
**THE CALCULUS OF COALITIONS:
CITIES AND STATES AND THE METROPOLITAN AGENDA**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cities are creations of their states. Their boundaries, their powers, and their responsibilities are all substantially prescribed by state law. With the advent of the new federalism—beginning in the 1970s and resurgent today—the devolution of power from Washington to state capitals has increased the importance of state decision making for cities.

Yet, this shift occurred precisely as cities were losing political clout in state legislatures due to population decline within city limits and rampant growth in suburban jurisdictions.

This paper argues that in response to shifting population distributions within states, cities need to build new coalitions to effectively achieve their legislative goals within state legislatures. Case studies—New York City, Chicago, Detroit, and the three largest cities in Ohio (Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Columbus)—are used to more closely examine coalition-building methods.

Overall, the authors find:

- **Cities' dependence on state government has increased as the federal government has ceded more power to the states.** As cities' populations have declined, they have become weaker in state legislatures that have grown more powerful due to federal policy. In the peak year of 1978, about 15 percent of city revenues came from the federal government. By 1999 that had decreased to 3 percent. Concurrently, the federal government has shifted a number of programs to the states, which control the rules and revenue mechanisms cities operate under.
- **Traditional political coalitions cities have used to achieve their state legislative goals are no longer as effective.** Partisan (usually Democratic) coalitions are less reliable as focus has shifted to suburban swing districts. Moreover, as their power has decreased, cities' agendas have become more reactive, aiming to preserve the status quo in funding, infrastructure projects, and autonomy.
- **Older, inner-ring suburbs are a logical new partner for cities in state legislatures.** Increasingly, these suburbs, and some outer ones, have common interests with central cities as they address immigration, fiscal stress, and infrastructure woes. Such alliances would also better address metropolitan-wide issues on a metropolitan basis.

There remain many obstacles to forging such coalitions, however, including longtime distrust among big cities and their neighbors, racial disparities, and in some cases, growing investment in central cities while surrounding suburbs languish. Nonetheless, for cities to effectively influence their state governments more creative approaches to coalition building must be found.

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THE CALCULUS OF COALITIONS: CITIES AND STATES AND THE METROPOLITAN AGENDA

I. INTRODUCTION

Throughout American history cities have lobbied their states in order to obtain funding and to protect or enhance their legal authority. States are responsible for the enabling legislation that determines city powers and resources; likewise issues crucial to the fate of cities are fought out each year in state legislatures. The importance of state decision making for cities increased with the new federalism of the 1970s and it has continued to grow as the federal government has delegated more responsibility to state governments in recent decades.

However, the enhanced importance of states comes at a time when cities have lost political strength in state legislatures. Once reliable urban strategies such as logrolling, coalitions with legislators from other distressed areas of the state, and control of the Democratic Party caucus are less effective in state legislatures as cities have lost population and as urban delegations have become less cohesive. As urban political strength has ebbed, a growing chorus of analysts has argued that cities can no longer go it alone and must engage in broader regional coalitions in order to thrive.

This paper examines the coalition-building strategies of central cities in state legislatures. In this way, it seeks to determine what cities want out of their state governments, i.e., what issues are at the top of their lobbying agenda and what methods or coalitional strategies they use to achieve their political goals. To do so, we examine four states in depth: Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, and New York.

This analysis finds that over the past decade, cities set defensive and reactive legislative priorities designed largely to preserve existing arrangements; urban leaders, especially mayors, showed little initiative in pressing for new regionalist ideas in these state legislatures. City leaders continued to rely heavily on older political strategies of logrolling and party caucus alliances. But as such strategies became less dependable, cities have looked to a much broader range of political alliances to win desired legislation.

Ultimately, we argue that their limited success suggests the need for more creative approaches to defining urban priorities in state legislatures and increased efforts to build common interests across geographical boundaries.

II. THE DEPENDENCE OF CITIES ON STATES

Legally, cities are creatures of state governments and therefore state laws powerfully impact what cities can and cannot do. According to Dillon's Rule, first enunciated in 1868 by Iowa Supreme Court Judge John F. Dillon, "Municipal corporations owe their origin to, and derive their powers and rights wholly from, the legislature."¹ As such, many have argued that cities are relatively powerless, requiring state permission to exercise essential governmental powers (Frug 1980, 1999; and Barron, 2003). While this assertion of "powerlessness" may be exaggerated, it is clear that states still exercise substantial authority over the legal affairs of cities. (Krane and Rigos, 2000),

Not only do cities depend on states for their legal powers, they also depend on states for the resources necessary to meet their responsibilities. State laws determine what services cities must provide and cities require the permission of states to impose many taxes, even on their own citizens. Research on the fiscal condition of cities provides ample evidence of the importance of states for cities. In their definitive analysis of urban fiscal conditions, Ladd and Yinger (1989) differentiate between the fiscal health of cities based on their socioeconomic condition and their "actual" fiscal health taking into account fiscal institutions, which are mostly determined by state laws.

With regard to revenue-raising capacity, the ability of cities to export some of their tax load is shaped by whether the state allows them to impose certain taxes, such as a commuter tax. Similarly, states can impose limits on city revenue sources, such as Proposition 13 in California or Proposition 2½ in Massachusetts, both of which limited local property tax collections. On the expenditure side, Ladd and Yinger observe, "The scope of a city's service responsibility is outside its control." State governments determine what services a city must provide, including the nonfederal portion of expensive social welfare programs, such as Medicaid. In short, both the revenue-raising capacity and the expenditure needs of cities are powerfully shaped by state policies.

Changes in American federalism since the 1970s have made cities even more dependent on states. First, federal aid to cities has fallen precipitously. At the peak, in 1978, about 15 percent of city revenues (over 25 percent in some big cities) came from federal aid. By 1999 federal aid was less than 3 percent of city revenues (Kincaid, 1998; Judd and Swanstrom, 2004). General revenue sharing on the federal level for cities died via congressional resolution in 1986 (Wallin, 1998). With looming federal deficits and both houses of Congress controlled by Republicans, there is little prospect for increased federal aid. Cities must turn to the states.

Devolution of federal programs also makes cities more dependent on states. The conversion of welfare from a national entitlement to a state block grant under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program means that during recessions, as the need for welfare spending

¹ Most states grant some type of authority to local governments to rule themselves. Dillon's Rule serves to guide courts in interpreting state grants of authority. (Richardson and others, 2003)

increases, cities cannot count on additional funding; it is up to state legislatures to provide it (Chernick and Reschovsky, 2001). With most states now facing huge deficits, the challenges become more difficult.

In short, there is ample evidence that the fates of cities depend crucially on the actions of their states and recent scholarly research on devolution suggests that cities are becoming even more dependent on state policies. Given the importance of states for cities, it is important to examine the strategies cities have used to influence their state governments.

III. CREATING MAJORITY LEGISLATIVE COALITIONS: THE CALCULUS OF COALITIONS

Overall, the nation's top 100 cities gained population in the 1990s; however, 28 of these cities lost residents or did not grow at all. Only five central cities experienced a true comeback, rebounding from 1980s population losses to a net gain in the 1990s.² No matter how strongly or weakly cities grew in population in the 1990s, their suburbs fared better. Although the top 100 cities grew by 9 percent as a whole, their suburbs grew twice as fast—by 18 percent. Suburban growth outpaced city growth in four out of every five metropolitan areas (Katz, 2003).

This trend has been occurring since the 1970s and, as a result, the political clout of cities in state legislatures has eroded. Most central cities have suffered a substantial decline as a share of their state's population over the past decades (see Table 1). In 37 states, the largest city declined as a share of the state population. The drop was particularly precipitous in some states. Chicago's share, for example, declined from 35.2 percent of Illinois' population in 1960 to 23.3 percent in 2000, Baltimore from 30.3 percent of Maryland's population to 12.3 percent, Detroit from 21.3 percent of Michigan's population to 9.6 percent, and Denver from 28.2 percent of Colorado's population to 12.9 percent.³

We also calculated the change in percent of the state population for all large cities (over 250,000 people). Many states with more than one large city also experienced substantial relative declines in the population of their large urban areas. Ohio's large cities declined from 28 percent of the state's population in 1960 to 16.2 percent in 2000, Missouri's from 28.4 percent to 14.1 percent, Minnesota's from 23.3 percent to 13.6 percent, and Pennsylvania's from 23 percent to 15.1 percent. As the table shows, even in 1960, most central cities were not close to a majority of their state's population.

To create majorities in state legislatures, large cities have always needed to add votes from representatives of other geographic areas. The reduction in city representatives since the 1960s has made efforts to construct majority coalitions even more challenging. For this reason, cities have employed a range of strategies to move from a minority situation in the legislature to create legislative majorities in support of city interests.

² Denver, Memphis, Atlanta, Chicago, and Yonkers

³ It is important to note that although the share of state population declined from 1960 to 2000 in places like Denver and Phoenix, these cities continued to grow during this time. Denver grew by 12.3 percent and Phoenix grew by over 200 percent from 1960 to 2000.

