approximately 100 days) is associated with a 2.8 (3) percentage point increase in the Republican vote share in the 2016 presidential election, relative to 2008 (2012).

While the effect size may appear modest, even small shifts in vote share could have been decisive in Trump's 2016 victory, given the narrow margins in key Rust Belt states—Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania—where trade-related job losses were significant and TAA benefits were heavily utilized. Trump won these three states by a combined margin of just 107,000 votes, representing 0.09% of the total votes cast in the 2016 election (Meko, Lu, and Gamio 2016).

In Appendix D, we find that our results above are robust to the presence of unobservable confounders via sensitivity analysis. We also show that they are not driven

[21] Standard errors are usually underestimated without a *Moulton factor* correction (Moulton 1990). Appendix D provides details on the procedure.

Figure 3: Effects of TAA Bureaucratic Delays on Vote for Republicans in Presidential Elections, by Labor Union Strength



Notes: 95% bootstrapped confidence bands clustered by county in gray; 95% (90%) bootstrapped standard errors clustered by county for the quartiles of collective bargaining agreements in thin (thick) spikes. Controls include year and county fixed effects, the total number of TAA affected workers and petition denial rate of petitions investigated in a given time period. They also include includes lagged measures of the China Shock as well as the robot-adoption shock.

specifically by any given county. Additionally, we show that the effects of bureaucratic delays in TAA petitions are similar whether petitions are approved or denied.

All in all, we find that our results are robust and that individuals react negatively to delays in the delivery of redistributive benefits, even when those benefits are ultimately received by laid-off workers in their localities. This stands to reason: frustration over delays may be actively communicated among community members to such an extent that information about eventual petition approvals—after long delays—does not offset the negative sentiment. A one-standard-deviation increase in these bureaucratic delays is substantial, corresponding to an average decision time that is 2.5 times longer than the statutory 40-day period. These delays pose a serious threat to beneficiaries' economic security, as losing even a single month of income can push many households into destitution and despair (e.g., Case and Deaton 2022).

Understanding the Mechanism of the Electoral Backlash

To better understand how delays triggered electoral backlash against international integration, we examine how our measure of TAA delays affects individuals' attitudes toward incumbent politicians, international integration, and trust in government. As noted by Walter (2021) and Bisbee and Rosendorff (2025), observed changes in individuals' attitudes toward international integration may be weaker than changes in their voting behavior, possibly because individuals tend to support politicians based on comprehensive policy platforms but may not independently form strong opinions on specific policy issues.

Nonetheless, we expect the effects of TAA petition delays on individuals' attitudes toward international integration to be more pronounced among union members compared to their non-union peers. Furthermore, these effects should manifest as reduced support for the incumbent government, diminished trust in government, and increased opposition to policies associated with international integration—consistent with our theoretical framework.

Survey Data and Model Specification

To measure individuals' attitudes, our primary data source is the Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) surveys (https://cces.gov.harvard.edu). The CCES is a nationally stratified sample survey administered by YouGov, involving more than 50,000 respondents each year. A key advantage of the CCES is its inclusion of a consistent set of questions over time, enabling us to track changes in individuals' attitudes. It also provides information on union membership and other individual characteristics, which we use in our analysis.[22]

Our secondary data source is the American National Election Studies (ANES), which

[22]The CCES annual surveys are typically conducted in November of each year. Almost all petitions submitted in the previous year have received a decision by the time of the CCES survey.

also includes questions relevant to our theoretical framework. However, its sample size is small—less than one-twentieth the size of the CCES—and it is administered only once every four years, during presidential election years. Moreover, while the ANES provides information on respondents' congressional district of residence, it does not identify their county of residence. Thus, we aggregate our measure of bureaucratic delays to the congressional district $\times$ year level for this analysis. Given the more limited identifying variation, we treat the ANES-based analysis as supplementary and present the results in Appendix G.

Table 2 presents the list of questions we use, along with data sources and other summary information.[23] While the CCES includes questions on trade preferences, these were only asked in the 2018-2021 waves, which fall outside our study period. We exclude them, also considering the potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which may have significantly influenced responses. The ANES, however, contains relevant items within our analysis period, such as questions on support for limiting imports and restricting firms from outsourcing jobs abroad.

We also use the CCES to measure individuals' attitudes toward international cooperation and foreign affairs, capturing preferences for internationalism versus nationalism or isolationism (Sluga 2013). Because these questions are about U.S. military interventions, we supplement them with a related ANES item that asks whether the U.S. would be better off if it did not concern itself with problems in other parts of the world.

As a robustness check, we also measure views on domestic social issues such as abortion, same-sex marriage, and affirmative action. We expect support for these domestic policies to be less affected by bureaucratic delays, which are unlikely to create in-group/out-group distinctions within U.S. society, but rather between the U.S. and foreign actors. We therefore treat these outcomes as placebo tests.

To address the problem of making false discoveries when performing multiple hy-

[23] A complete list of CCES questions used to create these indices is provided in Table H1, and the list of ANES questions is shown in Table H2.

Table 2: The List of Main Dependent Variables and Data Sources

No	Index	Questionnaire	Data	Period	Frequency	Analysis
1	Disapproval Ratings (No Index)	Disapprove the president Disapprove my Senators Disapprove my House representatives Disapprove my governor	CCES	2006-2016	Annual	Main
2	Internationalism	Intervene to protect allies Intervene for terrorism Intervene to spread democracy Intervene to uphold international law Intervene against genocide	CCES	2006-2016	Annual	Main
3	Against Immigration	Fine businesses hiring immigrats Prevent legal status to illegal aliens Increase the number of border patrols	CCES CCES CCES	2010-2016 2010-2016 2010-2016	Annual Annual Annual	Main Main Main
4	Domestic Rights	Support abortion Support affirmative action Support gay marriage	CCES	2006-2016	Annual	Main
5	Government Trust	Governments benefit all people Governments don't waste money	ANES	2000-2016	Four Years	Appendix
6	Internationalism	US should concern problems in other parts of the world & not stay home	ANES	2000-2016	Four Years	Appendix
7	Trade Liberalization	Against import limits Support firm outsourcing	ANES	2000-2016	Four Years	Appendix
8	Against Immigration	Decrease the number of immigrants to the U.S.	ANES	2000-2016	Four Years	Appendix
9	Domestic Rights	Support abortion Support affirmative action Positive feelings toward gay people	ANES	2000-2016	Four Years	Appendix

potheses tests (Anderson 2008), we construct construct indices by applying polychoric principal component analysis (PCA) to similar sets of survey questions grouped by topic, estimating the first principal component for each index. Before running PCA, we residualize all survey responses using controls for age, education, race, gender, and ZIP code and month fixed effects, which helps produce more precise indices.

Using CCES individual survey respondent-level data, we run the following regression model:

$$\begin{aligned} Y_{pit} =& \pi_1 Delays_{it-1} + \pi_2 Delays_{it-1} \times UnionMember_p + \pi_3 UnionMember_p \\ &+ X'_{pit}\rho_1 + (Delays_{it-1} \times Z_{pit})'\rho_2 + \iota_t + \eta_i + \xi_{pit} \end{aligned} \tag{4}$$

where p denotes the survey respondent, i the county, and t the year. Y_{pit} is an index of respondents' attitudes. $Delays_{it-1}$ is the one-year-lagged measure of bureaucratic delays in TAA petitions at the county $\times$ year level. We include year fixed effects (ι_t) and county fixed effects (η_i). $UnionMember_{pit}$ equals one if the respondent is or was a member of any labor union, and zero otherwise. We find that $Delays_{it-1}$ does not affect $UnionMember_{pit}$, suggesting that union status is unlikely to be post-treatment. X_{pit} includes county-level petition denial rates, the number of TAA-affected workers. Z_{pit} includes observable characteristics that may influence the decision to join or remain in a union: age, gender, race, education, affiliation with manufacturing industries,[24] and unemployment status. Including these variables and their interaction terms with $Delays_{it-1}$ ensures that they do not drive our findings. Summary statistics for these variables are available in Appendix H.

Our estimates likely represent a lower bound of the true effect, as the sample may include union members who are less affected by trade policies, which could bias the estimates toward zero due to lower treatment uptake.

Standard errors are computed using bootstrapping to account for uncertainties in estimating TAA investigator fixed-effect estimates, and clustered at the county level.

Delays Reduce Union Members' Support for the Incumbent and Government

Table 3 shows the impact of county-level TAA petition delays on the disapproval ratings of union members residing in affected counties toward incumbent politicians. Full

[24] While the CCES provides information on respondents' industry affiliation, these data are available only for the years 2006-2007, 2011-2014, and 2016. Because the responses were open-ended, classifying manufacturing industries is not straightforward. We therefore create a binary indicator equal to 1 if a respondent's description contains any of the following terms: "manuf," "mfg," "mill," "factory," "steel," "automotive," "goods," "chemical," "furniture," "circuit board," "lumber," "medical device," "semiconductor," and "textile." The inclusion of these terms was based on the top 30 products associated with TAA petitions submitted between 2006 and 2016. For years in which responses are not available, we code the indicator as zero. Including or excluding this variable in the regression model does not change our results.

results including covariates are presented in Table E3. Row (A) reports the effect for non-union members, while Row (A+B) reports the effect for union members. Consistent with our expectations, bureaucrat-driven TAA petition delays increase presidential disapproval—but only among union members. Substantively: a one-standard-deviation increase in TAA bureaucratic delays (approximately 72 days) raises presidential disapproval among union members by 4.4 percentage points, with no comparable effects observed for other elected offices.

These results suggest that labor union members who receive information about bureaucratic delays in TAA petitions attribute blame to the incumbent politician responsible for overseeing the federal government—namely, the incumbent president. The president is the most visible figure associated with federal redistributive programs and the government employees who administer them, including those responsible for TAA (Ritchie and You 2019).

Using ANES survey items on trust toward the government, we report in Table G1 that a one-standard-deviation increase in bureaucratic delays in TAA decisions (approximately 103 days) reduces trust in government by 9 percentage points. In Table G2, we show that this decline in trust is driven by an increased perception that the government "wastes" money.

Delays Erode Union Members' Support for Internationalism

Table 3 displays the results for the indices constructed using the CCES, covering internationalism (column 1), immigration (column 2), and domestic rights (column 3). Full results with covariates are presented in Table E4. We find that a one-standard-deviation increase in our measure of delays (approximately 72 days) reduces support for internationalism among union members by 2.8 percentage points. We find no evidence of effects on attitudes toward domestic rights and immigration.

Notably, column (1) shows that bureaucratic delays in TAA petitions appear to have

Table 3: Effect of TAA Bureaucratic Delays on Incumbents' Disapproval Rating

	Dependent Variables: Disapproval Rating			
	the President	Senators	House representative	the Governor
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Union Member	-0.1362**	-0.1021*	-0.1502**	-0.0172
	(0.0690)	(0.0612)	(0.0691)	(0.0644)
(A) TAA Bureaucratic Delays	-0.0226	-0.0046	-0.0002	-0.0261
	(0.0140)	(0.0097)	(0.0091)	(0.0179)
(B) TAA Bureaucratic Delays x Union Member	0.0668***	0.0078	0.0127	0.0139
	(0.0128)	(0.0094)	(0.0109)	(0.0130)
(A+B) Linear Combination of Coefficients:				
Effect for union members	0.0441***	0.0032	0.0125	-0.0120
	(0.0168)	(0.0110)	(0.0111)	(0.0212)
Observations	235243	195601	193448	221743
Control Variables	Y	Y	Y	Y
Fixed Effects	Y	Y	Y	Y
Adjusted R2	0.0373	0.0410	0.0234	0.0413

Notes: Bootstrapped standard errors clustered by county. * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01. Controls include year and county fixed effects, the total number of TAA affected workers and petition denial rate of petitions investigated in a given time period. They also include includes lagged measures of the China Shock as well as the robot-adoption shock. Our bureaucratic delays measure is orthogonal to other confounders as demonstrated in AppendixA.

the opposite effect on non-union members' attitudes toward international integration. While a full exploration of this pattern is beyond the scope of this paper, one possible explanation is the influence of other interest groups (e.g., trade associations) that may counteract the information transmitted by labor unions.

