Challenging Change: Geographic dispersal of the foreign-born population and local anti-immigration policies*

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Abstract:

From 2000 to 2009, 215 local governments in the United States considered policies intended to restrict either the settlement of immigrants or the services and benefits available to them. This paper explores the relationship between these policy responses and the dramatic geographic dispersal of the immigrant population from major "immigrant gateway" cities to smaller cities and towns. I find that, at both the county and municipal level, an increase in the proportion of the population that is foreign-born is associated with an increased risk of an anti-immigration policy proposal if the locality voted Republican in 2004 or was located outside of a traditional immigrant gateway state. Geographic dispersal caused the immigrant population to grow more quickly in areas with these characteristics. A simulation shows that, as a result, geographic dispersal of the immigrant population was a key factor promoting the boom in local anti-immigration policy proposals after 2000.

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1. Introduction

In July of 2006, the small city of Hazleton, Pennsylvania made national headlines by passing a local law intended to drive unauthorized immigrants out of the town. The town's "Illegal Immigration Relief Act" created substantial penalties for employing or renting housing to unauthorized immigrants and declared English to be the town's official language. It was a watershed moment: Dozens of other city, town and county governments passed similar laws in the months and years that followed, despite the fact that Hazleton's law was blocked by court action. For the first time in US history, local governments became an active force in making immigration policy.

What explains the sudden and unprecedented popularity of these local "anti-immigration policies"? [1] Prominent journalists and politicians tied these local efforts to federal inaction on illegal immigration, noting that Hazleton's ordinance and its contemporaries followed two decades of steady growth of the unauthorized immigrant population and failed attempts by the US Congress to pass immigration reform legislation in 2005 (The New York Times 2009). These explanations do little to explain why some localities took action on immigration, while others did not, however.

This article examines the link between these local anti-immigration policies and one of the major demographic trends that shaped the experience of American localities over the past three decade: The geographic dispersal of the US immigrant population. Beginning before 1990, the proportion of the nation's immigrants located in traditional central city "gateways" such as New York,

[1] I define "anti-immigration policy proposals" broadly as concrete proposals for local laws or stated policies intended to limit immigration, illegal immigration or the impact either has on the local community. Some proponents of such ordinances would argue that they are instead intended to support legal immigrants. For example, a measure intended to prevent the hiring of unauthorized immigrants conceivably could improve employment prospects for authorized immigrants.

Los Angeles, Miami and Chicago declined, while significant immigrant populations sprang up in smaller cities, suburbs and towns across the country (Massey and Capoferro 2008; Singer 2004; Lichter and Johnson 2006). Hazleton itself is typical of the new immigrant destinations created by the geographic redistribution of the immigrant population: The estimated foreign born share of the city's population increased from 3.7 percent in 2000 to 14.0 percent in 2007 (US Census Bureau n.d.).

As the immigrant population dispersed, the nature of the localities that hosted immigrants broadened in important ways. Most obviously, immigrant populations boomed in localities that had little recent experience with accommodating newcomers from other countries. The differences only began there: many of the new immigrant destinations had electorates that were far more conservative than those in the traditional immigrant gateways, for example. There is a substantial body of theory and evidence suggesting that as immigrants moved into this diverse set of new immigrant destinations, the potential for natives to feel threatened would rise. This hypothesis gains credence from the high-profile local anti-immigration laws passed in Hazleton and other communities where immigrant populations have grown rapidly.

In this article, I test whether communities with specific characteristics—such as not having an established immigrant population or having a politically conservative electorate—are more likely than others to react to growth of the immigrant population by considering an anti-immigration policy change. I then conduct a simulation to determine whether the dispersal of the foreign born population into these and other communities might have promoted anti-immigration policies. Results show that simply being classified as a "new" immigrant destination in itself is not associated with greater sensitivity to changes in population makeup once other controls are introduced. However, localities that had a conservative electorate and that were located outside of the traditional immigrant gateway states were far more likely than other jurisdictions to consider an anti-immigration policy in response to growth of the immigrant population. Geographic dispersal, by causing the immigrant population to grow very

rapidly in localities with these very characteristics, may be implicated in the surge of anti-immigration policy proposals. Indeed, a simulation based on these results shows that about half of anti-immigration policies may have been related to geographic dispersal of the foreign-born populations.