Table 1. Center City as a Percentage of State Population: 1960-2000

State	% of state pop. in largest central city			% of state pop. in cities>250k		
	1960	2000	% point difference	1960	2000	% point difference
1 Maryland	30.3	12.3	-18.0	30.3	12.3	-18.0
2 Hawaii	46.5	30.7	-15.8	46.5	30.7	-15.8
3 Colorado	28.2	12.9	-15.3	28.2	27.7	-0.5
4 Utah	21.3	8.1	-13.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
5 Delaware	21.5	9.3	-12.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
6 Illinois	35.2	23.3	-11.9	35.2	23.3	-11.9
7 Michigan	21.3	9.6	-11.7	21.3	9.6	-11.7
8 Washington	19.5	9.6	-10.0	19.5	9.6	-9.9
9 Missouri	17.4	7.9	-9.5	28.4	14.1	-14.3
10 Louisiana	19.3	10.8	-8.5	19.3	10.8	-8.5
11 Arizona	33.7	25.7	-8.0	33.7	35.2	1.5
12 Rhode Island	24.1	16.6	-7.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
13 Wisconsin	18.8	11.1	-7.6	18.8	11.1	-7.7
14 Georgia	12.4	5.1	-7.3	12.4	5.1	-7.3
15 Kentucky	12.9	6.4	-6.4	12.9	12.8	-0.1
15 Minnesota	14.1	7.8	-6.4	23.3	13.6	-9.7
17 New Hampshire	14.5	8.7	-5.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
18 Oregon	21.1	15.5	-5.6	21.1	15.5	-5.6
19 Pennsylvania	17.7	12.4	-5.3	23.0	15.1	-7.9
20 Alabama	10.4	5.5	-5.0	10.4	0.0	-10.4
21 California	15.8	10.9	-4.9	26.5	27.2	0.7
22 Massachusetts	13.5	9.3	-4.2	13.5	9.3	-4.2
22 New York	46.4	42.2	-4.2	51.4	43.7	-7.7
24 New Jersey	6.7	3.3	-3.4	11.2	3.3	-7.9
25 Ohio	9.0	6.3	-2.8	28.0	16.2	-11.9
26 Vermont	9.1	6.4	-2.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
27 Maine	7.5	5.0	-2.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
27 Tennessee	13.9	11.4	-2.5	13.9	21.4	7.5
27 Wyoming	13.2	10.7	-2.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
30 Connecticut	6.4	4.1	-2.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
31 Virginia	7.7	6.0	-1.7	7.7	6.0	-1.7
32 West Virginia	4.6	3.0	-1.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
33 Florida	5.9	4.6	-1.3	11.4	8.8	-2.7
34 South Carolina	4.1	2.9	-1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
35 Iowa	7.6	6.8	-0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
36 Texas	9.8	9.4	-0.4	29.6	31.9	2.3
37 Mississippi	6.6	6.5	-0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
38 Oklahoma	13.9	14.7	0.7	25.2	26.1	0.9
39 Arkansas	6.0	6.9	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
40 Kansas	11.7	12.8	1.1	11.7	12.8	1.1
41 Nebraska	21.4	22.8	1.4	21.4	22.8	1.4
41 Nevada	22.6	23.9	1.4	0.0	23.9	23.9
43 Montana	8.2	10.0	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
44 North Carolina	4.4	6.7	2.3	0.0	10.1	10.1
45 Indiana	10.2	13.0	2.8	10.2	13.0	2.8
46 New Mexico	21.2	24.7	3.5	0.0	24.7	24.7
47 North Dakota	7.4	14.1	6.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
48 South Dakota	9.6	16.4	6.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
49 Idaho	5.2	14.4	9.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
50 Alaska	19.6	41.5	22.0	0.0	41.5	41.5
TOTALS	15.8	12.4	-3.4	12.9	11.8	-1.1

Source: U.S. Census and authors' calculations

As noted above, central cities have always faced a fundamental political weakness when lobbying their states: they do not represent a majority of votes in the state legislature. With the exception of New York City, which had a majority of state population for a short period, central cities have rarely constituted a majority of votes and almost never a majority of seats in both houses of the state legislature. The minority status of cities was exacerbated by the under-representation of urban areas prior to *Baker v. Carr* in 1962.⁴ The implementation of “one man-one vote” came at a time when most cities were losing population to their suburbs and therefore probably benefited suburbs more than cities (Reichley, 1970; see also Burns and others, 2002).

Not only have central cities lacked a majority in state legislatures, many rural and small town legislators have mobilized their supporters by running *against* cities. The literature on the urban-rural divide in American politics is vast (see e.g., Derge, 1958 and Broach, 1972.) In *American State Politics* (1956) V.O. Key observed that the metropolitan/non-metropolitan electoral divide is greatest in states where one large city seems to dominate the state. Two examples are amply documented in the literature: New York and Illinois (Benjamin and Brecher, 1988; and Nardulli, 1989). Urban-rural conflicts complicate the coalitional efforts of cities.

Since cities never had a majority and they were viewed with hostility by many rural and small town legislators, they have had to rely on various coalitions in order to achieve any success in state legislatures. The coalitions can be grouped into the following categories:

1. *Party-Imposed Coalitions*: The first, and historically the leading strategy, has been for representatives of the dominant party in the city (usually Democratic) to persuade the party’s legislative caucus to impose party discipline to support the city’s interests. Often a shared interest in an active or generous state role unites such coalitions, even if the specifics of what coalitional partners want are different. Traditionally, such party-based coalitions have joined central city representatives and those from distressed rural and small town areas on issues related to poverty, economic development, and education funding. Such coalitions may be fragile when cities cannot dominate the party caucus, when party discipline cannot be enforced, or when the broad interests of the city and distressed areas begin to diverge.
2. *Ad Hoc Logrolling Coalitions*: A second kind of coalition is held together by logrolling pure and simple.⁵ In these cases, there is little common interest or party connection among coalition partners. Rather allies unite in order to pursue their narrow interests. Such opportunistic coalitions are likely to be short-lived and constructed on a case-by-case basis.

⁴ In this case, the U.S. Supreme Court found that Tennessee’s reapportionment of legislative seats ignored population shifts to cities which, as a result, were underrepresented. The case prompted lawsuits in other states and helped guarantee a more representative form of government.

⁵ “Logrolling” is a common legislative practice in which two or more legislators promise mutual support for one another’s issue(s). It is often used to secure votes for bills or projects that concentrate benefits in one legislator’s district or territory (Johnson, 2000).

3. *Governor-Brokered Coalitions:* A third type of coalition relies on the governor to bring legislators together across party lines. Governors (including Republican governors) often play a key role in winning legislative support for urban priorities. This is especially true for major infrastructure projects that require legislative approval. Several factors prompt governors to support some urban priorities regardless of partisanship. Governors recognize that they are elected statewide and that a vote from the city counts as much as a vote elsewhere, even though Republican gubernatorial candidates in some states may not get many votes from cities. Moreover, governors are responsible for the entire state and are aware that even fiscally stressed cities play an important economic role in the state. This does not mean that governors necessarily favor city interests but rather that they protect cities against possible adverse initiatives by legislators with narrower geographic interests. Finally, major corporate interests that donate heavily to campaign coffers are often urban-based. Governors are especially attentive to the priorities of these interests.
4. *Ideological Coalitions:* Cities also join coalitions that are united around shared ideological commitments. These concerns may either be substantive, reflecting common views on an issue or they may be procedural with respect to the role of state and/or federal governments relative to that of local governments. Liberal groups from across the state, for example, may ally with cities to press for greater welfare spending.
5. *Interest-Based Coalitions:* Shared interest coalitions can take several forms. Large cities can unite with depressed rural areas or with smaller-sized central cities. In states where there are other large and/or medium sized cities, such coalitions may cooperate on a wide range of issues that go beyond fiscal concerns. Representatives from different metropolitan areas may also join forces around common concerns in state legislatures. On some kinds of issues (e.g., large capital projects such as transportation) central city and suburban representatives may readily perceive a common metropolitan interest and enter into coalitions in pursuit of that. Cities may also unite around common fiscal interests with a subset of their suburbs, such as older, inner-ring and fiscally-stressed suburbs.

IV. CASE STUDIES: HOW DO CITIES BUILD COALITIONS?

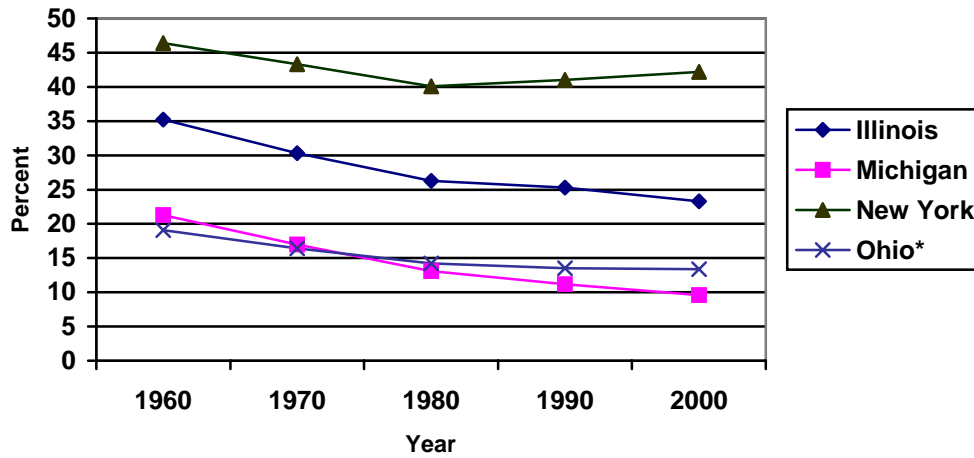
To determine what kind of coalitional strategies cities are engaged in, we chose four states as sites for deeper study: Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, and New York. These states were selected because they each contain distressed urban and suburban areas, but they also vary in the geographic, economic, racial, and political characteristics of cities and suburbs. Illinois, Michigan, and New York have a single dominant city, while Ohio has three cities (Columbus, Cleveland and Cincinnati) of roughly equal size and influence.

These case studies explore the question of how large central cities pursue their interests in state legislatures, what kinds of coalitions they enter into under what circumstances, and whether multi-jurisdictional coalitions are occurring. We examine the coalition-building strategies of cities in state legislatures over the past decade. The central questions we ask include: What have cities tried to win from their states? What institutions, if any, do they work through as they choose priorities and build coalitions? Where have they been successful and where have they failed? Our research design and methodology, as well as a summary of the case studies, are detailed in the appendix.⁶

As the figure below shows, in each case the percentage of the state population in these large cities we studied fell between 1960 and 2000. Detroit suffered the greatest proportional drop, with Chicago behind. The Ohio cities declined less thanks to the growth of Columbus, based largely on its ability to annex suburbs. Steady immigration has enabled New York City to actually increase its share of the state's population in recent years.