Additionally, we do not find statistically significant effects on attitudes toward immigration. This is not unexpected as we anticipated significant effects on some—but not all—policy preference questions. On the one hand, the null result may reflect differences between voting behavior and expressed attitudes (Walter 2021), as well as factors such as the content or framing of survey questions; cognitive biases during response; or data limitations due to non-response; all of which can introduce noise and attenuate ob-

served effects (Bisbee and Rosendorff 2025). On the other hand, Frymer and Grumbach (2021) show that union membership is correlated to lower out-group sentiment, which could also explain the absence of changes in attitudes towards immigration among the unionized.

We find similar results using the ANES (Appendix G): a one-standard-deviation increase in bureaucratic delays is associated with a 4.6 percentage point decrease in support for internationalism. Consistent with the previous findings, we observe no significant effects on attitudes toward domestic rights or immigration. Likewise, we do not find statistically significant effects on attitudes toward trade policies.

Our results are robust to using the individual survey questions that comprise our indices as outcome variables: Appendix F and Appendix G.

Table 4: Effect of TAA Bureaucratic Delays on Individuals' Attitudes (Indices)

	Dependent Variables:		
	Internationalism	*Against Immigration*	*Domestic Rights*
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Union Member	0.0011	-0.0463	0.1200
	(0.0973)	(0.1309)	(0.0869)
(A) TAA Bureaucratic Delays	0.0202**	0.0108	-0.0036
	(0.0088)	(0.0125)	(0.0084)
(B) TAA Bureaucratic Delays x Union Member	-0.0480***	-0.0078	-0.0004
	(0.0132)	(0.0189)	(0.0122)
Linear Combination of Coefficients:			
(A+B) Effect for union members	-0.0279**	0.0030	-0.0040
	(0.0128)	(0.0192)	(0.0122)
Observations	204784	102870	182749
Control Variables	Y	Y	Y
Fixed Effects	Y	Y	Y
Adjusted R2	0.0255	0.0209	0.0552

Notes: Bootstrapped standard errors clustered by county. * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01. Controls include year and county fixed effects, the total number of TAA affected workers and petition denial rate of petitions investigated in a given time period. They also include includes lagged measures of the China Shock as well as the robot-adoption shock. Our bureaucratic delays measure is orthogonal to other confounders as demonstrated in AppendixA.

Lastly, we examine whether the differential effects of TAA bureaucrat-driven delays

by union status vary between white and non-white union members. Mutz (2018) and Baccini and Weymouth (2022) suggest that such group-identity can generate divergent political reactions to common economic shocks. For instance, white (non-white) union members may become more opposed to (favorable toward) affirmative action in response to TAA bureaucrat-driven delays. These diverging effects could offset each other in the aggregate, potentially contributing to the absence of statistically significant differential effects by union membership observed in columns (2) and (3) of Table 3.

We address this concern by estimating a triple-interaction model in which white-respondent status is interacted with both TAA delays and union membership, using the same set of covariates as before. That is, we estimate π_2 in model (4) but both for white and non-white respondents, respectively. The results, presented in Table F4, indicate that, regardless of race, union membership amplifies the impact of TAA bureaucrat-driven delays on attitudes toward international integration and on presidential disapproval ratings. Moreover, we find no statistically significant difference between these differential effects between white and non-white respondents. Table G3 shows similar results using ANES data.

Discussion

We propose an informational theory explaining how bureaucratic delays in redistributive programs can undermine support for international integration. In the context of the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program in the United States, we show that delays in processing TAA petitions negatively affect individuals' support for the incumbent government and international engagement more broadly. We also highlight the role of labor unions as key venues for disseminating information about these delays. Our findings suggest that areas with stronger unions—where voters are more likely to be informed—are the primary drivers of these effects.

Although unions are not the central focus of our theoretical framework, they provide

a valuable institutional setting through which we empirically test the scope conditions of our theory. In this regard, our findings contribute to the ongoing debate about the extent to which labor unions shape members' political behavior. While some recent evidence casts doubt on unions' ability to influence members' preferences (e.g., Yan 2024), our findings align with a growing body of research showing that union membership can gradually shape the political attitudes and behaviors of at least some members (e.g., Hadziabdic and Baccaro 2020; Frymer and Grumbach 2021; Hertel-Fernandez 2024).

Importantly, we demonstrate that our findings are not simply driven by self-selection into unions by more politically engaged individuals. Rather, it is the interaction between bureaucratic delays and information dissemination that accounts for the observed effects. In this way, our results echo recent calls for deeper investigation into the role of union-based collective action and the broader political consequences of union membership (Balcazar 2023; Kaplan and Naidu 2024; Becher and Stegmueller 2025).

We also recognize that in other contexts, different actors may serve as information brokers who influence political preferences and behaviors. For example, recent work by Cremaschi et al. (2024) demonstrates how citizens' experiences with public services—combined with elite rhetoric linking those experiences to immigration—can increase support for far-right messaging. Similar dynamics have been identified in Epp and Jennings (2020) and Das et al. (2023). Although these studies fall outside the scope of our paper, we view this as a promising research agenda, particularly given the critical role of redistribution in sustaining public support for international integration.

Overall, our empirical analysis offers new insights into how redistributive programs operate when individual bureaucrats are responsible for determining the quality or validity of citizen petitions. While we focus on TAA, our theoretical framework has broader applicability to other redistributive programs—both in the U.S. and in other countries—where bureaucrats make case-by-case decisions about benefit provision. In such settings, citizens may face barriers to accessing government support due to collective decision-

making processes, bureaucratic discretion, or the uneven flow of information, all of which can shape public perceptions of government fairness and effectiveness.

Finally, we acknowledge that bureaucratic delays are just one type of hurdle that may shape outcomes in redistributive programs. Other constraints—such as red tape, poor targeting, corruption, conflicts of interest, and low state capacity—may also undermine the effectiveness of government compensation mechanisms for those harmed by international economic competition. While our focus on delays provides a first step in exploring these dynamics, we view future work on other forms of bureaucratic constraint as essential for understanding the broader political consequences of redistribution on support for international integration.

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Online Supplementary Appendix

Table of Contents

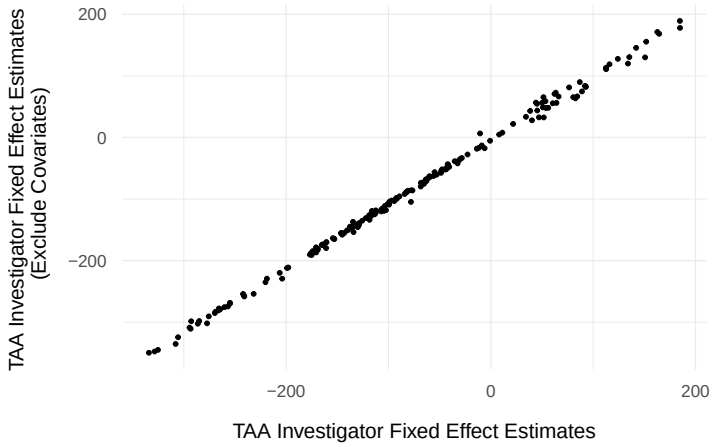
A Estimation of TAA Bureaucrats' Propensity

Table A1: The List of Covariates

No	Variable	Mean (SD)	Description
TAA Investigator Chracteristics:			
1	Investigator Load	29.47 (22.62)	The number of other petitions that the investigator is investigating at a time when the investigator being an investigation on the petition
2	Accumulated Years	6.21 (6.62)	The accumulated number of years that the investigator worked in the OTAA
3	Tenured	0.58 (0.49)	1 if the investigator has worked in the OTAA for more than three years; 0 otherwise
House Representative Chracteristics:			
4	African American	0.05 (0.22)	1 if the House representative of the district where the petition is submitted is African American; 0 otherwise
5	Latino	0.04 (0.20)	1 if the House representative of the district where the petition is submitted is Latino; 0 otherwise
6	Power	0.25 (0.43)	1 if the House representative of the district where the petition is submitted is a member of the committee on Appropriations, Rules, or Ways and Means; 0 otherwise
7	DW-Nominate	0.05 (0.41)	1st dimension DW-Nominate score of the House representative of the district where the petition is submitted
8	Democratic Party	0.48 (0.50)	1 if the House representative of the district where the petition is submitted is in the Democratic Party; 0 otherwise
9	Seniority	5.58 (4.25)	Seniority of the House representative of the district where the petition is submitted

10	Freshman	0.15 (0.36)	1 if he House representative of the district where the petition is submitted is freshman; 0 otherwise
11	Majority Party	0.55 (0.49)	1 if the House representative of the district where the petition is submitted is in the majority power; 0 otherwise
12	Committe Chair	0.05 (0.21)	1 if the House representative of the district where the petition is submitted is the committee chair; 0 otherwise
Petition Chracteristics:			
13	Submitted by Workers	0.35 (0.47)	1 if the petition is submitted by workers; 0 if the petition has been submitted by state agencies, companies or labor unions
14	Submitted by Unions	0.12 (0.32)	1 if the petition is submitted by labor unions; 0 otherwise
15	China Mentioned	0.05 (0.22)	1 if the petition is related to China; 0 otherwise
16	Petition Denied	0.27 (0.44)	1 if the petition is denied; 0 otherwise
17	Estimated Number of TAA Affected Workers	88.14 (222.71)	The estimated number of workers in the petition
State-Level Presidential Support:			
18	Swing State	0.50 (0.49)	1 if the state had the vote share for the incumbent president's party has averaged between 0.45 and 0.55 in the previous three presidential elections; 0 otherwise (Kriner and Reeves 2015)
19	Core State	0.24 (0.24)	1 if the state had the vote share for the incumbent president's party has averaged over 0.55 in the previous three presidential elections; 0 otherwise (Kriner and Reeves 2015)

Figure A1: Estimated TAA Investigator Propensity With and Without Petition and House Representative Characteristics



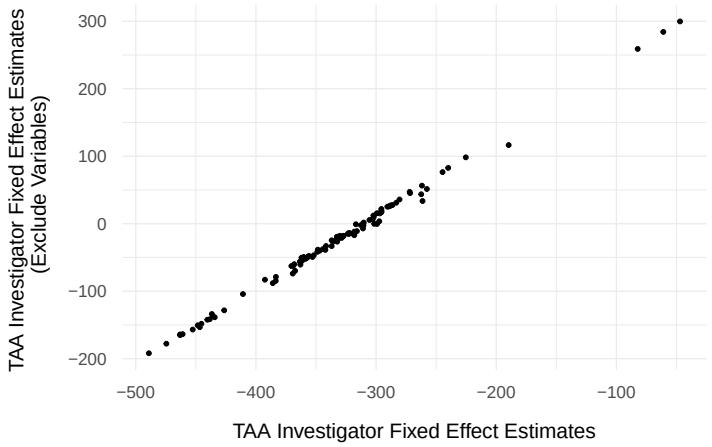
Notes: x-axis denotes estimated TAA investigator propensities including all covariates, and y-axis denotes the estimates excluding variables on petition and House representative characteristics, presented in Table A1. The adjusted R-squared for the correlation between the two estimates is 0.99.