2. Theoretical and Empirical Background

My analysis builds on three converging insights from the existing literature on local political, policy and opinion reactions to immigration. First, there is compelling evidence that growth of the immigrant population share in a local community may be a key trigger of defensive reactions from natives, including anti-immigration policy proposals. Second, as the immigrant population has dispersed geographically over the past three decades, immigrant populations have grown in cities, towns, and rural localities whose characteristics are very different from those of the traditional immigrant destinations. Third, many of the characteristics of these new immigrant destinations have been identified as possibly contributing to friction between natives and immigrants.

The importance of changing population composition

Sociologists and political scientists have long been interested in the role of local population composition in explaining public opinion and policy reactions to immigration-related issues at the sub-national level. The key variable in most analyses has been the size of the immigrant (or other minority) group relative to the majority. The competing theories of "group threat" and "contact" respectively predict that a larger minority share can either lead natives to feel threatened, or enable them to have positive, fear-dispelling encounters with immigrants, depending on the circumstances (Dixon 2006). However, neither group threat nor contact theories have consistently predicted when and where natives feel threatened by immigration (Stein, Post, and Rinden 2000).

The inconsistent evidence on the relationship between the size of the immigrant population and natives' opinions led to the hypothesis that *changes* in relative group sizes are more important for

understanding when feelings of threat materialize among natives than the relative group sizes themselves. This argument was materially advanced by Hopkins (2010), who finds that native residents of communities where the immigrant population share rose rapidly showed a greater negative change in their opinions about immigration when immigration was a salient national issue than did residents of other communities. The same study finds that municipalities considering anti-immigration policies in the period 2000 to 2006 had greater percent point changes in their foreign-born population share from 1990 to 2000 than did a set of matched controls. [2]

The theory that growth in immigrant population share locally can set off defensive reactions thus provides one key part of the link between geographic dispersal of the immigrant population and anti-immigration policies. However, the findings presented by Hopkins (2010) are not by themselves evidence that the geographic dispersal of the immigrant population promoted anti-immigration policies. Although Hopkins found a positive association between changes in the immigrant share of the population and anti-immigration policymaking, the traditional immigrant gateways continued to experience the largest such changes in their immigrant population share, even as geographic dispersal brought immigrants into new areas as well.

Local context in a shifting immigration geography

Geographic dispersal has increased the number of localities where the immigrant population is growing. It has also broadening the sets of characteristics of the communities where immigrants and natives encounter each other. In many cases outlined below, there is reason to believe that the

[2]Ramakrishnan and Wong (2008), using a different dataset and model, find no relationship between Hispanic population growth from 1990 to 2000 and anti-immigration policy proposals. This may be due to their use of growth rates (as opposed to changes in population share) to measure changes in population composition. Very large growth rates can result in insignificant point changes because the majority of US communities have long had very small or nonexistent immigrant and Hispanic populations.

potential for feelings of threat and conflict in response to a growing immigrant population may be higher in these new settlement areas.