⁶ The interviews for the case studies all occurred prior to the November 2002 election. Thus, they may not represent any possible activities, for example, under the new governors in Michigan or Illinois.

Figure 1. Largest City Population as a Percentage of the State, 1960-2000



*Ohio includes Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati.

Source: U.S. Census and authors' calculations

These population declines have translated directly into a loss of representatives from the central city delegations. In 1950, for example there were 33 legislators who represented some portion of the city of Detroit out of 110 members of the Michigan House of Representatives. Today there are 13. Prior to the redistricting following the 2000 Census, New York City had 61 of 150 House seats in New York state, Chicago had 30 of 118 in Illinois, and Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Columbus combined had 14 out of the 99 seats in the Ohio House. This decline in representation has not only reduced the proportion of votes from city representatives in the legislature, it has, perhaps more importantly, also reduced the influence of the city in the Democratic caucuses in the legislature.

While some issues were unique to a particular city or state, we found much overlap in what the mayors of these cities sought from their states. At the most general level, the focus of city lobbying efforts was on the *institution* of city government, not on the *people* who live in the city or the region. Our research reveals three main messages:

1. *Funding*: The goal of increasing state aid was a prominent feature on the policy agenda of our cities. Most state aid comes with strings attached, but most states also have retained some form of revenue sharing with cities. Cities are constantly lobbying to avoid cuts in state general aid, such as Detroit's effort to block a change in the revenue sharing formula that would have eliminated the "tax effort" component, thus cutting Detroit's share or Cincinnati's effort to block a state freeze in the local government fund. For the most part, cities have been fighting a losing battle on revenue sharing. In New York the proportion of state

revenues shared with localities fell by over three quarters between 1979 and 1994 (Fiscal Policy Institute, 1994).

2. *Infrastructure and Capital Investments.* Nearly all our cities lobbied to have infrastructure and other state-funded capital projects built in their city, presumably boosting city tax revenues. Thus, Cincinnati lobbied to keep a post office in the city, for park improvements, and for museum funding. Chicago lobbied for renovation to a convention center and stadium and was a major supporter of a state transportation infrastructure initiative that would provide important benefits to the city. Ohio cities lobbied actively for a share of the biannual state capital budget allocated to local projects. State brownfields legislation that would boost the local economy was a high priority for Detroit and Cincinnati. It is interesting to note that the lobbying for state project money was opportunistic; it was not part of any long-term plan for city or regional economic development.
3. *Autonomy.* Cities want more legal autonomy from state interference or they want to preserve the autonomy they have. This quest is closely tied to fiscal concerns. In the state of Ohio, for example, giving cities the legal authority to impose a commuter tax can substitute in many ways for state aid. In 1999, New York City failed, losing its right to impose an income tax on commuters (resulting in the loss of \$475 million in 2000.) But not only do cities want autonomy to impose taxes as they see fit, they also want freedom from state-mandated expenditures. Mayors of both New York and Chicago have lobbied to prevent state legislation from mandating additional spending on city pensions, for example. In other cases, cities have sought legal autonomy to increase the powers of the city, and by implication the mayor. For example, the mayor of Detroit opposed a power sharing arrangement concerning the city water authority. In three cases, mayors were not just reacting to threats to their autonomy but seeking substantial new authority over city public schools (Chicago, Detroit, and New York).

Often, the objectives of the city were reactive—designed to fend off threats from state legislation that would undermine their autonomy or cost them money. This highlights the effect of the limits of home rule: Subject to state laws, in many important areas cities do not possess general powers to govern themselves as they see fit. Whether intentional or not, by restricting the authority of their local jurisdictions, and requiring them to come before the state legislature each session just to protect the status quo, legislators from outside cities create opportunities for favorable logrolls, exchanging their support of city-friendly legislation for city support of their own legislative priorities.

It is worthwhile to note plausible priorities that were missing from the mayors' lobbying agendas. First, in these cases the mayors did not make state legislation to address poverty and unemployment a high priority.⁷ The main exception to this is New York City, which as a city and

⁷ Illinois did establish a state Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) program in May 2000.

counties has responsibility for administering many social welfare programs. Additional funding for foster care has been made a priority, but this hardly represented an aggressive effort on the part of New York City to help the disadvantaged populations concentrated there. Efforts to directly help the poor were largely missing from the top policy agendas of the other cities.⁸

The second large hole in city priorities was any effort to promote regional development or to establish a common agenda between the city and mature suburbs facing similar issues. The mayors seemed focused on the immediate fiscal well-being of city government. They did not make the policies of regional authorities, such as transit and sewer and water, high priority in their dealings with the state legislature. Addressing state and regional policies that might harm the city by subsidizing suburban sprawl did not capture significant policy attention. In this respect our research supports the findings of Rusk (1999) who concluded that big city mayors, with few exceptions, were “missing in action” in leading regional coalition building.⁹

City legislators from the four states we studied created all five of the different types of coalitions we identified. But the two traditional strategies predominated: 1) party-imposed coalition and dependence on the Democratic caucus, which united urban legislators with their fellow Democratic legislators from relatively poor constituencies outside of the metropolitan area; and 2) governor-brokered coalitions, including Republican governors, that construct majority coalitions protecting city interests. As important as these traditional strategies remain, our case studies show that declining city political strength has made them less reliable than in the past.

The Democratic caucus remains the key forum for representing city interests in state legislatures. In both Illinois and Michigan, this alliance has traditionally joined the city with the declining rural areas of the state. In New York, where upstate declining rural areas are much more likely to be Republican, the Democratic caucus links New York City legislators with representatives from upstate cities and from the suburbs. However, as suburban Democrats have gained more clout in the New York Democratic Party, the Democratic caucus cannot always be counted on to place the city’s interest first. Detroit’s position in the caucus is much weaker than in the past, making the city much less able to drive the Democratic agenda.

Chicago and New York City retain dominant status within the Democratic caucus, but even in these states the Democratic caucuses increasingly have interests that are distinct from those of the city. The need to appeal to suburban interests in order to maintain legislative power sometimes leads the caucus to take stands that go against the city’s interests. The alliance between cities and

⁸ It is important to note that the number of high-poverty neighborhoods—where the poverty rate is over 40 percent—declined in center cities in the 1990s (Jargowsky, 2003). However, most urban counties still have a disproportionately high share of their states’ welfare caseloads (Waller and Berube, 2002).

⁹ While some of these issues may not be a top priority for mayors, many civic leaders and other urban interest groups are lobbying for important regional reforms.

distressed areas is also more strained today than in the past. In both New York and Illinois, the increasing prosperity of the major city has begun to undermine the economic basis for cooperation.

In addition, term limits have served to reduce the influence of city representatives in the two of the four states we examined that had imposed term limits on state legislators – Michigan and Ohio. Cities, in particular, need long-term relationships that build the trust necessary for successful logrolls. Prior to term limits, Detroit representatives in the legislature had seniority (because they ran in what were essentially one-party districts and were immune to defeat), and they formed long-term relationships with representatives from other areas in the Michigan House. Since term limits, the advantages of seniority have disappeared and the trust among representatives, who do not have time to build strong ties, has declined. As a consequence, representatives from Detroit have found it much harder to win support for city needs in the legislature.

The same dynamic appears to be taking place in Ohio, particularly Cincinnati. Ohio passed a measure that both limits House and Senate members to eight years (four terms for House members; two terms for Senate members). According to several respondents, term limits (though not fully in effect at the time of our interviews) have increased the power of lobbyists and public relations firms in the political process and have also encouraged cities to hire contract lobbyists. One former legislator observed that term limits and legislative redistricting have changed the political dynamic saying, “it used to be that legislators sat down directly with mayors and city managers—but that doesn’t happen as much now.”

In addition, as one of our interviewees noted, term limits have also put a premium on fundraising because of the constant party need to finance new candidates who have little or no name recognition. This has resulted in a relative shift of power to the rapidly growing suburbs, “because that is where the money is and that is where the development interests are.”

As cities have become politically weaker, they have become more dependent on governors to assist them. For the reasons noted above, governors can be willing partners. But they are not always reliable or effective allies. Alliances may be negotiated on the terms of the governor, rather than on the terms most favorable to the city. For example, former Governor Engler’s intervention in the state revenue sharing debate described below rescued Detroit from a potential disastrous defeat, but at the cost of both extending an inadequate status quo and reducing the city’s ability to tax suburbanites. In other cases, Republican governors may not be able to induce enough Republicans to support the alliances they are seeking to construct. In Illinois, for example, former Governor Edgar was unable to persuade legislative Republicans in 1997 to support his proposal for property tax reform, though he did win on school funding adequacy.

V. CITY-SUBURBAN COALITIONS: AN IMPORTANT POLITICAL STRATEGY FOR CITIES

Over the years, the types of legislative coalitions discussed above have generally proven to be successful for cities. However, given the demographic and population trends showing declining central city representation, cities have to look for new coalitional partners out of necessity. Despite the historical differences in city and suburban political leanings, many analysts have begun to argue that the best strategy is for cities is to build new coalitions with their suburbs.

As cities have declined, suburbs have grown in political importance. Since the 1960s, suburbs have gained tremendously in population and in representation in state legislatures at the expense of cities and rural areas. This is an important point because place does make a difference in voting behavior. Research shows that suburbanites vote differently from urban dwellers, even after controlling for individual variables (Schneider, 1992; Gainsborough, 2001; Wolman and Marckini, 1998 and 2000.)

Overall, however, the differences between city and suburban legislative voting records, at least in Congress, are not as great as between city and non-metropolitan representatives. The fact that cities and suburbs are not as different from each other, culturally, economically, and politically as cities and rural areas suggests the possibility of important city-suburban coalitions.