Table A2: Determinants of Delays in Investigating TAA Petitions, 1991-2019

	Dependent Variable: TAA Petition Processing Time	
TAA Investigator Chracteristics:		
Investigator Load	8.19	(20.2)***
Accumulated Years	−11.40	(4.61)**
Tenured	−0.72	(3.24)
House Representative Chracteristics:		
African American	2.96	(1.56)*
Latino	−0.57	(2.04)
Power	0.22	(0.67)
DW-Nominate	−4.22	(2.71)
Democratic Party	−2.88	(1.82)
Seniority	0.11	(0.10)
Freshman	0.50	(1.12)
Majority Party	−1.07	(0.91)
Committee Chair	−0.12	(1.91)
Petition Chracteristics:		
Submitted by Workers	4.36	(1.24)***
Submitted by Unions	6.67	(1.74)***
China Mentioned	−10.04	(1.92)***
Petition Denied	24.17	(3.67)***
Estimated Number of TAA Workers	2.57	(0.33)***
State-Level Presidential Support:		
Swing State	-0.18	(0.97)
Core State	0.27	(1.32)
N	53,467	
Fixed Effects	Y	
F-statistic for excluded α_b	25.53***	
P-value for excluded α_b	1.013e-12	
Adjusted R^2	0.35	
Mean Outcome	68.6	

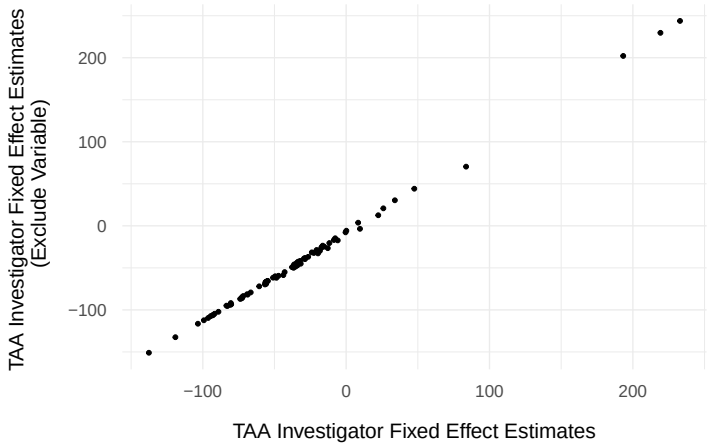
Notes: Standard errors clustered by TAA investigator and are in parentheses. * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01. F-statistic for excluded fixed effects (α_b) adjusts for clustering and it also block-bootstrapped. The results suggest that delays are more likely if TAA investigators are in charge of too many petitions in a given time, but less likely as TAA investigators accumulate work experience over time. Second, petition-level characteristics strongly predict TAA petition delays. Specifically, delays are more likely if petitions are of lower quality measured by whether they are submitted by workers but not by companies or unions (Ritchie and You 2019). Moreover, delays are more likely if petitions or have a higher number of workers claiming to be eligible for petitions. On the other hand, delays are not affected by variables related to House representatives and presidential support of where the petition was submitted. It is possible that tenured bureaucrats can respond differently to political influence (Kim 2024). However, we find that interaction terms between TAA investigator's tenure and political variables are not significantly associated with TAA petition delays.

Figure A2: Estimated TAA Investigator Propensity With and Without Congressional District Demographics and Economic Characteristics from American Community Survey (ACS)



Notes: x-axis denotes estimated TAA investigator propensities including all covariates from 2005-2016, and y-axis denotes the estimates excluding variables from ACS. The list of ACS variables includes: congressional district$\times$year log-transformed variables on total population, White population, Black population, Hispanic population, Asian population, the number of people unemployed, employed in manufacturing, construction, services, wholesale, and retail, the number of total households, households with social security income, supplemental security income, public assistance income, and the level of household median income, using the petition data from 2005-2016. The adjusted R-squared for the correlation between the two estimates is 0.99.

Figure A3: Estimated TAA Investigator Propensity With and Without Legislators' Direct Contact to the DOL Concerning Specific TAA petitions (Ritchie and You 2019)



Notes: x-axis denotes estimated TAA investigator propensities including all covariates from 2005-2012, and y-axis denotes the estimates excluding the variable on the number of legislators' contact to the DOL regarding specific TAA petitions, using the petition data from 2005-2012. The adjusted R-squared for the correlation between the two estimates is 0.99.

Table A3: Effect of TAA Investigator Fixed-Effect Estimates on Petition Revision, 1991-2019

	Dependent Variable: TAA Petition Revision
Investigator Fixed-Effect Estimates	0.0000
	(0.0000)
N	53,481
Fixed Effects	Y
Adjusted R^2	0.03
Mean Outcome	0.04

Notes: Standard errors clustered by TAA investigator and are in parantheses. Year, congressional districts, and SIC two-digit industry fixed effects are included. * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01.

B Assigning Congressional Districts to Petitions

We use the zipcode-congressional district crosswalk datasets provided by the Missouri Census Data Center (MCDC) (https://mcdc.missouri.edu/geography/ZIP-resources.html). Table B1 shows how petitions that are investigated during each congress session (year) are matched with the corresponding congressional district. For 56,277 petitions that were investigated from 1991 to 2019, 7,714 petitions had congressional districts unmatched either due to missing zipcode or changes in the zipcode that were not captured by the MCDC data. For these unmatched petitions, we alternatively used their city information and used MCDC's city-congressional district crosswalk files. As a result, only 2,804 petitions had congressional district information unmatched.

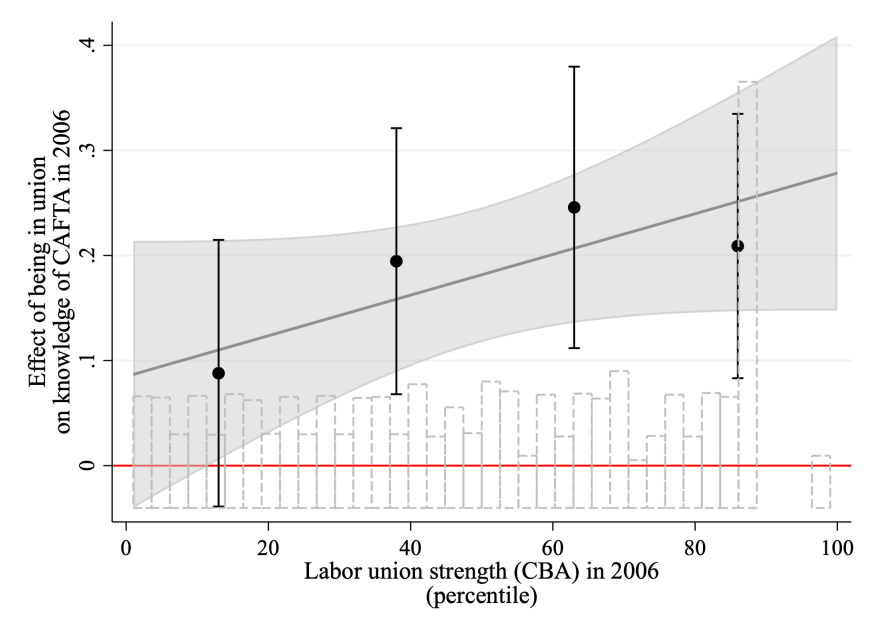
Table B1: CMDC Congressional District Crosswalk Data for Congress Session (Year)

Congression Session (Year)	MCDC Data
102nd (1991-1992)	Zipcode (City) 1990 - 102nd Session
103rd (1993-1994), 104th (1995-1996), 105th (1997-1998), 106th (1999-2000), 107th (2001-2002)	Zipcode (City) 1990 - 103rd Session
108th (2003-2004)	Zipcode (City) 2000 - 108th Session
109th (2005-2006)	Zipcode (City) 2000 - 109th Session
110th (2007-2008), 111th (2009-2010), 112th (2011-2012)	Zipcode (City) 2018 - 111th Session
113th (2013-2014)	Zipcode 2018 (City) - 113th Session
114th (2015-2016)	Zipcode (City) 2018 - 114th Session
115th (2017-2018)	Zipcode (City) 2018 - 115th Session
115th (2019-2030)	Zipcode (City) 2018 - 116th Session

C Validity of labor Union Strength Measure

First, we use the 2006 CCES data who asks respondents if they know about how their legislator voted on the Central American Free Trade agreement (CAFTA): "How about <Senator>? Do you think <he/she> voted for or against the trade agreement?." If they know how they actually voted, then the variable takes value of 1 and zero otherwise. We analyze the correlation between unionization and this proxy for knowledge of international trade policy. Figure C1 indicates that union members in areas where unions are stronger—as measured by Collective Bargaining Agreements—have more knowledge about how their legislator voted.

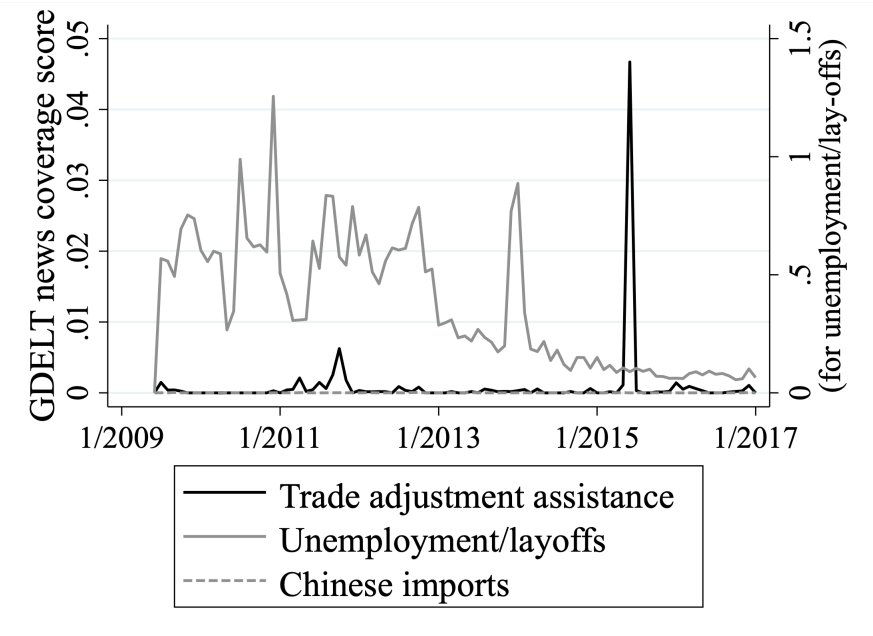
Figure C1: Correlation between union status and knowledge of trad policy, by labor union strength



We also use the Global Database of Events, Language and Tone (GDELT) reveals to obtain a proxy of the level of newsworthiness of the Trade Adjustment Assistance program we use in our empirical analysis v. other newsworthy issues—the data is available at https://www.gdeltproject.org. Specifically, we focus on "unemployment" and "chinese imports"—which have been the most important drivers in the backlash against globalization—as the competing issues to "TAA" and "trade adjustment assistance." We collect data from 2009 to 2022 from the major TV stations—MSNBC, Fox News, Bloomberg, Al Jazeera America. Figure C2 shows that news much more coverage to the topic of lay-offs than to the Trade Adjustment Assistance; it devoted 419 times more coverage on average to the former during the period shown. Thus the TAA didn't

seem to be relatively relevant in these sources of information.[1]

Figure C2: Relative newsworthiness of trade adjustment assistance



Lastly, we examine the correlation between our measure and several known proxies of union strength: the establishment of statewide right-to-work laws, and congressional district×year-level measures on the number of union members and union concentration compiled by (Becher, Stegmueller, and Käppner 2018) for years 2005-2012. For this validation, we construct our union strength measure at the congressional district-by-year level, using collective bargaining mediations reported from fiscal years $t-3$ to $t-1$ where t is the corresponding year. Results are presented in Table C1.

We observe lower values for this measure in right-to-work states, as expected; our measure is also positively correlated with the number of labor union members and negatively correlated with union concentration. Note that Becher, Stegmueller, and Käppner (2018) argue that lower union concentration leads to the weaker influence of labor unions on legislators' policy choices.

[1]We also tried performing a similar analysis using the data from both Wisconsin Advertising Project (WAP) and data from Wesleyan Media Project (WMP), which has been used to measure elite cues by politicians (e.g., Guisinger 2017b). However, the data doesn't include classifications regarding the Trade Adjustment Assistance program.

Table C1: Correlations Between Congressional District-Level Union Strength Measure and Other Union-Related Variables, 2006-2016

	Dependent Variable:		
	Statewide Right-to-Work Laws	log(The Number of Union Members+1)	Union Concentration
	(1)	(2)	(3)
log(Strong Labor Unions+1)	-0.14***	0.52***	-0.016***
	(0.02)	(3967.68)	(0.006)
N	4,874	3,346	3,346
State Fixed Effects	N	Y	Y
Year Fixed Effects	Y	Y	Y
Adjusted R^2	0.18	0.51	0.31
Mean Outcome	0.40	9.663	0.56

Notes: The unit of analysis is congressional districts×year for columns (1), (2), (3) and CCES survey respondent for column (2). Standard errors are clustered by House representative. * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01.

D Robustness

Three relevant concerns may arise from our empirical design: i) uncertainty from the first-stage TAA delays estimates, ii) The presence of heterogeneous effects that could bias the results, iii) The possibility that confounders that are not accounted may overturn the results, iv) The possibility that any group of observations is driving the results, v) The approved or denied drive the results, vi) Whether Trump's anti-globalist stance was not a determinant of our findings.