Novelty of immigration

Most obviously, geographic dispersal has brought immigrants into communities with little recent experience of immigration—a process that a number of observers have linked to friction between natives and immigrants. Accounts from the news media and advocacy organizations of high profile anti-immigration policy proposals or native-on-immigrant violence have identified the novelty of Hispanic immigration in the new immigrant destinations as a possible trigger (Semple 2008). Beyond the few extreme incidents that attracted media attention, a body of rich ethnographies and case studies document the complex and often contentious adjustment of natives to immigrants and vice-versa in these places (Gozdziak and Martin 2005; Massey 2008; Singer, Hardwick, and Brettell 2008; Zuniga and Hernandez-Leon 2005). In particular, a number of case studies have documented how immigration to relatively homogenous communities may threaten a psychological sense of place, continuity and community in the new immigrant destinations in a way that it does not in the traditional immigrant destinations (Fennelly 2008; Erwin 2003; Schoenholtz 2005). Further, immigrant-focused services that may smooth intergroup relations, such as English language classes and translation services, may be less developed in areas where immigration is new (Kay 2005; Riffe, Turner, and Rojas-Guyler 2008).

There are, of course, multiple geographical and jurisdictional levels at which immigration can be "new." Even if immigration is new to a particular locality, it may be a familiar phenomenon in the state that contains it. Indeed, the five traditional immigrant gateway states[3] contained around a quarter of counties and places categorized as "new immigrant destinations", under one definition of the term

[3]New York, California, Florida, Illinois and Texas.

(O'Neil 2011b)[4]. States provide an important element of context: Many important social and educational services used by immigrants are provided or funded by state-level governments and organizations (Marrow 2005).

Employment and growth

In general, localities that attracted "new" immigrant populations in the past two decades also attracted resettling natives and had high overall rates of population growth. This growth potentially camouflages some impacts of immigration: Case studies from very rapidly growing, largely suburban areas have commented on the inconspicuous clusters of immigrants in booming areas and the relatively low visibility of the jobs they occupy (Smith and Furuseth 2008; Odem 2008).

However, not all places that attracted immigrants experienced such growth: A smaller number of communities received influxes of immigrants, but had zero or negative growth of the native population. This may create a context in which immigration is more visible and threatening. Donato and coauthors (2008, 2007) study rural counties that have had native population losses offset by immigrant population growth, observing that these places have special potential and risk for immigrant integration outcomes. For example, immigrants have come to dominate the school-aged population and native household incomes are very low in such places, on average.

Another category of communities singled out in my analysis are those with substantial employment in nondurable manufacturing industries that are heavily dependent on immigrant labor, specifically meatpacking, food processing, textiles, apparel, leather goods, furniture and wood products. The relocation of these industries away from major cities coupled with active recruitment of immigrant

[4]O'Neil (2011b) defines the new immigrant destinations as those counties and places whose foreign-born population was below that of the country as a whole in 1990, but where the percent of their population that was foreign-born increased by more than five percentage points by 2007.

labor were major reasons for immigrant population growth in many rural or small city Midwestern and Southeastern communities (Guzmán and McConnell 2002; Kandel and Parrado 2005). These industries also shape the integration process once immigrants arrive in a community. Immigrants in nondurable manufacturing industries are often employed by a single, prominent producer. Despite the generally unattractive nature of such jobs, immigrant labor in these industries represents highly visible competition for lesser-skilled natives (Gouveia and Stull 1995; Griffith 1995; Kandel and Parrado 2005; Anderson 2000).

The general state of a locality's labor market is also a potentially important variable, although one not as important when considering geographic dispersal. At the individual level, several studies find that natives in financial peril, the unemployed and those with a pessimistic view of the national economy view immigration more negatively (Alvarez and Butterfield 2000; Citrin et al. 1997; O'Neil and Tienda 2010). At the community level, Hopkins (2010) finds that localities that both experienced an increase in unemployment and had a large immigrant population share were at higher risk of considering an anti-immigration policy.

Native population characteristics

The education level of individual natives and in communities as a whole have long been a key variable of interest in the study of the politics of immigration. Individuals with greater education are generally found to be more supportive of immigration, either because immigration presents a greater net economic benefit (and less of a threat) to better-educated residents or because education expands tolerance for diversity and change (Espenshade and Hempstead 1996; Pantoja 2006; Scheve and Slaughter 2001). This idea is relevant for understanding the consequences of geographic dispersal: as immigrants populations: as immigrant populations have grown in suburbs, rural areas, and previously

stagnant urban cores, many areas with low rates of college and high school completion among native have seen substantial gains in their immigrant populations (O'Neil 2011b).