As early as 1970 James Reichley observed that "Close-in suburbs are increasingly experiencing problems that are similar to those faced by inner cities," suggesting that this offered an opportunity to overcome the political isolation of cities. Most recently, Puentes and Orfield (2001) assert that these older, inner-ring suburbs are caught in a policy "blindspot" given the attention focused on fast-growing, newly developing places on the suburban fringe. They also suggest coalitions between these jurisdictions and center cities.

The most prominent advocate of city-suburban coalitions today is former Minnesota State Senator Myron Orfield. Noting the increasing variation among suburbs, Orfield made the case for coalitions between central cities and suburbs based on common fiscal problems in his book, *Metropolitcs* (1997). Orfield's argument is focused on the common *fiscal* interests of *jurisdictions*.

Central cities, disproportionately the home for the metropolitan area's poor and with older housing and infrastructure, face high public service needs but an eroding revenue base due to outmigration of the middle class to the suburbs and loss of commercial and industrial taxpaying property. Many inner-ring distressed suburbs are beginning to experience similar fiscal concerns as the same process extends to them. Many rapidly developing outer suburbs, because they have growing numbers of school-aged children and little commercial or industrial tax base, and thus depend almost completely on the residential tax base for revenue, suffer from fiscal stress as well.

Sharing common fiscal concerns, Orfield argues, these types of jurisdictions have the potential to form coalitions to advance and protect those interests.¹⁰

In his latest book, *American Metropolitcs* (2002), Orfield amends his hypothesis about coalitions in state legislatures among different parts of metropolitan areas, arguing that “affluent job centers” are also among the strongest supporters of metropolitan reforms. Their support is motivated not by a fear of fiscal stress but by the fear that present patterns of development will damage the environment and undermine the quality of their lives, especially by generating traffic congestion and paving over green space.

There have been few systematic efforts to test Orfield’s hypotheses. Steinacker (2001) examined voter support for seven statewide propositions in support of metropolitan reforms in California. She found positive correlations between residence in distressed suburbs and support for metropolitan reforms, but the correlations were weak and “the specific demographic characteristics that are critical are not clear-cut.”

The main evidence for the Orfield hypothesis are case studies of successful coalitions in Minnesota and Oregon (Weir, 2000). The initial case is the enactment of tax base sharing in Minnesota in 1971. In this case central city representatives joined with representatives from distressed suburbs, including many Republicans, who felt their jurisdictions would not benefit from development trends under existing tax laws. Minnesota’s fiscal disparities law has allocated 40 percent of property tax revenue from new commercial and industrial development among seven Twin Cities-area counties and 187 jurisdictions on a per capita wealth basis. Funds in this metropolitan tax base pool—around \$400 million in 1999—are then redistributed to communities in inverse proportion to net commercial tax capacity. (Orfield, 1997) It is the only example of metropolitan-wide tax base sharing in the nation.

In 1990 Myron Orfield was elected to the Minnesota House of Representatives from Minneapolis, and over the years he successfully assembled central city/suburban coalitions behind a wide range of metropolitan reforms. These coalitions are described in his books and are documented by Rusk (1999). The coalitions behind metropolitan reforms in the Minnesota Legislature successfully united representatives from the central cities and the less prosperous suburbs. The legislative results would have been much more impressive in Minnesota if Republican Governor Arne Carlson had not vetoed many of the metropolitan reforms.

Portland, Oregon, is the other widely cited example of successful metropolitan reform in the United States. The statewide coalition in Oregon, however, was different from the coalition in Minnesota. The Oregon statewide land use law, the most progressive in the country, now is thirty

¹⁰ It is important to note that political coalitions for education—general school costs, aid, etc.—have existed for decades. These expenses usually make up the largest component of state budgets and certainly represent an important type of coalition building.

years old and there is extensive literature on it (e.g., Abbott, 1983; 2000; Abbott, Howe and Adler, 1994; Nelson, 1996; Leo, 1998; and Weir, 2000.) The Oregon case is interesting because the coalition that supported reform was not primarily between Portland and suburbs but between Portland, environmentalists, and rural representatives. Indeed, the success in Portland may have stemmed partly from the fact that in 1973 the suburbs were relatively weak politically (Weir, 2000).

Another factor that may have contributed to success in both Minnesota and Oregon is their relative racial homogeneity. Racial fears make it more difficult to recognize common interests between cities and suburbs. Some argue that the gap between white suburbs and minority cities, especially those with large black “underclass” concentrations, has served to split apart coalitions based on economic concerns (Edsall and Edsall, 1991). Gainsborough (2001) shows that the greater the racial gap between the city and its suburbs the greater is the gap between the voting behavior and attitudes of city and suburban residents (after controlling for individual characteristics). In racially polarized metropolitan areas suburbanites tend to vote more for Republican candidates for President and Congress and to favor decreased spending on social services. Voting research suggests that city-suburban coalitions will be more difficult in metropolitan areas where poor minority populations are concentrated in the central city and the suburbs are overwhelmingly white.

Finally, it is worth noting that Republican Governors (Tom McCall in Oregon and Harold Levander in Minnesota) played key roles in assembling the coalitions that enacted the far-reaching metropolitan reforms discussed above: tax-base sharing and statewide land-use planning.

Obstacles and Opportunities

The results of our research suggest that the potential exists for large cities to structure effective coalitions in the state legislature based on the increasingly frequent shared common interests (particularly fiscal interests) of these cities, inner suburbs, and certain outer suburbs.

In Michigan, city legislators and suburban legislators (including a majority of suburban Republicans) joined to support a compromise brokered by the governor to prevent a cut in Detroit’s state revenue sharing funds (but with the condition that they would not increase for ten years and that Detroit would reduce its income tax on both city residents and suburban residents who worked in the city). The same coalition supported legislation to protect many favorable provisions in state legislation that would have otherwise expired when Detroit dropped below a population of one million in the 2000 Census. In Ohio, as a result of state insistence, the large cities and their suburbs come to the legislature with a common list of capital projects they wish the state to fund, a process that has largely worked to the cities’ advantage. In Illinois, major distributive packages such as transportation, school funding adequacy, and certain kinds of social issues such as gun control legislation and prohibition of racial profiling have generated city-suburban legislative coalitions across party lines.

Although city-suburban coalitions exist in state legislatures, they tend to be ad hoc and based on special circumstances. More often, on the issues most important to cities, city-suburban interests, as indicated by the behavior of state legislators, seem to conflict. City-suburban conflict was paramount in city employee residency requirements in Michigan, the repeal of the commuter tax and the reduction of state revenue sharing to New York City, and the battle over state fund distribution in Ohio, and property tax reform in Illinois. There was little evidence of cooperation over “lifestyle” issues, and the fiscal issues that ought to provide the greatest potential for coalition building seemed to be the most divisive – the distribution of state funds in general and, in particular, state revenue sharing and permission of cities to tax suburban commuters.

Thus, while a few city-suburban coalitions have emerged in these states, they are more the exception than the rule. (The one important exception is in Ohio where the state government *requires* central city-suburban jointly agreed upon bids for major state funded infrastructure projects.) There are several reasons why effective city-suburban legislative coalitions across a series of issues have not yet emerged, or been the norm.

First, there is the traditional city-suburban distrust, which has existed in one form or another for years. In Illinois, for example, the traditional animosity of Chicago’s suburbs to the city is legendary. One interviewee described the former State Senate leader James “Pate” Philip, a Republican vociferously opposed to all things Chicago, as “straight out of central casting” in his anti-urban, anti-minority views. A long time member of the Senate, Philip became leader when Republicans won control in 1992. His generation of DuPage County Republicans came to power as whites were fleeing Chicago for the suburbs. Philip used his new power as an opportunity for payback, routinely challenging Chicago’s priorities in the legislature (Pearson, 1997).

The tremendous power of the legislative leaders to control the state agenda—a power described as “papal in its dimensions” by one of our interviewees—greatly magnified city-suburb conflict in Illinois. By limiting the ability of individual legislators to explore common ground and hold hearings to promote alternative perspectives on issues, legislative leaders hostile to the city actively worked against potential coalition-building between city and suburbs. One legislator complained that the tight control of the legislative process made it difficult to launch debates that would educate the public and promote new ways of looking at problems. The power of legislative leaders is reinforced by their control over campaign funds, so critical in swing districts.

Yet some legislators we interviewed described a generational split among suburban Republicans. The older generation was not only reflexively anti-Chicago, it also had a limited suburban agenda that emphasized suburban development, highways, and associated patronage. The newer generation from well-off affluent suburbs is more concerned with quality of life issues such as congestion and open space, the issues that Orfield identifies as points of city-suburb coalition-building. These younger Republicans are also less likely to view Chicago-suburban issues as zero-sum conflicts. As one interviewee noted, the new generation of suburban Republicans is not

“running away from the city; their attitude toward the city is not inherently negative.” The recent failure of Republicans to retain control of the Senate may pave the way for this newer generation of suburban Republicans to compromise with the city.

Detroit has arguably faced even sharper suburban animosity than Chicago. One interviewee noted that the toughest area to get support from legislators for Detroit from was Macomb County, a working class suburban county northeast of Detroit. As another explained, “In Macomb County, any hint of support for Detroit is used against them in elections.” Another observed “suburban legislators—even the Democratic ones—are a harder nut to crack than outstate legislators, although sometimes the suburban Democrats will support Detroit if the caucus takes a position.” Behind this antipathy to supporting Detroit on high profile issues—even when they do not appear to be in obvious conflict with suburban interests—is the often unarticulated racial animosity and the concerns and fears that suburban legislators often believe their constituents hold for Detroit. In areas such as Detroit, racial concerns are never too far below the surface, despite whatever objective interests that city and suburbs share. The difficulty the Detroit area has experienced in passing a referendum establishing a regional tax to fund area cultural institutions, even with the support of many area political leaders, indicates the public animosity that exists between city and suburbs.