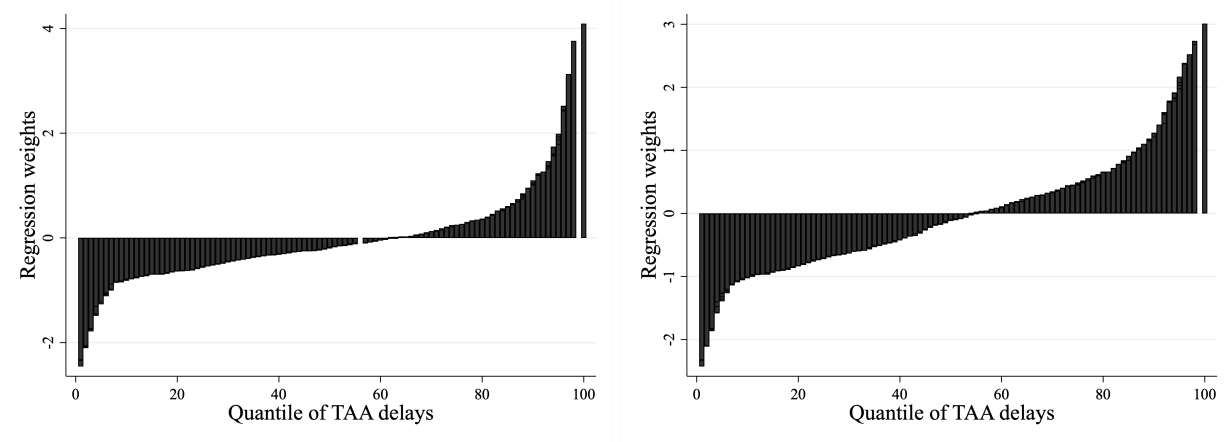
Uncertainty from the first-stage TAA. Moulton (1990) shows that we can underestimate the intra-class correlation when performing a first stage regression to then aggregate data for performing a second stage regression. This can lead to lower estimated standard errors. As a result, two-stage regressions need to adjust for the uncertainty of the first stage. The adjustment factor is called the Moulton factor, and it accounts for the increased uncertainty introduced by the first stage intra-class correlation. We estimate the Moulton factor using cluster bootstrapping on TAA investigators, with 10000 repetitions. This adjustment increases our standard errors by around two times. All regressions results we report in the document take into account this adjustment.

Sensitivity to heterogenous treatment effects. Our estimates are not subject to the negative weights issue highlighted differences-in-differences literature, because our approach is a two-stage OLS approach. Borusyak and Hull (2024) indicate that negative

weights are of no concern in design-based specifications if there is a monotonic relationship between the weights and the treatment dosage, as we show in the Figure D1.

Figure D1: Regression weights and TAA delays percentiles

(a) 2008-2016 **(b) 2012-2016**



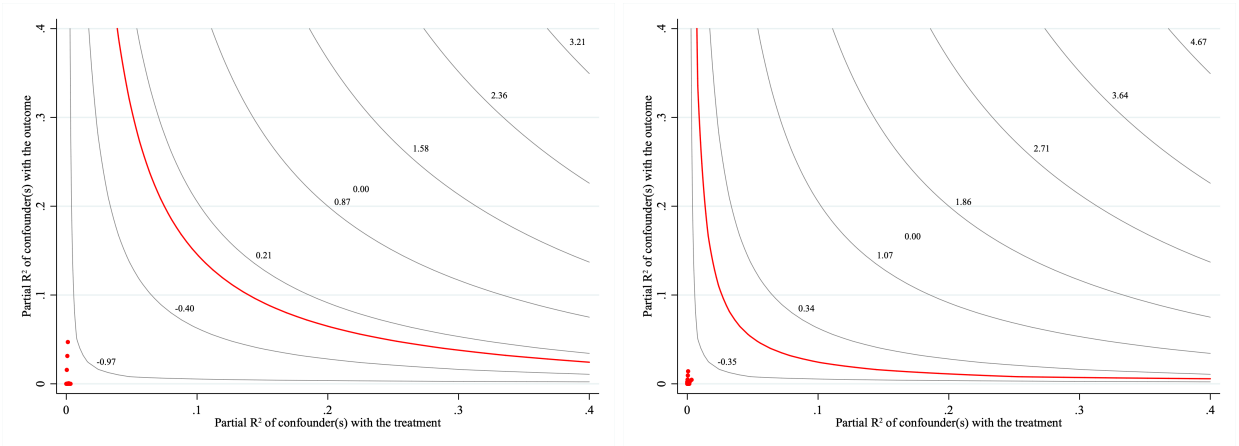
Notes: The regression weights are computed following Borusyak and Hull (2024).

Sensitivity to unobserved confounding. We check the sensitivity of the estimated results with respect to deviations from the conditional exogeneity assumption; i.e., if there are unobserved variables that affect assignment into treatment and the outcome variable simultaneously that estimated coefficients may not be robust to. We explicitly relax the exogeneity assumption by allowing for a limited amount of correlation between treatment and unobserved components of the outcomes (Imbens 2003). We find that an unobservable confounder that could potentially overturn my main results needs to exhibit a higher partial R^2 vis-á-vis the confounders we account for, which is unlikely to exist since it would need to have a much stronger effect than import competition— the confounder with the highest partial R^2.

Parameter stability to observations. To further corroborate that our results are not driven by few cases, we carry out a robustness tests wherein we drop one county at a time with replacement (*á la* Jackknife). We find that the effect of the treatment is stable and statistically significant for each permutation (Figure D3).

Figure D2: Sensitivity analysis to unobserved confounding

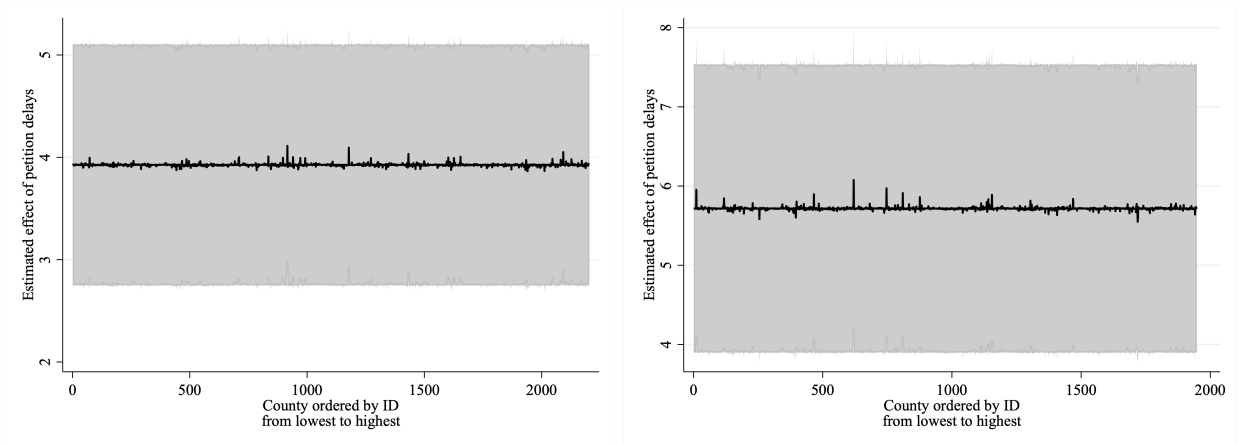
(a) 2008-2016 **(b) 2012-2016**



Note: Controls include year and county fixed effects, the total number of TAA affected workers and petition denial rate of petitions investigated in a given time period. They also include includes lagged measures of the China Shock as well as the robot-adoption shock. We also include the socio-demographics in Table A2. Our bureaucratic delays measure is orthogonal to other confounders as demonstrated in AppendixA.

Figure D3: Parameter stability to excluding one district with replacement

(a) 2008-2016 **(b) 2012-2016**

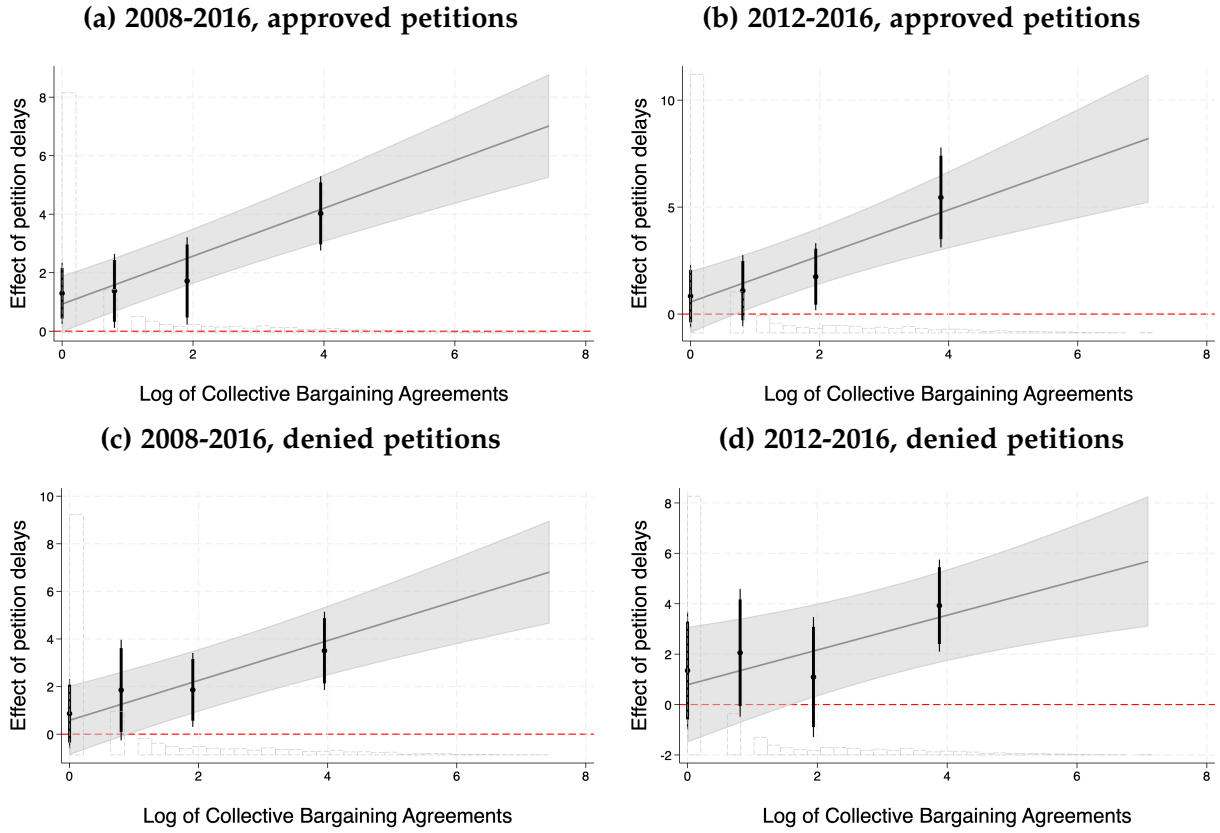


Note: 95% bootstrapped confidence bands clustered by county in gray; 95% (90%) bootstrapped standard errors clustered by county for the quartiles of collective bargaining agreements in thin (thick) spikes. Controls include year and county fixed effects, the total number of TAA affected workers and petition denial rate of petitions investigated in a given time period. They also include includes lagged measures of the China Shock as well as the robot-adoption shock. Our bureaucratic delays measure is orthogonal to other confounders as demonstrated in AppendixA.

Approved or denied petitions. We examine whether the effects of bureaucratic delays in TAA petitions differ by whether petitions are approved or denied. To do so, we

split petitions into those that are approved and denied. We then run the same regression models with the same set of outcome variables. Figure D4 shows that the heterogeneous effect of petition delays is consistent with our main findings.

Figure D4: Effects of TAA Bureaucratic Delays on Vote for Republicans in Presidentials, by Labor Union Strength



Notes: 95% bootstrapped confidence bands clustered by county in gray; 95% (90%) bootstrapped standard errors clustered by county for the quartiles of collective bargaining agreements in thin (thick) spikes. Controls include year and county fixed effects, the total number of TAA affected workers and petition denial rate of petitions investigated in a given time period. They also include includes lagged measures of the China Shock as well as the robot-adoption shock. Our bureaucratic delays measure is orthogonal to other confounders as demonstrated in AppendixA.