The US immigrant population was traditionally overrepresented in "blue" states like California and New York and in urban cores where the Democratic Party is relatively strong. Dispersal brought immigrants into more politically conservative suburbs, exurbs and rural areas, as well as "red" states in the Southeast and Midwest (O'Neil 2011b). Political beliefs are highly associated with opinions about immigration and immigrants, presumably because immigration provokes questions of national identity and public priorities (Citrin et al. 1990; Pantoja 2006). Important associations between political preferences of local voters and the proposal and/or passage of immigration-related laws have been found at both state and local levels, making a the political composition of a jurisdiction's electorate a key variable of interest (Chavez and Provine 2009; Ramakrishnan and T. Wong 2008).

Foreign-born population characteristics

The characteristics of immigrants themselves also play an important, if less well studied, role in the way natives react. The dispersal of the immigrant population coincided with important changes in the composition of newly arriving immigrants in terms of source countries. Immigrants from Latin America, especially Mexico, accounted for the majority of growth in the foreign-born population since 1980. Partially as a result, the geographic dispersal of the immigrant population has also been driven by the Mexican-origin and other Hispanic immigrant groups (Massey and Capoferro 2008). The combination of these two factors means that the foreign-born populations of many new immigrant destinations are dominated by a single, recognizable language and ethnic group. Hispanic immigration has inspired high profile concern about cultural changes (e.g., Huntington 2004) and has been shown in experiments to inspire negative emotional reactions among natives, to a far greater degree than does the immigration of other groups (Brader, Valentino, and Suhay 2008). In case studies in suburban Dallas,

Brettell (2008) hypothesizes that the dominance of Hispanic immigrants in one city promoted an anti-immigration policy, while the multi-ethnic mix of immigrants in another city received a warmer welcome.

Geographic dispersal of the immigrant population primarily resulted from changes in the settlement locations of recent arrivals to the country, not relocations of long-settled immigrants (Lichter and Johnson 2009). This implies that a lower proportion of the immigrant population in these new settlement areas will be naturalized citizens, relative to more established immigrant destinations. Naturalized citizens are thought to play a possibly important but ambiguous role in local politics: their potential voting power could either help fend off anti-immigration policies or present a special threat to natives, leading to heightened conflict (Dancygier 2010).

3. Data, Hypotheses and Methods

My analysis consists of three stages. First, I use regression analysis to test the hypothesis that growth in the foreign-born population share of a locality increases the probability of a local anti-immigration policy proposal. This provides a comparison to Hopkins (2010), which supported the same hypothesis using a different dataset, time period, unit of analysis and model. Second, I test the hypothesis that specific characteristics of localities discussed above, such as having a conservative electorate or an immigrant population dominated by Hispanics, make them more likely to react to growth of the immigrant population by considering an anti-immigration policy proposal. Third, I use simulated datasets to model a hypothetical case in order to roughly quantify the possible importance of geographic dispersal in explaining the popularity of anti-immigration policy proposals.

Units of Analysis

Choosing a geographic unit of analysis presents challenges given that both counties and municipalities took action on immigration in the past decade. In my dataset, there are 215 unique

government jurisdictions that considered anti-immigration policies, 77 of which are at the county level and 138 of which are in towns, cities or other municipal jurisdictions. I thus conduct my analysis separately for counties and Census places (which correspond closely to municipal jurisdictions). I restrict the analysis to counties and Census places of 5,000 persons or more population in the 2005-9 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates, leaving analytic populations of 2,832 counties and 5,895 Census places.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable indicates whether or not a jurisdiction (county or Census place) seriously considered a concrete proposal for an anti-immigration policy, defined as a policy intended to either enforce federal immigration law locally or to restrict the services or privileges accessible to authorized or unauthorized immigrants. More details on these policies are available in O'Neil (2011a).