Another reason why these four states may have not been able to forge successful city-suburban legislative coalitions is that they lack a critical legislative mover—a political/policy entrepreneur—in the legislature to frame issues in a way that makes clear the common city-suburban interests and to structure coalitions around those common interests. This is a role that Orfield himself, for example, has played in Minnesota as a state legislator. But it is unusual for a state legislator to play this role. Most individual legislators do not have the resources or capacity to engage in innovative policy research necessary to support alternative approaches to metropolitan problems. Moreover, in many states, legislators’ dependence on the legislative leadership for political support and campaign funds makes it difficult for them to introduce new ideas that are at odds with the leadership agenda.

The difficulties in creating city-suburban alliances in state legislatures and the importance of entrepreneurs where such coalitions have emerged suggest that groups outside the legislature must play a central role in fashioning a new agenda that finds common ground between the city and some of its suburbs. In each of our states, such groups have already played important roles in promoting legislative alliances between city and suburb. They are currently actively working to frame regional issues in new terms designed to find common ground.

In Chicago, business leaders have played a central role in provoking new interest in regionalism with the far reaching report “Chicago Metropolis 2020” issued in 1999 and the subsequent creation of an organization whose mission is to move a regional agenda (Johnson, 1999 and Hamilton, 2002). The Metropolitan Planning Council in Chicago initiated a Campaign for Sensible Growth that shaped the outcomes of the Illinois Growth Task Force, composed of members

of the legislature and a range of civic groups and interest groups from around the state. Holding hearings around the state, the task force highlighted public concern about existing patterns of growth and served as a sounding board for possible policy solutions. In 2002, the legislature passed the Local Planning Technical Assistance Act, which updates the state's 1920s planning statutes and provides technical assistance to localities (American Planning Association, 2002). In addition, the task force served an important educational function, especially for the many legislators who had little background on growth issues.

In addition to the entrepreneurship of nongovernmental groups, the development of suburban consortia, even though at times opposed to city interests, may be a first step toward cooperation. Joined together, suburbs will no longer feel politically overwhelmed in alliances with central cities. The Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, first convened by Mayor Daley in 1998, has received much attention. The Caucus provides a regular venue for city and suburbs to meet. The Caucus mainly pursues efforts at voluntary cooperation on relatively consensual issues, although it has recently ventured into the area of reforming the way the state funds public schools as well as efforts to address the jobs/housing imbalance (Hamilton, 2002).

Ohio has now organized First Suburbs Consortiums (FSCs) in three metropolitan areas: Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Columbus. Altogether they join over 34 inner suburban municipalities representing a total population of about 750,000 making them formidable force the state legislature cannot afford to ignore. The Northeast Ohio (Cleveland) FSC, with 15 communities representing 449,000 people, is the largest and most active. Created in 1997, the Northeast Ohio FSC was formally organized in 2000 as a Council of Government (COG) under Ohio law. Besides lobbying county and state governments for policies more favorable to mature suburbs, the Northeast Ohio FSC also administers programs for housing and economic development. In 2000 the consortium retained a part-time lobbyist in Columbus to push its issues in the state legislature. Many of the issues pushed by the consortium overlap with the concerns of central cities like Cleveland. These include protecting and enhancing Ohio's Local Government Fund (revenue sharing with cities) and its historic preservation tax credit program.

The recent experience in Michigan is particularly encouraging in showing how nongovernmental groups can promote regional legislation that helps cities. A church-based organization, the Metropolitan Organization Strategy for Mobilizing Strength (MOSES), undertook a grass roots campaign, enlisted the support of a business association, the regional chamber of commerce, to induce the area's local political elites to sit down and develop an agreed upon plan for a regional transportation authority. They, in turn, used their influence to compel support of the state legislative delegations from the region. This success of this grassroots strategy contrasts with the metropolitan reform strategy of going directly to the voters – a strategy that has repeatedly failed.

The Michigan Suburbs Alliance (MSA) was established in the summer of 2002 and currently has 25 members drawn from inner suburbs in five counties surrounding Detroit (Wayne, Oakland,

Macomb, Washtenaw and Monroe). From the outset, the MSA has made a special effort to reach out to leaders from the city of Detroit. Group meetings have been held with city leaders and the Detroit Regional Chamber of Commerce to determine what kind of specific issues suburban leaders could collaborate with as a means of building trust and confidence on both sides. Such issues include transportation, infrastructure investments, and metropolitan growth and development.

In New York, city and suburban alliances, or coordination, have not been institutionalized in any way. Of note is the Regional Plan Association (RPA) an independent organization that conducts research and advocacy work for the 31-county tri state metropolitan area. The RPA is focused currently on issues related to community design, open space, transportation, workforce and the economy, and housing (Yaro, 2000).

One major question about the current direction of city-suburb alliances is whether it is possible to build coalitions around equity issues that require spending. Cities and suburbs have had the most success in uniting around spending increases for infrastructure improvements where benefits are shared. But on issues such as social services, public assistance, health care, and education, it is much harder to build alliances across regional lines. As one legislator stated, non-city legislators have “less confidence that the city can solve these problems with more state assistance.”

The role of race in shaping such judgments is “huge” in the words of one legislator. Several legislators in the Chicago area contended that racial antagonism in the suburbs continued to be a “major impediment” to taking regional approaches to poverty and affordable housing. However they also noted that as the city has sought to attract and retain the middle class, low-income residents have moved into declining inner suburbs. How this new geography will alter the politics of poverty and social assistance in the states is one of the most pressing questions for the future of regionalism.

V. CONCLUSION

At a time when central cities are more dependent on their states than ever, there is considerable evidence that their clout in state legislatures is eroding. The declining number of state representatives from cities means that cities have less power within the Democratic Party caucuses in the state legislature, historically the main protector of city interests. Increasingly, the Democratic Party aims to please the swing districts in the suburbs, figuring, usually correctly, that central city Democratic seats are secure. In addition, the weakening of party cohesion has hurt cities. County party organizations, with their patronage ties to city government, are not as important as they used to be for winning races for the state legislature. State legislators increasingly rely on money raised from special interests and from legislative campaign committees. Forbidden to make campaign contributions, the voices of cities are being drowned out by special-interest campaign contributions and the flood of lobbying money in state capitols.¹¹

The declining political power of cities in state legislatures suggests the need for new coalitional strategies and partners. The obvious direction to turn to is new coalitions with suburbs. Increasingly, suburbs experience the same problems as cities. Objectively, fiscally stressed cities and mature suburbs share an interest in needs-based state aid and in smart growth policies to slow suburban sprawl. Innovative leadership will be needed to build these coalitions. One of our most striking findings is that big city mayors are not leading the way in metropolitan reform. The mayors we studied were preoccupied with the immediate fiscal condition of city government. Long-term metropolitan land use issues were not high on their agendas. Most central cities have enjoyed new investment and growth in recent years, putting them in a different economic situation than most inner-ring suburbs. When mayors did reach out to politically to suburbs, the suburbs were often reluctant to join for fear of being dominated by city interests.

Our research shows only inklings of the city-suburban legislative coalitions based on objective common interests. We do not conclude from this that such coalitions are impossible, but rather that they are difficult and will require new leadership.

State level actors – particularly governors - have a stronger and better understood interest in promoting regional cooperation than do many political actors within the region itself. This interest flows both from the policy concern for the performance of the state economy as a whole and also from their position as state officeholders with a statewide electorate. Advocates of regional cooperation should focus greater attention at this level.

In addition, much of the interest in regionalism is latent and varies considerably by issue area. Because many interests may not rank regionalism as a top priority, they are not active on

¹¹ The Center for Public Integrity reports that lobbyists spent \$570 million in 2000 lobbying state legislators, an increase of 91 percent from 1995 when fewer states reported (Dunbar and Rush, 2002).

these issues. This creates a vacuum in which opponents dominate the political arena. This suggests that coalitions are more likely to emerge around specific issue areas that have a regional dimension, such as transportation, public education, and fair-share housing. As we have seen, transportation is a particularly promising area. More redistributive policies, especially those that have a racial edge such as public education and fair share housing, face much greater difficulties in attracting supporters.

Finally, because the dynamics of state legislatures limit creative coalition building, venues outside the legislature are needed to promote regional perspectives. This includes efforts at coalition building both by local political elites (organizations such as the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus in Chicago may provide a forum for promoting regional perspectives) and by grassroots organizations within the region to encourage and induce local elites to come to agreement. In the late 1990s several networks of community organizations such as the Gamaliel Foundation and the Industrial Areas Foundation adopted regional equity as the centerpiece of their organizing work. We examined the impressive effort of one of these grassroots organizations, MOSES, to create a unified regional transportation authority in the Detroit area. These new efforts by groups that have a regional approach to inequities and that cross jurisdictional boundaries in their organizing are especially encouraging for the future of regionalism.

APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

In each state, we interviewed the lobbyist(s) of the major central city governments and asked them to name the issues before the state legislature over the past several years that had been or currently were of greatest concern to their city, either in terms of legislation they wanted passed or legislation they wanted blocked. We then asked the lobbyists how they had attempted to pursue their city's interest in these issues before the state legislature, who were the legislators they depended upon to advance and protect these interests, what other legislators were important to gain the support of, what kinds of coalitions they attempted to put together and whether they were successful.

In addition we interviewed close observers (including newspaper reporters covering the state house, academics, retired legislators), asking similar questions. We then interviewed some of the legislators named by the lobbyists and others as important on these issues. The objective in each case was to determine, on the issues important to city government, what kind of coalitions had been put together under what circumstances and to what extent the kind of city-suburban legislative coalition suggested by Orfield occurred.

In order to determine the policy agenda or chief goals of central cities in their state legislatures, we interviewed top staff of the mayor, chief lobbyists for the city, and consulted public pronouncements of city goals. It would be more accurate to say that what we researched was not what "cities" wanted from their states but what the chief executives, or mayors, of cities wanted from their states. In the case of New York City, the city council has a separate lobbying office in Albany, but there was a great deal of overlap between the lobbying agenda of the mayor and the city council.