E Main Summary Statistics and Full Main Results

Table E1: Summary Statistics (Election Data)

Variables	Mean	SD	Min	Max	N
Elections 2008 and 2016:					
TAA bureaucrat-driven petition delays	-107.77	83.57	-310.52	143.76	3630
TAA bureaucrat-driven petition delays (approved)	-108.45	85.46	-310.52	143.76	3349
TAA bureaucrat-driven petition delays (denied)	-101.53	89.19	-310.52	143.76	2134
Collective bargaining agreements	13.26	65.25	0.00	1700.00	3630
Share of votes for Trump	56.55	14.25	4.09	88.87	3630
Number of workers in TAA petitions	791.64	1684.17	1.00	31339.00	3630
Number of denied TAA petitions	0.24	0.29	0.00	1.00	3630
China shock	0.89	0.68	-0.14	6.08	3619
Robot adoption	1.30	0.96	0.14	6.51	3619
Manufacturing employment	8701.57	21682.22	5.00	586627.00	3630
Unemployment rate	4749.23	14309.23	0.00	378401.00	3630
Total population	145575.00	386516.16	729.00	9785295.00	3630
White population	107858.66	234954.00	646.00	4963235.00	3630
Elections 2012 and 2016:					
TAA bureaucrat-driven petition delays	-140.16	69.43	-310.52	143.76	3455
TAA bureaucrat-driven petition delays (approved)	-140.73	70.80	-310.52	143.76	3226
TAA bureaucrat-driven petition delays (denied)	-135.13	78.47	-310.52	143.76	1919
Collective bargaining agreements	10.66	50.87	0.00	1300.00	3455
Share of votes for Trump	57.54	14.60	4.09	89.97	3455
Number of workers in TAA petitions	769.85	1652.34	1.00	26312.00	3455
Number of denied TAA petitions	0.21	0.28	0.00	1.00	3455
China shock	0.89	0.67	0.00	6.08	3445

Robot adoption	1.32	0.97	0.14	6.51	3445
Manufacturing employment	9055.10	22162.27	12.00	586627.00	3455
Unemployment rate	4948.54	14637.88	0.00	378401.00	3455
Total population	151480.08	395215.19	849.00	9785295.00	3455
White population	112138.00	239995.92	784.00	4963235.00	3455

Table E2: Full Results for Figure 3

	Dependent Variable: Republican Party Vote Share (0-100)	
	Sample: 2008, 2016 General Elections	Sample: 2012, 2016 General Elections
	(1)	(2)
TAA Bureaucratic Delays	1.0653***	0.5134
	(0.3505)	(0.4110)
log(CBA +1)	-0.8111	-1.5839*
	(0.7211)	(0.8761)
TAA Bureaucratic Delays × log(CBA +1)	0.4857***	0.6006***
	(0.1072)	(0.1439)
Petition Denial Rate	-0.1341	0.2816
	(0.6635)	(0.8394)
log(TAA Affected Workers+1)	-0.3077**	-0.4450***
	(0.1570)	(0.1721)
log(TAA Affected Workers+1) × log(CBA +1)	0.1915*	0.1942
	(0.1016)	(0.1254)
Petition Denial Rate × log(CBA +1)	1.3917**	2.1692***
	(0.6531)	(0.8252)
TAA Bureaucratic Delays × Local Import Shock	-0.0163	0.1025
	(0.2159)	(0.2531)
TAA Bureaucratic Delays × Robot Adoption Shock	-0.8672***	-0.5472***
	(0.2226)	(0.1933)
log(Manurfacturing Population+1)	0.1902	-2.3830***
	(1.3581)	(0.8512)
log(Unemployed Population+1)	1.7691**	1.7317***
	(0.7657)	(0.5626)
log(Total Population+1)	-35.2966***	-30.8017***
	(7.7986)	(5.1321)
log(White Population+1)	0.6669	-3.3885
	(7.1510)	(4.3518)
Mean Outcome	55.69	57.20
Adjusted R^2	0.9187	0.9439
Fixed Effects	Y	Y
N	2844	3004

Notes: Bootstrapped standard errors clustered by county. * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01. Controls include year and county fixed effects, the total number of TAA affected workers and petition denial rate of petitions investigated in a given time period. They also include includes lagged measures of the China Shock as well as the robot-adoption shock.

Table E3: Full Results for Figure 3

	Dependent Variables: Disapproval Rating			
	the President	Senators	House representative	the Governor
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Union Member	-0.1362**	-0.1021*	-0.1502**	-0.0172
	(0.0690)	(0.0612)	(0.0691)	(0.0644)
(A) TAA Bureaucratic Delays	-0.0226	-0.0046	-0.0002	-0.0261
	(0.0140)	(0.0097)	(0.0091)	(0.0179)
(B) TAA Bureaucratic Delays x	0.0668***	0.0078	0.0127	0.0139
Union Member	(0.0128)	(0.0094)	(0.0109)	(0.0130)
log(TAA Affected Workers+1)	0.0031	0.0038	0.0053	-0.0006
	(0.0062)	(0.0042)	(0.0037)	(0.0079)
Petition Denial Rate	0.0202	-0.0063	0.0125	0.0074
	(0.0331)	(0.0210)	(0.0208)	(0.0368)
Age	-0.0006*	0.0004	0.0005	-0.0005
	(0.0003)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0005)
Male=1	-0.0112	-0.0051	0.0156	-0.0030
	(0.0103)	(0.0145)	(0.0135)	(0.0123)
Race: Black	0.0452	-0.0271	-0.0719**	-0.0441
	(0.0276)	(0.0460)	(0.0362)	(0.0419)
Race: Hispanic	-0.0098	-0.0093	-0.0206	-0.0049
	(0.0258)	(0.0242)	(0.0258)	(0.0266)
Race: Asian	0.0496	0.0122	0.0438	0.0090
	(0.0420)	(0.0379)	(0.0330)	(0.0390)
Race: Other	-0.0567***	-0.0157	0.0175	-0.0110
	(0.0217)	(0.0214)	(0.0247)	(0.0223)
Edu: Secondary Education	0.0095	-0.0022	-0.0128	0.0072
	(0.0255)	(0.0247)	(0.0274)	(0.0273)
Edu: Higher Education	0.0363	0.0026	-0.0201	-0.0093
	(0.0252)	(0.0247)	(0.0277)	(0.0292)
Edu: Postgraduate	0.0695**	0.0217	-0.0276	-0.0267
	(0.0294)	(0.0299)	(0.0317)	(0.0343)
Unemployed	0.0435***	0.0453***	0.0654***	0.0583***
	(0.0150)	(0.0137)	(0.0145)	(0.0129)
In Manufacturing Industry	0.0203	0.0223**	0.0034	0.0004
	(0.0145)	(0.0110)	(0.0131)	(0.0145)
Union Member ×	0.0001	-0.0042	-0.0001	-0.0064

log(TAA Affected Workers+1)	(0.0048)	(0.0054)	(0.0052)	(0.0054)
Union Member ×	0.0333	0.0067	0.0053	0.0050
Petition Denial Rate	(0.0320)	(0.0252)	(0.0280)	(0.0337)
Union Member ×	0.0012**	0.0015**	0.0017***	0.0027***
Age	(0.0005)	(0.0006)	(0.0006)	(0.0006)
Union Member ×	0.0631***	0.0491***	0.0159	-0.0032
Male	(0.0178)	(0.0152)	(0.0182)	(0.0163)
Union Member ×	0.0739**	-0.0953***	-0.0767**	-0.0306
Race: Black	(0.0298)	(0.0261)	(0.0310)	(0.0243)
Union Member ×	0.1589***	0.0042	0.0526	0.0291
Race: Hispanic	(0.0318)	(0.0277)	(0.0338)	(0.0318)
Union Member ×	0.0536	-0.0594	-0.1393**	-0.0437
Race: Asian	(0.0641)	(0.0476)	(0.0619)	(0.0550)
Union Member ×	0.2137***	0.0320	0.0043	0.0136
Race: Other	(0.0369)	(0.0314)	(0.0385)	(0.0354)
Union Member ×	0.0342	0.0334	0.0728	-0.0211
Edu: Secondary Education	(0.0545)	(0.0476)	(0.0526)	(0.0512)
Union Member ×	0.0010	-0.0048	0.0714	-0.0440
Edu: Higher Education	(0.0569)	(0.0446)	(0.0575)	(0.0504)
Union Member ×	-0.0053	-0.0757	0.0385	-0.0324
Edu: Postgraduate	(0.0582)	(0.0511)	(0.0572)	(0.0558)
Union Member ×	0.0425	0.0520**	0.0058	-0.0190
Unemployed	(0.0291)	(0.0246)	(0.0292)	(0.0301)
Union Member ×	-0.0014	-0.0181	0.0063	-0.0169
In Manufacturing Industry	(0.0234)	(0.0196)	(0.0237)	(0.0241)
(A+B) Linear Combination of Coefficients:				
Effect for union members	0.0441***	0.0032	0.0125	-0.0120
	(0.0168)	(0.0110)	(0.0111)	(0.0212)
Observations	235243	195601	193448	221743
Control Variables	Y	Y	Y	Y
Fixed Effects	Y	Y	Y	Y
Adjusted R2	0.0373	0.0410	0.0234	0.0413

Notes: Bootstrapped standard errors clustered by county. * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01. Controls include year and county fixed effects, the total number of TAA affected workers and petition denial rate of petitions investigated in a given time period. They also include includes lagged measures of the China Shock as well as the robot-adoption shock. Our bureaucratic delays measure is orthogonal to other confounders as demonstrated in AppendixA. The baseline for the race variable is white, and incomplete secondary education for the education variable.

Table E4: Full Results for Figure 4

	Dependent Variables:		
	Internationalism	*Against Immigration*	*Domestic Rights*
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Union Member	0.0011	-0.0463	0.1200
	(0.0973)	(0.1309)	(0.0869)
(A) TAA Bureaucratic Delays	0.0202**	0.0108	-0.0036
	(0.0088)	(0.0125)	(0.0084)
(B) TAA Bureaucratic Delays x	-0.0480***	-0.0078	-0.0004
Union Member	(0.0132)	(0.0189)	(0.0122)
log(TAA Affected Workers+1)	0.0002	-0.0028	-0.0016
	(0.0040)	(0.0055)	(0.0036)
Petition Denial Rate	-0.0089	0.0127	-0.0127
	(0.0213)	(0.0286)	(0.0208)
Age	-0.0019***	0.0001	0.0008**
	(0.0004)	(0.0005)	(0.0004)
Male	0.0165	-0.0457***	0.0062
	(0.0125)	(0.0162)	(0.0108)
Race: Black	-0.0366	0.0044	-0.0224
	(0.0242)	(0.0339)	(0.0225)
Race: Hispanic	-0.0713***	-0.0452	0.0052
	(0.0255)	(0.0383)	(0.0274)
Race: Asian	0.0091	0.0200	-0.0371
	(0.0412)	(0.0509)	(0.0463)
Race: Other	-0.0093	-0.0623*	0.0472*
	(0.0268)	(0.0355)	(0.0267)
Edu: Secondary Education	-0.0193	-0.0510	-0.0007
	(0.0399)	(0.0387)	(0.0288)
Edu: Higher Education	0.0115	-0.0497	0.0109
	(0.0398)	(0.0398)	(0.0300)
Edu: Postgraduate	0.0105	-0.0066	-0.0134
	(0.0406)	(0.0438)	(0.0348)
Unemployed	-0.1534***	-0.0011	0.0274
	(0.0206)	(0.0234)	(0.0177)
In Manufacturing Industry	0.0326*	0.0301	-0.0256*
	(0.0177)	(0.0195)	(0.0155)
Union Member ×	-0.0067	-0.0003	-0.0001
log(TAA Affected Workers+1)	(0.0068)	(0.0088)	(0.0050)