I choose to measure proposed, rather than passed, policies because there is substantial ambiguity surrounding the substantive meaning of proposal passage in terms of political support. In many of the jurisdictions where support for an anti-immigration policy was arguably strongest, the proposed laws were tabled because their very extremity made the possibility of court action likely. In other jurisdictions, more moderate policies passed more easily with less vocal or widespread political support.

I also count applications to US Immigration and Custom Enforcement's "287(g)" program as anti-immigration policy proposals. 287(g) agreements, which allow local police to be deputized to enforce federal immigration laws, involve localities directly in immigration enforcement. I include these federal-local cooperative policies because they share the same goals as other local anti-immigration policies and are initiated at the local level.

The primary method for identifying proposed policies was a full-text search of the Dow Jones Factiva database of US newspapers for a set of keywords commonly associated with local immigration-related policies, during the period from January 1, 2000 to December 1, 2009. The Factiva database contains articles from 605 major and minor US newspapers in all 50 states, as well as major newswires. I also obtained lists of proposed policies from organizations representing different political perspectives on immigration.[5] I obtained a list of jurisdictions that signed "287(g)" local immigration enforcement agreements from the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement website (US Immigration and Customs Enforcement 2008).

I confirmed each policy proposal and its outcome through either the minutes of public meetings or newspaper accounts. A jurisdiction was coded as having proposed a policy when specific language for an ordinance or a formal motion was successfully introduced and formally discussed by the governing body, where the relevant executive body considered a stated, formal change in policy, or where a voter-led initiative was successfully placed on the ballot by petition.

My search yielded 259 policies considered by localities from January 2000 to December 2009. Of these, 180 (69.5 percent) passed into law or were otherwise approved by the local government. Two hundred fifteen distinct jurisdictions considered at least one policy and 156 (72.6 percent) of these approved at least one policy. These jurisdictions were located in 150 distinct counties. Seventy-seven county-level jurisdictions considered at least one policy, 66 of these passed at least one policy. One hundred thirty eight sub-county (municipal) jurisdictions considered policies, 90 passed or implemented

[5] The Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM) and Latino Justice PRLDEF provided me with lists of proposed ordinances. I also obtained lists from websites of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF), the Immigration Reform Law Institute, US English, and ProEnglish (LatinoJustice PRLDEF n.d.; Fair Immigration Reform Movement n.d.). Latino Justice PRLDEF, ACLU, MALDEF and FIRM are immigrant advocacy and civil rights organizations. The Immigration Reform Law Institute (a branch of the Fair Immigration Reform Movement) advocates in favor of legislation to reduce immigration, while US English and ProEnglish advocate on behalf of official English legislation.

them. Eight of the sub-county level policy proposals occurred in political jurisdictions with no closely equivalent Census place and were not used in analysis.

I cannot directly assess the extent to which this search captured all anti-immigration policies considered by US localities but my results compare favorably other studies. Using a slightly different definition of "proposal," Hopkins (2010) finds 108 sub-county localities considered anti-immigration policies from 2000 to 2006, compared with 98 in the same period in my data. Ramakrishnan and T. Wong (2008) found 78 jurisdictions had considered anti-immigration policies through July 2007, compared with 121 equivalent jurisdictions in the same time period in my data.

Of the 259 different proposed anti-immigration policies found in my search, 89 (34%) sought to prevent unauthorized immigrants from obtaining employment, 66 (26%) were 287(g) agreements, 63 (24%) declared English to be the official language or regulated the use of foreign languages, 46 (18%) regulated access to housing. Twenty policies (8%) restricted the hiring of day laborers, 19 (7%) had to do with immigration by local policies without a 287(g) agreement, and 11% (4%) limited ability of immigrants to access public services. Twenty-three (9%) had goals that could not be easily classified and many policies had more than one objective. Only 18 policy proposals preceded Hazleton's proposal in 2006. In that year, 79 different policies were considered, followed by 88 in 2007, 57 in 2008 and 17 in 2009.