APPENDIX B: CASE STUDY SUMMARIES

A. Detroit: Fighting Against Political Isolation

Who supports Detroit's interests in the Michigan legislature? As one interviewee observed, "I don't think it's most accurately identified by geography. It's almost never a good vote for you. But on a lot of issues it's not really important electorally. It's the ones more sympathetic to Detroit who will vote for it. Others simply don't buy the idea that there should be special advantages for Detroit."

Particularly on issues involving money and resource distribution, voting tends to be by region, with legislators being less willing to support Detroit the further west they are in the state. In particular, the growing areas of the state (in the west) resent the disproportionately high share of resources going to Detroit through programs such as state revenue sharing. As one interviewee observed, "There is a feeling that Detroit is getting 'too much' and that it is inefficient." On the other hand, there are some issues important to Detroit where the Democratic caucus takes a stance and virtually all Democrats hold to the party line. There are also issues, such as brownfields, where Republican representatives from other urban areas in the state support Detroit's interests.

While the Detroit delegation itself usually votes as a group, it is too small now to make a major difference. As such, the city has been engaged in several different types of coalitions.

1. *Party-Imposed and Interest-Based Coalitions*

While most voting is structured by party membership, straight party-line votes on issues related to Detroit are rare. Historically the Detroit delegation had structured an alliance with Democratic members from distressed areas of northern Michigan and the Upper Peninsula (U.P.), particularly with respect to project-based decisions. This alliance was built around the collegial relationships between long-serving Democratic committee chairs, a relationship which, because of term limits, no longer exists. It also reflected the strong labor orientation of members of both the Detroit and U.P. delegations. Frequently these alliances received party caucus support.

An example is legislation prohibiting local governments from enacting living wage laws. This bill was the subject of a series of votes, almost all of which were along party lines. Spurred on by a major campaign by organized labor, Detroit residents passed by referendum a living wage law to apply to city contractors, requiring wage levels substantially above the state minimum wage. The bill to prohibit cities from adopting livable wage laws was introduced and pushed by Republican legislators, at least partly to demonstrate that Democratic legislators were beholden to labor. According to reports, the city was put in a bind: the mayor and his advisors actually were not in favor of the livable wage referendum, fearing it would put the city under serious fiscal pressure. On the other hand, neither he nor members of the city delegation could be seen to oppose it. The result was a series of votes in both houses that simply pitted Democrats from all areas of the state against

Republicans from all areas of the state, though with a very high absentee rate among Democrats (on the first vote in the House, four of the 13 Democratic members of the city delegation were absent).

2. *Governor-Brokered Coalitions*

Former Mayor Dennis Archer, instead of depending upon the diminished Detroit delegation (many of whom were his political opponents) as previous mayors had done, went directly to the legislative leaders and, more importantly, directly to the Republican Governor John Engler. On several of the issues (e.g., brownfields, the school takeover, the changed revenue sharing formula) important to Detroit, Archer and Engler and their aides were able to work out an acceptable deal and the governor then was able to convince enough Republicans to go along with it to create a majority.

Interestingly, despite the public's perception, nearly all of the interviewees observed that Gov. Engler was willing to listen to Detroit's needs and to negotiate with the mayor to meet them (albeit on terms often far removed from the mayor's initial preferences), as long as the issue didn't have obvious partisan implications and did not visibly move resources from other parts of the state to Detroit. One of those interviewed noted, "The governor takes these issues seriously. [He knows that] most issues that affect Detroit affect the state."

The state revenue sharing program, which provides fiscally strapped Detroit with important discretionary revenues, illustrates the role of the governor. When the program came up for reauthorization in 1998 the Republican-controlled legislature suggested reforms that would have sharply reduced Detroit's payments and increased the payments to smaller cities and rural areas. However, Mayor Archer and Governor Engler brokered a compromise proposal that froze Detroit's current payments of \$334 million annually through 2007-2008. In return the city agreed to reduce its municipal income tax from 3 percent to 2 percent for residents and from 1.5 percent to 1.0 percent for non-residents who work in the city. Newspaper reports and our interviews make clear that the energetic efforts of Engler on behalf of the legislation were crucial to the affirmative votes of Republicans from the suburbs and from larger Western Michigan cities.

3. *Ideological Coalitions*

A bill that would have prohibited all local governments from imposing residency requirements for city employees illustrates how ideological coalitions can help bolster city interests. During the debate, Detroit unsuccessfully attempted to gain exemption from the prohibition. The final legislation applied to all local governments but was amended to permit them to impose restrictions requiring all city employees to live within 20 miles of the outer city limits. Clearly this was an issue that the city opposed, but which would be in the mild interest of surrounding suburban jurisdictions

This issue clearly resulted in a city-suburban split, but it also reflected an ideological divide about the role of governments. The Detroit metropolitan delegation in the Senate was split with the

central city Democrats all opposing and all of the suburban senators voting in favor. Part of the reason for the split in the Detroit area metropolitan Democratic delegation was the opposition to the measure by the traditionally Democratic police and fire unions, many of whose members on the Detroit force lived in the suburbs and commuted in to work.

Opposition to the bill was joined by Republicans from rural and small-town districts whose opposition was clearly based on ideological grounds. The rationale was expressed clearly by Sen. Emmons, a Republican from such a district, who explained his opposition by noting “These decisions are to be made by local people... I trust my local people to set conditions of employment that are good for me and my family.”

4. *City-Suburban Coalitions*

There were somewhat diverse views of the frequency of suburban representatives voting with city representatives. One interviewee noted that the toughest area to get legislative support for Detroit was Macomb County. On the other hand, a Democratic state legislator said, “Democratic caucus members often vote against their own political interests to support Detroit—including Macomb County representatives. The Macomb County Democrats usually come from inner-ring suburbs with the same stresses as the city.”

An example of a city-suburban voting coalition focused on the creation of a single transportation authority for the Detroit metropolitan area. The Detroit area has two separate transportation systems, one serving the city and one serving the suburbs, with minimal coordination.¹² An interfaith religious organization proposed creation of a single regional transportation authority to serve the entire region.¹³ The Detroit area chamber of commerce soon lent its support and the Detroit mayor and elected political leaders of the three major counties worked out a plan for the creation of such an authority. The plan was presented to the state legislature, which approved it with strong bi-partisan support from the legislative delegations of the city and the three counties.

However, in virtually his last act as governor, John Engler vetoed the legislation, apparently in retaliation for the legislature’s refusal to approve the creation of 15 additional charter schools in Detroit (Dickerson, 2003). New Governor Jennifer M. Granholm then approved an intergovernmental agreement that created the Detroit Area Regional Transportation Authority (DARTA).

¹² The City of Detroit Department of Transportation and the SMART (Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation), respectively.

¹³ The objective of the Metropolitan Organization Strategy for Mobilizing Strength (MOSES) is to induce the religious organizations of various faiths, particularly in the city and inner suburbs, to mobilize their members politically to change state policies in the direction of greater social and economic justice.

B. Ohio: Cooperation on a Limited Agenda

How do the large cities in Ohio form legislative coalitions to pursue their interests? Unlike the other states we examined, city-suburb conflicts in Ohio were not as dominant a part of the political landscape. One important reason is that the cities' agendas in the legislature are so strongly oriented around obtaining support for capital projects. Every two years the legislature considers the state capital budget. To streamline the process, the governor and the legislature effectively enforce regional cooperation by requiring each metropolitan area to come to the legislature with proposals supported by the entire delegation. Apart from these capital budget projects, Ohio cities pursue a largely defensive strategy in the legislature, seeking to preserve their share of the local government fund but not pressing much beyond preserving what they have.

In contrast to Detroit, Chicago and New York, where the lines between city and suburban delegations are sharply drawn, in Ohio, these differences are less salient. For example, Cincinnati's lobbyist emphasized that he considers the Cincinnati delegation to consist not simply of those House and Senate members who represent the city, but of those who represent the Cincinnati suburbs as well. In Columbus, a city that has grown dramatically due to annexation over the past thirty years, legislators from the city saw little difference between city and suburb. Many parts of the city, they noted, were similar to the suburbs. Partly for this reason, the coalitions we observed in Ohio were primarily city/suburban and governor-brokered.

1. City-Suburban Coalitions

City lobbyists in Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Columbus emphasized that on many issues, particularly those involved with capital projects, the delegation cooperated fully. Indeed, several of the respondents observed that city and suburban state legislative members acted in concert on most capital projects for the city (and the region), even across party lines. One observed that they approached this process as "citi-states" that competed against one another for projects. The cooperation is partly explained by the informally institutionalized process by which the local projects part of the capital budget is allocated to state projects.¹⁴ The governor's office and legislative leaders in effect demand that each region come to the process with an agreed upon set of priorities for capital projects.

An interviewee noted that the inner suburbs are beginning to organize their own formal coalitions in Cleveland and Columbus because they feel that they "too often lose out to the central cities rather than because they think that they are 'all in it together'."

¹⁴ This apparently evolved from competition among cities for big projects such as the baseball stadium and basketball arena in Cleveland and the new baseball and football stadiums in Cincinnati. Other parts of the region complained that their priorities were being ignored.

One recent exception to the relative amity between cities and some peripheral suburban areas was the decision to alter the state's annexation laws. Unlike Cleveland and Cincinnati, which were landlocked early in the twentieth century, Columbus used Ohio's annexation laws to capture suburban growth in the decades following World War II. As a consequence, Columbus is the largest city in Ohio and has a strong tax base. Although the old downtown has suffered the fate of many urban centers, growth on the periphery has benefited the city. In 2001, however, after several failed efforts, opponents succeeded in altering state law in ways that will make annexation more difficult. Even this issue, however, did not exhibit a clear city-suburb division. Because the existing annexation process promoted a predictable process of development, homebuilders and other suburban interests had little interest in changing the law. Moreover, established suburban municipalities wanted to preserve their own power to annex. As a result, suburbs were split on the changing the law. The impetus to make annexation more difficult came especially from rural and semi-rural townships concerned that they not be swallowed up (and deprived of tax revenues) by annexation. Although Columbus was not in favor of the change, the law that ultimately passed was a compromise that added new voices to the annexation process. Subsequent amendments have strengthened the hand of the pro-annexation forces.