Union Member ×	-0.0508	-0.0446	0.0140
Petition Denial Rate	(0.0326)	(0.0422)	(0.0316)
Union Member ×	0.0005	-0.0024**	0.0001
Age	(0.0007)	(0.0010)	(0.0006)
Union Member ×	-0.0412**	0.0825***	-0.0557***
Male	(0.0202)	(0.0262)	(0.0193)
Union Member ×	0.1181***	0.0757*	0.0493**
Race: Black	(0.0341)	(0.0402)	(0.0237)
Union Member ×	0.1056**	0.1527**	-0.0685*
Race: Hispanic	(0.0425)	(0.0594)	(0.0357)
Union Member ×	0.1466	0.0276	-0.0736
Race: Asian	(0.1022)	(0.0971)	(0.0710)
Union Member ×	-0.0157	0.1736***	-0.1313***
Race: Other	(0.0493)	(0.0620)	(0.0428)
Union Member ×	-0.0513	0.1611	-0.0375
Edu: Secondary Education	(0.0731)	(0.1065)	(0.0642)
Union Member ×	-0.0817	0.0663	0.0376
Edu: Higher Education	(0.0783)	(0.1092)	(0.0633)
Union Member ×	-0.0753	-0.0547	0.1043
Edu: Postgraduate	(0.0799)	(0.1128)	(0.0695)
Union Member ×	0.0414	0.0845	-0.0482
Unemployed	(0.0419)	(0.0528)	(0.0378)
Union Member ×	-0.0419	0.0107	-0.0194
In Manufacturing Industry	(0.0322)	(0.0339)	(0.0268)
Linear Combination of Coefficients:			
(A+B) Effect for union members	-0.0279**	0.0030	-0.0040
	(0.0128)	(0.0192)	(0.0122)
Observations	204784	102870	182749
Control Variables	Y	Y	Y
Fixed Effects	Y	Y	Y
Adjusted R2	0.0255	0.0209	0.0552

Notes: Bootstrapped standard errors clustered by county. * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01. Controls include year and county fixed effects, the total number of TAA affected workers and petition denial rate of petitions investigated in a given time period. They also include includes lagged measures of the China Shock as well as the robot-adoption shock. Our bureaucratic delays measure is orthogonal to other confounders as demonstrated in AppendixA. The baseline for the race variable is white, and incomplete secondary education for the education variable.

F Additional Results Based on CCES Survey data

Table F1: Effect of TAA Bureaucratic Delays on Individuals' Attitudes (Internationalism Index)

	Dependent Variables: Opinions				
	Protect allies	***Intervene terrorism***	***Spread democracy***	***Uphold int. law***	***Intervene genocide***
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Union Member	-0.0233	-0.0045	0.0533**	-0.0192	-0.0046
	(0.0303)	(0.0321)	(0.0244)	(0.0315)	(0.0337)
TAA Bureaucratic Delays	0.0069***	0.0048*	0.0021	0.0025	0.0033
	(0.0025)	(0.0027)	(0.0029)	(0.0033)	(0.0033)
TAA Bureaucratic Delays x	-0.0137***	-0.0091**	-0.0065*	-0.0114**	-0.0078*
union member	(0.0040)	(0.0042)	(0.0037)	(0.0047)	(0.0047)
Effect for union members	-0.0068*	-0.0043	-0.0044	-0.0090**	-0.0045
	(0.0037)	(0.0040)	(0.0033)	(0.0045)	(0.0046)
Observations	204784	204784	204784	204784	204784
Control Variables	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Fixed Effects	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Adjusted R2	0.0121	0.0117	0.0117	0.0175	0.0247

Notes: Bootstrapped standard errors clustered by county. * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01. Controls include year and county fixed effects, the total number of TAA affected workers and petition denial rate of petitions investigated in a given time period. They also include includes lagged measures of the China Shock as well as the robot-adoption shock. Our bureaucratic delays measure is orthogonal to other confounders as demonstrated in AppendixA.

Table F2: Effect of TAA Bureaucratic Delays on Individuals' Attitudes (Immigration Index)

	Dependent Variables: Opinions		
	Prevent Legal Status	*Fine Business*	*Increase Border Patrols*
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Union Member	-0.0553*	0.0027	0.0091
	(0.0327)	(0.0416)	(0.0344)
TAA Bureaucratic Delays	0.0002	0.0083**	0.0012
	(0.0041)	(0.0042)	(0.0037)
TAA Bureaucratic Delays x union member	0.0031	-0.0073	-0.0028
	(0.0051)	(0.0073)	(0.0055)
Effect for union members	0.0034	0.0010	-0.0016
	(0.0054)	(0.0069)	(0.0055)
Observations	187058	102870	187058
Control Variables	Y	Y	Y
Fixed Effects	Y	Y	Y
Adjusted R2	0.0202	0.0111	0.0151

Notes: Bootstrapped standard errors clustered by county. * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01. Controls include year and county fixed effects, the total number of TAA affected workers and petition denial rate of petitions investigated in a given time period. They also include includes lagged measures of the China Shock as well as the robot-adoption shock. Our bureaucratic delays measure is orthogonal to other confounders as demonstrated in AppendixA.

Table F3: Effect of TAA Bureaucratic Delays on Individuals' Attitudes (Domestic Rights Index)

	Dependent Variables: Opinions		
	Abortion	*Affirmative Action*	*Gay Marriage*
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Union Member	0.0876***	-0.0119	0.0219
	(0.0297)	(0.0312)	(0.0291)
TAA Bureaucratic Delays	-0.0012	0.0005	-0.0012
	(0.0031)	(0.0031)	(0.0060)
TAA Bureaucratic Delays x union member	-0.0043	0.0011	-0.0024
	(0.0046)	(0.0045)	(0.0056)
Effect for union members	-0.0056	0.0016	-0.0036
	(0.0046)	(0.0041)	(0.0066)
Observations	238705	204833	221694
Control Variables	Y	Y	Y
Fixed Effects	Y	Y	Y
Adjusted R2	0.0533	0.0311	0.0407

Notes: Bootstrapped standard errors clustered by county. * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01. Controls include year and county fixed effects, the total number of TAA affected workers and petition denial rate of petitions investigated in a given time period. They also include includes lagged measures of the China Shock as well as the robot-adoption shock. Our bureaucratic delays measure is orthogonal to other confounders as demonstrated in AppendixA.

Table F4: Differential Effects of TAA Bureaucrat-Driven Delays By Union Membership Among White And Non-White CCES Respondents

	White	Non-White	Difference between (1) and (2)
Dependent Variables:	(1)	(2)	
Internationalism Index	-0.0466***	-0.0541**	0.0076
	(0.0153)	(0.0253)	(0.0296)
Against Immigration Index	-0.0022	-0.0312	0.0290
	(0.0208)	(0.0382)	(0.0414)
Domestic Rights Index	-0.0092	0.0312	-0.0404
	(0.0136)	(0.0271)	(0.0303)
Disapproval Rating of the President	0.0631***	0.0835***	-0.0204
	(0.0144)	(0.0257)	(0.0293)
Disapproval Rating of Senators	0.0110	-0.0026	0.0137
	(0.0109)	(0.0210)	(0.0244)
Disapproval Rating of the House Representative	0.0164	-0.0002	0.0166
	(0.0128)	(0.0206)	(0.0246)
Disapproval Rating of the Governor	0.0136	0.0151	-0.0015
	(0.0140)	(0.0260)	(0.0279)

Notes: Bootstrapped standard errors clustered by county. * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01. Controls include year and county fixed effects, the total number of TAA affected workers and petition denial rate of petitions investigated in a given time period. They also include includes lagged measures of the China Shock as well as the robot-adoption shock. Our bureaucratic delays measure is orthogonal to other confounders as demonstrated in AppendixA.

G Results Based on ANES Survey Data

Table G1 presents the results using indices based on individual questions as outcome variables. Notably, only one question captures individuals' attitudes toward international involvement, specifically their position on national isolationism. The list of questions used to create the indices, along with their summary statistics, is available in Tables 2 and H4. All dependent variables, as well as the TAA bureaucratic delays measure, are standardized.

The model specification is the same as the model (4) except that the unit of analysis is congressional district $\times$ year. We construct congressional district $\times$ year-level delay measures based on petitions investigated in a given congressional district and year, calculating the average delays for these petitions weighted by the number of TAA affected workers at the congressional district $\times$ year level.

The results in Table G1 are consistent with findings based on the CCES. Substantively, a one-standard deviation increase in TAA bureaucratic delays (103 days) corresponds to approximately a 4 percent decrease in union members' support for isolationism and a 10 percent decrease in the government trust index. Similar results are observed when individual questionnaires are used as outcome variables, as reported in Table G2.

In contrast, column (1) of Table G1 and columns (1) and (2) of Table G2 suggest that TAA bureaucratic delays do not significantly reduce support for free trade among union members, which reduces statistical power. This may partly be due to a significantly smaller number of respondents to trade-related questionnaires. The null results could also be attributed to union members in our sample having stronger opposition to trade liberalization compared to non-unionized individuals. If these union members are already strongly opposed to trade liberalization, additional information about TAA bureaucratic delays is less likely to have a significant impact on their attitudes toward trade policies.

Table G1: Effect of TAA Bureaucratic Delays on Individuals' Attitudes (Indices)

	Dependent Variables:				
	Government Trust	Against Isolationism	Trade	Against Immigration	Domestic Rights
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Union Member	-0.2421	0.2018*	-0.6711	0.1231	-0.1399
	(0.3048)	(0.1034)	(0.4582)	(0.2347)	(0.3845)
TAA Bureaucratic Delays	-0.0438	-0.0102	0.0222	0.0314	0.0012
	(0.0375)	(0.0137)	(0.0770)	(0.0251)	(0.0435)
TAA Bureaucratic Delays ×	-0.0476	-0.0363*	-0.0269	-0.0572	0.0373
Union Member	(0.0462)	(0.0220)	(0.0906)	(0.0380)	(0.0608)
Linear Combination of Coefficients:					
Effect for union members	-0.0914*	-0.0465*	-0.0048	-0.0257	0.0386
	(0.0538)	(0.0253)	(0.1129)	(0.0446)	(0.0715)
Observations	10965	11607	4321	9604	8228
Control Variables	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Fixed Effects	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Adjusted R2	0.0437	0.0133	0.0168	0.0208	0.1464

Notes: Bootstrapped standard errors clustered by county. * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01. Controls include year and county fixed effects, the total number of TAA affected workers and petition denial rate of petitions investigated in a given time period. They also include includes lagged measures of the China Shock as well as the robot-adoption shock. Our bureaucratic delays measure is orthogonal to other confounders as demonstrated in AppendixA.

Table G2: Effect of TAA Bureaucratic Delays on Individuals' Attitudes (Questions)

	Dependent Variables:						
	Trade Index		Domestic Rights Index			Government Trust Index	
	Against Import Limits	Support Outsourc-ing	Support Abortion	Support Affirmative Actions	Feelings Toward Gay People	Gov benefit all people vs run by a few	Gov don't waste money
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Union Member	-0.3827*	-0.0843	-0.1790	0.1130	-0.0149	-0.0131	-0.0511
	(0.1978)	(0.1646)	(0.1390)	(0.1330)	(0.0754)	(0.1351)	(0.0455)
TAA Bureaucratic Delays	0.0007	0.0156	0.0007	-0.0086	0.0000	-0.0266*	-0.0004
	(0.0258)	(0.0253)	(0.0186)	(0.0132)	(0.0087)	(0.0151)	(0.0051)
TAA Bureacratic Delays ×	-0.0358	-0.0195	-0.0067	0.0056	0.0153	0.0089	-0.0141*
Union Member	(0.0377)	(0.0305)	(0.0257)	(0.0212)	(0.0136)	(0.0205)	(0.0074)
Linear Combination of Coefficients:							
Effect for union members	-0.0351	-0.0039	-0.0060	-0.0030	0.0153	-0.0177	-0.0145*
	(0.0425)	(0.0361)	(0.0326)	(0.0216)	(0.0158)	(0.0229)	(0.0088)
Observations	4858	8433	9570	10202	10337	10995	11209
Fixed Effects	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Control Variables	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Adjusted R2	0.0339	0.0104	0.0890	0.0964	0.0997	0.0870	0.0029

Notes: Bootstrapped standard errors clustered by county. * p<0.10, ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01. Controls include year and county fixed effects, the total number of TAA affected workers and petition denial rate of petitions investigated in a given time period. They also include includes lagged measures of the China Shock as well as the robot-adoption shock. Our bureaucratic delays measure is orthogonal to other confounders as demonstrated in AppendixA.