Predictor variables

This analysis tests whether anti-immigration policy proposals are related to changes in the immigrant share of a locality's population and whether this relationship is moderated by other local characteristics. One key predictor variable is therefore the percent point change in the jurisdiction's immigrant population share between estimates from the 1990 Census and 2005-2009 combined ACS estimate (I refer to this second time point as "2007", for convenience). It is joined by indicator variables

identifying jurisdictions that fall into key theoretical categories.[6] Include a variable that measures the "novelty" of immigration to the jurisdiction by indicating whether it had a foreign-born population below the national proportion in 1990. Other variables measure whether the jurisdiction was in a traditional "Big Five" immigrant destination state, had a shrinking native population, an immigrant population that was dominated by Latin Americans or had few naturalized citizens, a poorly educated native population, a record of supporting conservative candidates in national elections, or a local economy that was dominated by immigrant intensive non-durable manufacturing industries or that had suffered large increases in unemployment. The criteria for coding these variables are detailed in Table 1 and each variable is summarized in Table 2. In addition to the variables of analytic interest, I use controls for 2000 population size and density and for urban, suburban and rural status.[7] All variables are from estimates generated by the Census Bureau from the 1990 Census, 2000 Census or 2005-9 combined ACS, except for data on unemployment (Bureau of Labor Statistics n.d.) and voting (Haines Stewart III; Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research 2008).

[TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]

[TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE]

Hypothesis testing

My first hypothesis is that growth in the foreign-born share of a locality increases the probability of a local anti-immigration policy proposal. I test this by estimating the association between point change in percent foreign-born and probability of considering an anti-immigration policy, while

[6] I describe these characteristics using indicator variables primarily because they result in regression coefficients that have a clear, interpretable substantive meaning when interacted with a continuous predictor variable.

[7] Urban status is defined by whether a jurisdiction intersects the central city of a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) as defined by the 2000 Census, lies within an MSA but outside a central city, or is outside an MSA, respectively.

statistically controlling for certain other variables. I use a linear probability model for ease of exposition[8] and estimate this equation separately on data at the county and Census-place level:

$$Y_i = \alpha + \beta_1 \Delta Fb_i + \gamma X_i + \rho Z_i + \varepsilon_i \qquad \text{[Equation 1]}$$

Y_i is coded one if the jurisdiction considered an anti-immigration policy and zero otherwise. ΔFb_i is the jurisdiction's point change in percent foreign-born between the 1990 Census and the 2005-9 ACS estimates. The coefficient β_1 thus represents the change in probability of considering an anti-immigration policy associated with a one percent increase in percent foreign-born between 1990 and 2007.

X_i is a vector of control indicator variables. These controls are grouped separately from other control variables (Z_i) because each of them will be interacted with ΔFb_i when testing the second hypothesis. These variables, described in Table 1, include indicators describing the novelty of immigration, native population characteristics, immigrant population characteristics, and local growth and employment conditions. Z_i is a vector containing additional control variables: Percent foreign-born in 2007, logged population size, logged population density, and indicators for suburban or rural status, with urban being the omitted category.

The variables contained in the vector X_i take on analytic importance as I test whether other local characteristics (measured by the variables in X_i) influence the association between growth of the immigrant population share and anti-immigration policy proposals. I test this hypothesis by adding additional interactions between all of the variables contained in vector X_i and the variable measuring growth of the foreign-born population to Equation 1 above:.

[8] Although a non-linear model such as a logit offers certain advantages (and was used in the simulations that follow), the substantive meaning of logit interactions are less intuitive and logit coefficients cannot be compared across nested models without additional calculations (Ai and Norton 2003; Karlson, Holm, and Breen 2010).

$$Y_i = \alpha + \beta_1 \Delta Fb_i + B_x X_i \Delta Fb_i + \gamma X_i + \rho Z_i + \varepsilon_i \qquad \text{[Equation 2]}$$

This second model thus allows the relationship between changes in foreign-born population share and risk of an anti-immigration policy proposal to vary with different values of the indicator variables contained in vector X_i.