In Ohio, there is no institutional mechanism for the three large cities (Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Columbus) to coordinate their strategy and form legislative coalitions. However, interviewees said that such coalitions did form on an ad hoc basis.

2. *Governor-Brokered Coalitions*

According to several of those we interviewed, Ohio governors are aware of and responsive to the plight of the cities. Governors, after all, run statewide; an additional vote from a city, even if they lose that city by 100,000 votes, counts just as much as a vote from a rural or suburban area where they might dominate. As one of Governor Robert Taft's policy aides observed, "The governor gets involved in urban issues. There is a natural tension between the governor as a state-wide elected official and state legislators who are elected in a specific district. The governor understands that the vitality of the cities is important to the state."

The interest of Ohio governors in cities was evident in Republican Governor Taft's decision to create an Urban Revitalization Task Force in 1999 (Taft, 2000). Composed of mayors, state legislators, and directors of several state agencies, the task force oversaw a series of focus groups around the state that discussed policies for urban redevelopment. The major accomplishment was the voter-approved Clean Ohio Fund. Proposed by the governor, this measure received bi-partisan support for clean-up of brownfields as well as for farmland preservation. The legislative coalition that approved the implemented legislation for the Clean Ohio Fund joined urban and rural interests, both of which stood to gain from the package (Myers and Puentes, 2001).

C. New York: From Bipartisan Coalitions to Logrolling Alone

To get its way in the legislature, New York City has moved from bipartisan coalitions with upstate cities to party-driven logrolling. Since 1994, party-driven logrolling has been disrupted by the election of Republican mayors, Rudolph Giuliani and Michael Bloomberg. As a result, New York City has had to increasingly go it alone, forming coalitions based on issue-specific logrolling. However, the change from interest-based coalitions, to party-driven logrolls, to ad hoc log rolls as the dominant method of coalition building represents a general decline in the power of New York City to achieve its will in the state legislature.

1. Interest-based Coalitions

In the late 1960s Governor Nelson Rockefeller and New York City Mayor John Lindsay led a coalition that campaigned for revenue sharing, both at the federal and state levels. The coalition succeeded in winning passage of New York state revenue sharing in 1971. However, between 1988 and 1994 the amount of revenue shared with localities fell from over a billion dollars to less than \$500 million. The portion of state revenues shared with localities dropped from 8 percent in 1979 to less than 2 percent by 1994 (Fiscal Policy Institute, 1994: 19–20). For New York City, unrestricted revenue as a proportion of own-source revenue fell from 9.0 percent in 1981–1982 to 2.9 percent in 1991–1992 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1982 and 1992). Part of this decline reflects the demise of federal revenue sharing but most of it was caused by the deterioration of revenue sharing from the state of New York.

The decline of revenue sharing reflects the decline of bipartisan interest-based coalitions between New York City and upstate cities. Indeed, it is accurate to say that New York City now has no permanent coalitions with other cities that cross issue areas. If they join together at all, it is issue by issue. The decline of coalition partly reflects a divergence in their objective conditions and thus their policy interests. Upstate cities are still suffering from deindustrialization, have relatively little immigration, and are declining in population (Pendall, 2003). By contrast, as a center of global capitalism, New York City has a prosperous fast-growing service economy. With the rise in immigration since 1965, New York City has become incredibly diverse and is growing in population. To cite but one example of a policy divergence, a major issue in many upstate cities is what to do with abandoned housing, while New York City faces a severe housing shortage.

Upstate cities do not view themselves as in the same boat as New York City and they are often jealous of its wealth and power. According to Rochester Mayor William Johnson, upstate mayors view New York City as able to protect its interests on its own. Indeed, New York City has made little effort to forge a coalition with upstate cities. In fact, in 2000 the “Big Four” upstate cities, Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Albany, formed their own interest coalition, without New York City, and successfully lobbied the Legislature for an additional \$65 million in state aid to address

fiscal shortfalls in five upstate cities. (At the insistence of Senate Republicans, Yonkers was added at the last minute.)

2. *Party-Imposed Coalitions*

Over the years the main way that New York City has achieved its goals in the state legislature has been through the Democratic Party. The New York City Democrats constitute a majority of the controlling Democratic caucus in the Assembly. So long as they are united, New York City Democrats can veto any statewide legislation. This puts the New York City delegation in an excellent position to engage in logrolling: We will not support your legislation unless you support ours. The method has generally served New York City well. In recent years, however, it has become increasingly problematic.

The state legislature has had divided partisan control continuously since 1975: the Democrats control the Assembly and the Republicans control the Senate. Divided partisan control has persisted in New York longer than in any other state and it has now become thoroughly institutionalized. Every ten years, the Assembly Democrats and the Senate Republicans give each other total freedom to re-draw district lines as they see fit for their house. As a result, very few districts are competitive. The average difference between the winner and the loser rose to over 50 percent (Stonecash, 1998). In two recent elections, only one sitting lawmaker out of 389 lost—an astounding 99.7 percent re-election rate (Perez-Pena, 2002).

Power in the New York Legislature is remarkably concentrated in the hands of the Speaker of the Assembly and the Majority Leader of the Senate. One study ranked New York tied for 8th in the nation in the institutional powers of the speaker (Hamm and Squire, 2001). The leaders control committee assignments and are not required to follow seniority. They also control legislative campaign committees that raise millions of dollars each year, targeting money on candidates in the few marginal districts. They also control staff allocations (other than the few automatically funded for each representative). This power is significant because the state legislature has the largest staff of any state legislature in the nation.

The overall result of relying upon party orchestrated logrolls is that relations between the city and the State have become highly politicized. The city is forced to continuously negotiate in the State Legislature -- even to maintain the status quo. As a top aide to the Senate Majority Leader put it, "New York City is constantly in the position of being a supplicant." To illustrate this point, the chief statehouse correspondent for the New York Times noted that New York City requires permission of the state legislature to put speed bumps on its streets.

With a Republican in the mayor's office since 1994 the city's bargaining position has weakened. As a Republican, Mayor Giuliani was forced to adopt a different strategy than his predecessors. Instead of relying upon the Speaker of the Assembly, Giuliani worked through

Republican Senate. However, the Republican-controlled Senate is a less reliable ally for the city because only 5 out of 36 Republicans in the Senate were from New York City. Because the Republican margin in the Senate was fairly narrow (six seats changing parties would give control to the Democrats), the Republican leadership moderates its views to protect its urban members. In the battle over repealing rent control, for example, some Senate Republicans from the city supported rent control. So did Governor George Pataki, mostly it seems, to protect the Republican majority in the Senate. Nevertheless, the Republican majority in the Senate is less of a reliable ally for the city than the Democratic majority in the Assembly, where 59 out of 99 were from New York City in 2001.

D. Chicago: Clout in Check

Historically, Chicago relied on three coalitional strategies to pass legislation in the Illinois legislature:

- First and foremost was Chicago's power in the Democratic caucus. Chicago traditionally worked through its tightly organized legislative delegation to pursue its interests and Chicago's storied political machine gave its Democratic state legislative delegation unusual cohesion in the Illinois legislature.¹⁵ During the long reign of Richard J. Daley (1955-1976), the Chicago mayor was the undisputed leader of the city's and Cook County's legislative delegation. The large size of Chicago's delegation and the mayor's power in the state central committee of the Democratic Party made it easy for the city to dominate the Democratic legislative caucus.
- Second, the city's major coalition partners within the Democratic caucus were downstate Democrats, representing distressed coal and agricultural communities. Chicago's strategy of logrolling with downstate Democrats was facilitated by the underlying common interest of both regions in getting more resources from the state. This Chicago-downstate alliance benefited from the political weakness of Republicans from the five suburban "collar counties" outside Chicago; in alliance, Chicago and the downstate Democrats could make the Republican suburbs foot the bill for their legislative initiatives.
- The third strategy that Chicago traditionally relied on was cross-party coalitions brokered by the governor. Chicago has a long history of working with governors of both parties (Banfield, 1961).

Together these three coalitional strategies made Chicago relatively effective in getting what it needed from the state. After 1970, the city's dependence on the state declined with the passage of a very strong home rule statute that gave the city substantial legal autonomy (Fossett and Giertz,

¹⁵ Until their elimination in 1983, Illinois had multi-member districts that ensured Republican representation from the city.

1989; Fuchs, 1992). Preserving the benefits of home rule remains one of Chicago's chief objectives in the legislature. But even after home rule, the city continued to need state support for major economic development projects, school finance problems, and some social welfare issues.

Influence within the Democratic caucus and logrolling with downstate Democrats are still the foundation of Chicago's power in the legislature. But each of these strategies is weaker and less reliable than in the past. The rise of the anti-Chicago suburban Republicans in the legislature, and particularly Republican control of the state Senate after 1992, made coalitions brokered by the governor even more important for Chicago. It is clear that gubernatorial support can provide the crucial edge to pass favorable legislation, but it is also evident that reliance on the governor does not always produce unmitigated legislative success for the city nor do governors always support the city. The Democratic sweep of both houses of the legislature and the governor's mansion in 2002 vastly improves Chicago's political fortunes, but even under such favorable circumstances the city's reduced presence in the legislature will ensure that compromise remains the order of the day.