Table G3: Differential Effects of TAA Bureaucrat-Driven Delays By Union Membership Among White And Non-White ANES Respondents

	White	Non-White	Difference between (1) and (2)
Dependent Variables:	(1)	(2)	
Government Trust Index	-0.0363	-0.0780	0.0417
	(0.0490)	(0.0930)	(0.1018)
Against Isolationism	-0.0465*	-0.0091	-0.0373
	(0.0255)	(0.0427)	(0.0491)
Trade Index	0.0201	-0.0847	0.1048
	(0.1175)	(0.1744)	(0.2233)
Against Immigration Index	-0.0728*	-0.0203	-0.0526
	(0.0430)	(0.0757)	(0.0871)
Domestic Rights Index	0.0626	-0.0374	0.1000
	(0.0725)	(0.1139)	(0.1373)

Notes: Bootstrapped standard errors clustered by county. * $p<0.10$, ** $p<0.05$, *** $p<0.01$. Controls include year and county fixed effects, the total number of TAA affected workers and petition denial rate of petitions investigated in a given time period. They also include includes lagged measures of the China Shock as well as the robot-adoption shock. Our bureaucratic delays measure is orthogonal to other confounders as demonstrated in AppendixA.

H Survey Questionnaires and Summary Statistics

Table H1: CCES Survey Questionnaires

Description	Question	Options	Value
Internationalism Index			
1. Military use for allies	For each of the following reasons, would you approve of the use of U.S. military troops? Please check all that apply: To protect American allies under attack by foreign nations	No Yes	0 1
2. Military use for democracy	For each of the following reasons, would you approve of the use of U.S. military troops? Please check all that apply: To assist the spread of democracy	No Yes	0 1
3. Military use for international laws	For each of the following reasons, would you approve of the use of U.S. military troops? Please check all that apply: To help the United Nations uphold international law	No Yes	0 1
4. Military use to destroy terrorists	For each of the following reasons, would you approve of the use of U.S. military troops? Please check all that apply: To destroy a terrorist camp	No Yes	0 1

5. Military use against genocide	For each of the following reasons, would you approve of the use of U.S. military troops? Please check all that apply: To intervene in a region where there is genocide or a civil war	No Yes	0 1
Againt Immigration			
1. Fine businesses hiring immigrants	What do you think the U.S. government should do about immigration? Select all that apply. Fine U.S. businesses that hire illegal immigrants.	No Yes	0 1
2. Prevent legal status to illegal aliens	What do you think the U.S. government should do about immigration? Select all that apply. Grant legal status to all illegal immigrants who have held jobs and paid taxes for at least 3 years, and not been convicted of any felony crimes.	Yes No	0 1
3. Increase the number of border patrols	What do you think the U.S. government should do about immigration? Select all that apply. Increase the number of border patrols on the U.S.-Mexican border.	No Yes	0 1

Domestic Rights Index

1. Support for abortion	(2006, 2007) There has been some discussion about abortion during recent years. Which one of the opinions on this page best agrees with your view on this issue?	By law, abortion should never be permitted	0
		The law should permit abortion only in case of rape, incest, or when the woman's life is in danger	0
		The law should permit abortion for reasons other than rape, incest, or danger to the woman's life, but only after the need for the abortion has been clearly established	0
		By law, a woman should always be able to obtain an abortion as a matter of personal choice	1
	(2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013) Which one of the opinions on this page best agrees with your view on this issue?	By law, abortion should never be permitted	0
		The law should permit abortion only in case of rape, incest, or when the woman's life is in danger	0
		The law should permit abortion for reasons other than rape, incest, or danger to the woman's life, but only after the need for the abortion has been clearly established	0
		By law, a woman should always be able to obtain an abortion as a matter of personal choice	1

	(2014, 2015, 2016) Do you support or oppose each of the following proposals?: Always allow a woman to obtain an abortion as a matter of choice	Oppose/(2014) Against Support/(2014) For	0 1
2. Support for affirmative action	Affirmative action programs give preference to racial minorities [2008: and to women] in employment and college admissions in order to correct for discrimination. Do you support or oppose affirmative action?	Strongly oppose Somewhat oppose Somewhat support Strongly support	0 0 1 1
	(2006, 2007) Some people think that if a company has a history of discriminating against blacks when making hiring decisions, then they should be required to have an affirmative action program that gives blacks preference in hiring. What do you think? Should companies that have discriminated against blacks have to have an affirmative action program?	(7) Strongly oppose (6) (5) (4) (3) (2) (1) Strongly support	0 0 0 1 1 1 1
	(2015) Affirmative action programs give preference to specific types of people in employment and college admissions. Do you support or oppose affirmative action for the following groups or reasons?: For Blacks and Hispanics	Oppose Support	0 1

3. Support for gay marriage	Do you support a Constitutional Amendment banning gay marriage?	No Yes	0 1
	(2006, 2007) President Bush recently spoke out in favor of a Constitutional Amendment defining marriage as strictly between a man and a woman. Do you support or oppose a Constitutional amendment banning gay marriage?	Strongly oppose Somewhat oppose Somewhat support Strongly support	0 0 1 1
Individuals' Characteristics			
Union members	Do you or have you ever belonged to a labor union?	Never have belonged to a labor union Past member Current member (2006: please specify which union):	0 1 1
Union household	Does anyone in your household belong to a labor union?	Never have belonged to a labor union Past member Current member (2006: please specify which union):	0 1 1
	(2008) Are you or a member of your household members of a union?	I am not a union member and no one in my household is a union member I am not a union member but someone else in my household is I am a union member and no one else in my household is in a union	0 1 1

		I am a union member and someone else in my household is too	1
Race	What racial or ethnic group best describes you?	White	1
		Black	2
		Hispanic	3
		Asian	4
		Other	5
Education	What is the highest level of education you have completed?	Did not graduate from high school	0
		High school graduate	1
		Some college, but no degree (yet)	1
		2-year college degree	2
		4-year college degree	2
		Post-graduate degree (MA, MBA, MD, JD, PhD, etc.)	3
Birth year	In what year were you born?		
Employment status	Which of the following best describes your current employment status?	Unemployed	0
		Temporarily laid off	0
		Working part time now	1
		Working full time now	1
		Retired	2
		Permanently disabled	2
		Taking care of home or family	2
		Student	2
	(2006) What is your current employment status?	Unemployed	0
		Temporarily laid off	0
		Working part time now	1
		Working full time now	1

		Retired	2
		Permanently disabled	2
		Taking care of home or family	2
		Student	2
Ideology	Thinking about politics these days, how would you describe your own political viewpoint?	Very liberal	1
		Liberal	2
		Moderate	3
		Conservative	4
		Very conservative	5
	Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a ...?	Democrat	1
		Republican	2
		Independent	3
		Other (Specify) [Open]	3
Political interest	Some people seem to follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, whether there's an election going on or not. Others aren't that interested. Would you say you follow what's going on in government and public affairs...?	Hardly at all	0
		Only now and then	0
		Some of the time	0
		Most of the time	1
	(2006, 2007, 2008) How interested are you in politics and current affairs?	Not sure	0
		Not much interested	0
		Somewhat interested	0
		Very much interested	1
Disapproval Ratings			
1. President	Do you approve of the way each is doing their job...:President	Strongly approve	1
		Somewhat approve	2
		Somewhat disapprove	3
		Strongly disapprove	4

	(2006, 2007) Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?	Strongly approve Somewhat approve Somewhat disapprove Strongly disapprove	1 2 3 4
2. Senate	Do you approve of the way each is doing their job...:Senate	Strongly approve Somewhat approve Somewhat disapprove Strongly disapprove	1 2 3 4
	(2006, 2007) Do you approve or disapprove of the way [Senator] is handling [his/her] job as U.S. Senator for [State]?	Strongly approve Somewhat approve Somewhat disapprove Strongly disapprove	1 2 3 4
3. House Representative	Do you approve of the way each is doing their job...:House Representative	Strongly approve Somewhat approve Somewhat disapprove Strongly disapprove	1 2 3 4
	(2006, 2007) Do you approve or disapprove of the way [Representative] handles [his/her] job as a member of Congress?	Strongly approve Somewhat approve Somewhat disapprove Strongly disapprove	1 2 3 4
4. Governor	Do you approve of the way each is doing their job...:The Governor of State	Strongly approve Somewhat approve Somewhat disapprove Strongly disapprove	1 2 3 4
	(2006, 2007) Do you approve or disapprove of the way [Governor] is handling [his/her] job as Governor of [State]?	Strongly approve Somewhat approve Somewhat disapprove Strongly disapprove	1 2 3 4

Table H2: ANES Survey Questionnaires

Description	Question	Options	Value
Domestic Rights Index			
1. Support for Abortion	There has been some discussion about abortion during recent years. Which one of the opinions on this page best agrees with your view?	By law, abortion should never be permitted	0
		The law should permit abortion only in case of rape, incest, or when the woman's life is in danger	0
		The law should permit abortion other than for rape/incest/danger to woman but only after need clearly established	0
		By law, a woman should always be able to obtain an abortion as a matter of personal choice	1
2. Support for Affirmative Action	(1992, 1994, 1996, 1998) Some people say that because of past discrimination, blacks should be given preference in hiring and promotion. Others say that such preference in hiring and promotion of blacks is wrong because it gives blacks advantages they haven't earned. What about your opinion–are you for or against preferential hiring and promotion of blacks?	Against	0
		For	1

	(2000, 2002) Some people think that if a company has a history of discriminating against blacks when making hiring decisions, then they should be required to have an affirmative action program that gives blacks preference in hiring. What do you think? Should companies that have discriminated against blacks have to have an affirmative action program?	No, they should not have to have affirmative action Yes, they should have to have affirmative action	0 1
	(2004, 2008, 2012, 2016, 2020) What about your opinion - are you for or against preferential hiring and promotion of blacks?	Against preferential hiring and promotion of Blacks For preferential hiring and promotion of Blacks	0 1
3. Support for Gay	How would you rate: Gay men and lesbians (Feeling Thermometer)	Not favorable Favorable	0 100
Internationalism Index			
1. Support for Isolationism	Do you agree or disagree with this statement: This country would be better off if we just stayed home and did not concern ourselves with problems in other parts of the world	Disagree Agree	0 1

Trade Index			
1. Support for Import Limit	Some people have suggested placing new limits on foreign imports in order to protect American jobs. Others say that such limits would raise consumer prices and hurt American exports. Do you favor or oppose placing new limits on imports?)	Oppose Favor	0 1
2. Support for Outsourcing	Recently, some big American companies have been hiring workers in foreign countries to replace workers in the U.S. Do you think the federal government should discourage companies from doing this, encourage companies to do this, or stay out of this matter?	Discourage companies Should stay out of this matter Encourage companies	1 2 3
Government Trust Index			
1. Self-interest vs. Benefit of People	Would you say the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves or that it is run for the benefit of all the people?	Gov't run by a few big interests Gov't run for the benefit of all	0 1
2. Waste Tax Money	Do you think that people in government [waste a lot of the money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or dont waste very much of it / dont waste very much of the money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or waste a lot of it]?	A lot Some Not very much	0 0 1

Against Immigration			
1. Against Immigration	Do you think the number of immigrants from foreign countries who are permitted to come to the United States to live should be increased, decreased, or left the same as it is now?	Increase a lot Increase a little Left the same as it is now Decrease a little Decrease a lot	1 1 2 3 3
Individuals' Characteristics			
Union Household	Do you or anyone else in this household belong to a labor union?	No Yes	0 1
Union Members	Who is it that belongs?	Other family member/s Respondent	0 1
Race	What racial or ethnic group or groups best describes you?	White Black Hispanic Asian Other	1 2 3 4 5
Education	What is highest grade of school or year of college you have completed? Did you get a high school diploma or pass a high school equivalency test? What is the highest degree that you have earned?	8 grade or less and no diploma or equivalency 9-12 grades, no further schooling High school diploma or equivalency test 13+grades, no degree Junior or community college level degrees (AA degrees) BA level degrees Advanced degree, including LLB	0 0 1 1 2 2 3