1. *Party-Imposed Coalitions*

After Daley's death in 1976, it became clear that Chicago's ability to count on a cohesive Democratic delegation in legislature was not automatic. Open fissures began to emerge among Chicago's Democrats in 1983, when Chicago's first black mayor, Harold Washington, took office (Fossett and Giertz, 1989; Gove, 1982). As some white Chicago legislators opposed the mayor in the legislature, it became apparent that a united city Democratic delegation could no longer be taken for granted. Under the current mayor, Richard M. Daley, racial splits have been less prominent and Chicago once again works through its legislative delegation.

The declining weight of the city's delegation among Democrats has given the Democratic leaders greater independence. As a result, the mayor is more likely to confront current Democratic legislature on equal terms, rather than as undisputed leader of the state party.

For the most part, the legislature has supported Chicago's priorities and despite the tensions between the Democratic leadership and the mayor, Chicago continues to be the main organized force in the Democratic caucus. The unity of the city's delegation on major economic development projects and the continuing weight of the city's representatives mean that the city finds support for most of what it wants from the Democratic leadership in the legislature.

2. *Ad hoc Logrolling*

The alliance with downstate Democrats also continues to be a key power resource for Chicago. This alliance is somewhat less powerful as downstate areas have lost population and representatives. Moreover, the interests of downstate and Chicago have diverged as Chicago became more economically prosperous and downstate languished during the 1990s.

For example, on educational finance issues, the city-downstate alliance has become more strained. Several interviewees noted that in the past school funding formulas made it easy for the city to align with downstate areas, as both areas had low property values. In the words of one interviewee: “Downstate superintendents would say that if it is good for Chicago, it is good for us.” As the city’s property tax base climbed and downstate property values stagnated, and as downstate school enrollments have declined, the interests of the city and downstate on school finance diverge more than they did in the past. Yet these differences do not appear fatal for the city. One Democratic legislator from the city indicated that downstaters often grumbled about supporting Chicago-specific economic projects. The legislator went on to note, however, that strong rhetoric was not matched by action and the city could generally rely on downstate Democratic votes in the legislature.

On some issues, the city cannot hope to logroll with downstate because interests are so different. A classic instance is gun control, which the city has championed and downstate Democrats strongly oppose. The Chicago-downstate alliance rests on mutual support for traditional “pork” projects, which are critically important to both regions.

3. *Governor-Brokered Coalitions*

Cooperation with Republicans, always an element of the city’s strategy became more important in the 1990s, when Republicans took over the Illinois Senate. For example, the package of taxes and spending in Illinois FIRST, a major transportation infrastructure bill passed in 1999, was negotiated informally between the mayor and the governor before it went to the legislature. With one-third of its transportation spending dedicated to mass transit, the bill provided substantial benefits to Chicago at the same time that it boosted spending for road repair throughout the state. The vote on the four bills that secured financing for the projects revealed strong support from the city, and from Democrats all over the state. But reflecting the brokered bipartisan support, the bill also captured critical suburban Republican support. Illinois FIRST exhibited the hallmarks of governor-brokered coalitions: such coalitions are most successful when organized around large spending programs that offer distributive benefits (and the patronage that comes with them) to Republicans and Democrats alike. (Joens, 2000).

On other issues, city-suburban differences make it more difficult for the governor to play the role of broker. In Illinois, educational finance is one such issue. In 1997, Republican Governor Jim Edgar proposed an educational finance package that would reduce the state’s heavy reliance on the local property tax to finance schools. The bill proposed to increase the state income tax and the state’s share of school finance. The new finance scheme would have benefited districts where lower property values mean less money for schools – primarily downstate rural areas and Chicago. But for many affluent suburban residents, the proposal was a Robin Hood plan that would take money from educationally-minded affluent areas and redistribute it elsewhere in the state (Doubek, 1997). The

governor's proposal had the strong backing of Chicago's mayor and of the Democratic leadership in the legislature. However, Republican leaders in the legislature, both suburban Republicans, worked hard to defeat the bill and although it narrowly passed the Democratic-controlled House it died when the suburban Republican leader of the Senate simply refused to allow a vote on the measure. The governor's most important legislative initiative fell victim to the city-suburban divide and the extraordinary power of legislative leaders to control the legislative agenda in Illinois (McDermott and Rogers, 1997).

Another limitation of governor-brokered compromises is that governors may not support many initiatives that cities view as key priorities. Republican Governor Jim Edgar, who governed the state for most of the 1990s, was often unsympathetic to the city's goals in the legislature. And on some issues, all Republican governors have proven unwilling to help the city. For example, as Chicago's major airport, O'Hare, became congested, the city sought first to build a new airport within city boundaries and later to expand the capacity at O'Hare. In this decade-long battle over airport expansion, Republican governors have not been reliable allies for the city.

4. *Interest-based Coalitions*

The traditional distrust between Chicago and its suburbs has meant that there are few interest-based coalitions joining these regions apart from major distributive packages that spread benefits widely, such as Illinois FIRST. Yet our interviews did reveal areas of common interest that may support future interest-based city suburb coalitions. For example, some suburban Republican legislators cited development of rapid light rail transit as a possible area for future suburban-city alliances. Although the current Republican leadership opposed light rail, one legislator noted that there were significant divisions among suburban Republicans on the issue. On some equity issues, such as education and social services, the less affluent suburbs represented by Democrats already routinely support the city. Among these suburbs are the financially troubled south suburbs and rapidly changing near western suburbs. According to one interviewee, Republican legislators from less well-off suburbs are also often sympathetic with the city on such equity issues but have been prevented from supporting the city/Democratic alliance by the Republican leadership.

5. *Ideological Coalitions*

Ideological alliances between representatives from Chicago and its suburbs have formed around such social issues as gun control and gay rights. Suburban Republican legislators have split on the issue of gun control. While much of the old guard strongly opposed any restrictions on gun ownership, representatives from inner-suburban areas are much more supportive. Faced with rising gang activity and drug dealing, these representatives rank crime reduction and gun control as major priorities. On other social issues, such as gay rights, the city and affluent, socially liberal suburbs have formed effective coalitions. In addition, city representatives have found suburban Republican

support for needle exchange legislation and legislation to prohibit racial profiling, both defeated in the legislature.

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEWEES

A. Michigan

- Paul Hillegonds, Director, Detroit Renaissance (former Republican Speaker of the House)
- Nettie Seabrooks, Chief of Staff to Mayor Dennis Archer, Detroit
- Chris Christoph and Dawson Bell, Detroit Free Press reporters, Lansing Bureau
- Sen. Bob Emerson (D, Flint), Senate Minority Leader
- Bill Ballinger, Editor, Inside Michigan Politics
- Mark Murray, State Treasurer (formerly Director, Office of Budget)
- Rep. Buzz Thomas (D-Detroit), co-chair legislative Urban Caucus
- Marge Malarney and Pat Laughlin, lobbyists, City of Detroit
- Virgil Smith (by telephone) former Democratic floor leader (until 2000), Michigan Senate

B. Ohio

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- Kevin O'Brien, Cleveland State University, Urban Center
- Pat Sweeney, former Chair, House Finance Committee
- John Magill, Ohio Department of Development
- Fannie Nicholes, Deputy City Manager and Legislative Liaison, City of Cincinnati
- Mary Anne Sharkey, Director of Communications, Office of Governor Taft
- Sandy Theis, Statehouse Bureau Chief, Cleveland Plain Dealer
- Julia Carr Smyth, Reporter, Cleveland Plain Dealer
- Greg Browning, President, Capital Partners (former Budget Director for Gov. Voinovich)
- Kevin Futryk, State Street Consultants and contract lobbyist for City of Cincinnati
- Lee Leonard, Statehouse Reporter, Columbus Dispatch
- Chan Cochran, Cochran Public Relations, former Press Secretary, Governor James Rhoads
- Paoli DiMaria, Policy Director, Governor Taft
- Dennis Keating, College of Urban Affairs, Cleveland State University
- Jay Westbrook, Cleveland City Council (former President of Council)
- Ken Montlack, Cleveland Heights City Council, Leader of First Suburbs Consortium
- Cheryl Davis, Greater Cleveland Growth Association, Legislative Liaison for the City of Cleveland, 1990-1995
- Greg Lashutka, former Mayor, Columbus, Ohio
- Mike Reese, lobbyist, city of Columbus, Ohio
- George J. Arnold, H.R. Gray Associates (former Director of Development, City of Columbus and Chief of Staff for Mayor Lashutka)
- Tom Suddes, former reporter Cleveland Plain Dealer
- Priscella Mead, State Senator (R-Columbus)
- Bill Habig, Director, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Council

C. New York

- Anthony Piscitelli, Chief Lobbyist, Mayor's Office of State Legislative Affairs
- Abraham Lackman, Special Adviser to the Senate Majority Leader, Joseph Bruno
- Richard Perez-Pena, *New York Times* Bureau Chief in Albany
- Roman Hedges, Deputy Secretary, New York State Assembly Ways and Means Committee
- Frank Mauro, Executive Director, Fiscal Policy Institute, Albany
- Gerald Benjamin, Dean, SUNY-New Paltz and author of numerous books and articles on the New York Legislature
- Diana Fortuna, President, Citizens Budget Commission, New York City
- Steve Gorelick, Assistant to the President of the City University of New York
- Cheryl Parsons Reul, Lobbyist with the firm of Nixon and Peabody
- William Johnson, Mayor, City of Rochester

D. Illinois

- Mary Sue Barrett, President, Metropolitan Planning Council
- Sean Heffernan and William Luking, lobbyists for the city of Chicago
- Steve Rauschenberger, State Senator (R.-Elgin)
- Rita Athas, Director of Regional Programs, City of Chicago
- James Durkin, State Representative (R-Westchester)
- Barbara Flynn Currie, House Majority Leader (D-Chicago)
- Julie Hamos, State Senator, (D-Evanston)
- Barak Obama, State Senator, (D-Chicago)
- Miguel del Valle, State Senator, (D-Chicago)

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