	(2012, 2016, 2020) What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?	Less than high school High school credential Some post-high school, no bachelor's degree Bachelor's degree Graduate degree	0 1 1 2 3
Age	Respondent Age		
Gender	Respondent gender	Female Male	0 1
Employment Status	Respondent work status	Unemployed Temporarily laid off Working now Retired Permanently disabled Homemaker Student	0 0 1 0 0 0 0

Table H3: Summary Statistics

	Average	Sd.	Min	Max	N
A. TAA Petition Data					
Congressional District×Year-Level Variables					
TAA bureaucrat-driven petition delays	-144.37	72.02	-332.93	143.76	243160
TAA bureaucrat-driven petition delays (approved)	-144.29	73.65	-332.93	143.76	228430
TAA bureaucrat-driven petition delays (denied)	-140.10	74.96	-310.52	143.76	133906
Index of internationalism (residualized)	0.00	1.37	-3.00	3.38	317520
Index of immigration (residualized)	0.00	1.27	-2.91	3.22	166908
Index of domestic rights (residualized)	0.00	1.12	-2.90	2.44	275698
Residualized opinion on prevent legal tatus to illegal aliens	0.00	0.49	-0.92	0.98	291526
Residualized opinion on fining businesses that hire immigratns	0.00	0.46	-0.84	0.96	166908
Residualized opinion on increasing border patrols	0.00	0.48	-0.78	0.91	291526
Residualized opinion on military intervention for allies	0.00	0.43	-0.92	0.56	317520
Residualized opinion onmilitary intervention for democracy	0.00	0.38	-0.53	0.90	317520
Residualized opinion on military intervention for international laws	0.00	0.49	-0.88	0.75	317520
Residualized opinion on military intervention against terrorist	0.00	0.46	-0.86	0.77	317520
Residualized opinion on military intervention against genocide	0.00	0.49	-0.60	0.93	317520
Residualized opinion on abortion	0.00	0.49	-0.82	0.81	369414
Residualized opinion on affirmative actions	0.00	0.45	-1.02	0.85	308530
Residualized opinion on gay marriage	0.00	0.49	-0.92	0.77	344006
Disapproval Rating for the President	0.00	1.15	-2.68	2.75	363571
Disapproval Rating for Senators	0.00	0.87	-1.85	1.91	297186

Disapproval Rating for the House representative	0.00	1.01	-1.66	1.96	296326
Disapproval Rating for the Governor	0.00	1.06	-2.36	1.72	340692
Labor union strength (continuous CBA)	112.96	273.99	0.00	2521.00	374545
Union membership	0.28	0.45	0.00	1.00	373237
Estimated TAA-affected workers	630.70	1171.93	1.00	13991.00	243160
Proportion of petition denial	0.20	0.27	0.00	1.00	243160
Age	49.92	16.15	18.00	109.00	374545
Gender of respondent	-0.53	0.50	-1.00	0.00	374545
Race of respondent	1.50	1.03	1.00	5.00	374545
Level of education	1.53	0.74	0.00	3.00	374478
Unemployment rate	0.07	0.26	0.00	1.00	374319
Manufacturing employment	0.10	0.30	0.00	1.00	374545
District import penetration, US-China (period diff.)	0.70	0.52	-0.26	6.08	368857
Robot automation shocks	1.16	1.01	0.14	6.51	368857

Table H4: Summary Statistics (ANES)

Variables	Mean	SD	Min	Max	N
TAA bureaucrat-driven petition delays	-116.64	103.61	-310.52	163.97	13456
TAA bureaucrat-driven petition delays (approved)	-114.62	106.52	-310.52	163.97	12547
TAA bureaucrat-driven petition delays (denied)	-100.40	105.82	-310.52	163.97	7851
Trade index (residualized)	0.00	1.10	-1.81	3.58	5998
Government trust index (residualized)	0.00	1.07	-1.51	5.71	15076
Domestic rights index (residualized)	0.00	1.15	-2.98	3.19	11465
Residualized opinion against immigration	0.00	0.67	-1.63	1.40	13358
Residualized opinion on import limits	0.00	0.47	-0.79	1.03	6806
Residualized opinion on firm outsourcing	0.00	0.54	-1.04	1.80	11712
Residualized opinion against isolationism	0.00	0.45	-0.93	0.69	15955
Residualized opinion on abortion	0.00	0.49	-0.76	0.93	13368
Residualized opinion on affirmative actions	0.00	0.40	-0.88	0.96	14045
Residualized opinion towards gay people	0.00	0.26	-0.78	0.70	14226
Residualized opinion on the government benefitting people	0.00	0.43	-0.68	0.90	15131
Residualized opinion on the government not wasting money	0.00	0.16	-0.36	1.01	15420
Union membership	0.07	0.25	0.00	1.00	16177
Level of education	1.42	0.82	0.00	3.00	16758
Gender of respondent	0.46	0.50	0.00	1.00	16834
Unemployed	0.41	0.49	0.00	1.00	15653
Union membership	0.07	0.25	0.00	1.00	16177
Estimated TAA-affected workers	478.48	739.54	1.00	9113.00	13456
Proportion of petition denial	0.25	0.29	0.00	1.00	13456
Age	48.78	17.12	17.00	99.00	16640
Gender of respondent	0.46	0.50	0.00	1.00	16834
Race of respondent	1.62	1.03	1.00	5.00	16617
Level of education	1.42	0.82	0.00	3.00	16758
Local Import Shocks	6.25	8.04	0.08	62.45	16469
Local Robot Automation Shocks	4.00	4.54	0.26	27.20	15946

I Union Interviews

To begin, we submitted an application for an IRB approval for the interviews. The IRB staff at our universities concluded that our study does not meet the definition of human subjects research per 45 CFR 46.102 (e)(1), as the project does not include information or biospecimens obtained through intervention or interaction with the individuals, and does not use, study, or analyze information or biospecimens or does not obtain, use, study, analyze, or generate identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens.

After obtaining IRB approval, we conducted interviews with union representatives and union members to better understand the role of labor unions in facilitating information sharing between their members. We followed current best practices for conducting interviews (e.g., Mosley 2019; Berg and Ternullo 2025), and we also integrated best practices related to sampling in causal inference research (Gerber and Green 2012), since our goal was to examine the role of unions in local areas affected by bureaucratic delays in the TAA program.

We first selected a sub-sample of cases using a stratified sampling approach, stratifying by state, right-to-work status, and collective bargaining agreement decile. This stratification ensured equal probabilities of selection into the sample across different local institutional arrangement that can influence the level of union power.

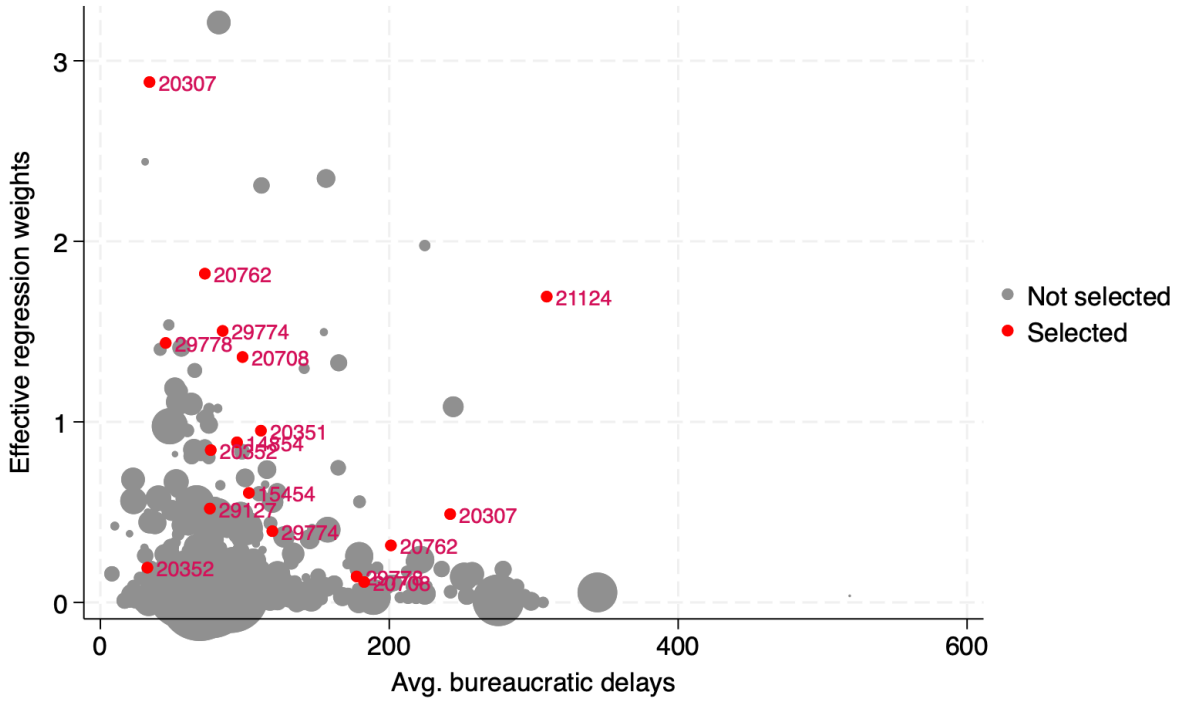
Second, we computed the effective regression weights from our regression (Aronow and Samii 2016), restricting our sample to the period 2013-2016 to avoid noise from redistricting, since the redistricting process occurred in the early 2010s. These regression weights are equivalent to the square of our estimated investigator fixed effects, aggregated at the state and legislator level. Cases with higher regression weights contribute more to the effect we identify in our main regressions.

Third, we restrict our sampling frame using the regression weights we identify and the average of petition delays at the congressional district level. Our goal was to find congressional districts with high levels of explanatory power (i.e., high regression weights) but with varying levels of petition delays—in the spirit of theoretical sampling and the mixed-methods approach (Timmermans and Tavory 2012; Bennett and Checkel 2015). We restricted ourselves to the top quartile of the distribution of effective regression weights, dropping outliers (or areas with petition delays above 250 days), to boost power and address biased case selection (Seawright and Gerring 2008).

All in all, our procedure generated variation in the extent to which our sample is exposed to petition delays, with variation also in the level of treatment uptake within period and overtime. The sample we construct exhibits both cross-sectional and time variation by construction.

Fourth, having selected our cases—which are displayed in red in Figure I1—we find the corresponding congressional districts for the period 2013-2022 (Table I1). We check for robustness to path dependence by performing a similar analysis as above, but first restricting our sample and then obtaining the stratified sample, but we do not find evidence for path dependency. We also perform a similar analysis using congressional districts as the unit of aggregation, but our sampling exercise returns similar results.

Figure I1: Sampled cases



Notes: Each case is a legislator-congressional district pair. Each point is weighted by the average number of union members for the period of analysis.

From Table I1, we randomly sampled four congressional districts: Florida 14th, Tennessee 7th, Texas 5th, New Jersey 6th, and California 13th and 22nd. Each district differs in terms of whether the state has right-to-work laws, the average annual number of workers affected by TAA, and the average reported number of annual collective bargaining agreements, providing evidence for institutional variation.

Within the districts selected, we compiled a comprehensive list of local labor unions that are known to be associated with manufacturing industries, and reached out to union representatives or members of these labor unions from March to May 2025. Table below shows the date on which interviews to the unions were conducted.

Table I1: Sampled congressional districts, 2013-2016

state	districts	right to work law	annual average labor union members	annual average population	annual average number of workers affected by TAA	annual average reported collective bargaining agreements
KY	5	0	11284	686364	317	0
CA	24	0	4907	725565	153	3
FL	14	1	22159	749053	77	5
TN	7	1	11451	749113	1416	5
TX	5	1	3462	719569	114	7
MN	7	0	5426	633176	361	8
CA	22	0	15805	734845	425	14
HI	1	0	93030	704784	125	46
CA	14	0	36111	739270	331	56
NJ	6	0	44491	686176	156	66
CA	13	0	383057	744265	36	120

Table I2: The List of Interviews Conducted

No.	State	CD	Interview Date	Recorded
1	FL	14	03/25/2025	Yes, Transcribed
2	FL	14	04/1/2025	Yes, Transcribed
3	CA	24	04/11/2025	Yes, Summarized
4	CA	24	04/17/2025	Yes, Summarized