Simulating Geographic Dispersal

My regressions provide estimates of the relationship between an individual jurisdiction's characteristics and the probability that it considered an anti-immigration policy. However, they provide little information about the relationship between the macro process of geographic dispersal of the immigrant population and the nationwide phenomenon of local anti-immigration policies. In order to explore this larger relationship, I consider a hypothetical counterfactual: Given the regression analysis results, how many anti-immigration policy proposals would have been expected had the immigrant population retained its 1990 geographic distribution as it grew?

I simulate this "no dispersion" case by calculating each jurisdiction's point change in percent foreign-born between 1990 and 2007, assuming that each jurisdiction received the same proportion of growth in the national foreign-born population as its share of the existing foreign-born population in 1990. I then generate predicted probabilities using this simulated data (with all variables unchanged) and the coefficients the generated from Equation 2 above, estimated using a logit model on the real data.[9] The predicted probabilities from this hypothetical "no dispersion" simulation can then be compared against predicted probabilities generated using the real data, providing a demonstration of what my results imply about the role of geographic dispersal in promoting local anti-immigration policies.

[9] A logit model is used because it does not result in out-of-range predictions, as does the linear model, and interpretation of coefficients is not important here.

Limitations of the analysis and robustness testing

A few limitations of the analysis deserve mention. The cross-sectional models developed here cannot directly confirm causal mechanisms. The stylized models rely extensively on indicator variables in order to make the theoretical arguments clearer and the results easy to interpret, but lose information in the process. The possibility that the results are sensitive to the choice of threshold used in converting continuous variables into indicator variables was tested by repeating the analysis using alternative specifications of the indicator variables. Substantive results remained unchanged. Of course, there may be confounding variables that I have not included in my models or discussed here. In particular, there are a host of differences between the "Big Five" immigrant gateway states and the other states that may be meaningful to this analysis; I do not explore here what underlying mechanism creates the difference I observe between these two groups of states. The counties and Census places observed were at risk of making these proposals from 2000 to 2009, yet the key predictor variable is change in proportion foreign-born between 1990 and an estimate constructed from 2005 to 2009 data. The need to use county level data for two core variables in the place-level analysis also adds an element of imprecision.

4. Results

Growth of immigrant population share and risk of policy proposal

Columns 1 and 2 in Table 3 (for counties) and Table 4 (for Census places) present estimated coefficients from Equation 1. In both the county and place-level analysis, there is a statistically significant positive relationship between percent point change in a jurisdiction's foreign-born population share between 1990 and 2007 and the probability of an anti-immigration policy proposal. At the county level, each point increase in percent foreign-born is associated with a 0.9 percentage point increase in the probability that the jurisdiction considers an anti-immigration policy. At the place level, the

association is weaker: Each point increase in percent foreign-born is associated with about a 0.02 percentage point increase in the probability that the jurisdiction considers an anti-immigration policy.

[TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE]

[TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE]

These seemingly small, but statistically significant, associations are important in context. The 90th percentile for change in percent foreign-born for counties is 5.3 percentage points, for Census places the same figure is 11.4 percentage points. These population changes would imply a risk of an anti-immigration policy 4.8 percentage points and 2.2 percentage points higher than an otherwise similar county or place, respectively, which experienced no change in proportion foreign-born. Only 2.7 percent of counties with more than 5,000 people and 1.8 percent of Census places with more than 5,000 persons actually considered an anti-immigration policy. Thus, the additional risk of an anti-immigration policy associated with change in foreign-born population share is large relative to the baseline risk. Although my results are only loosely comparable to those presented by Hopkins (2010: 55), the associations I find are of a similar order of magnitude and my results also support the hypothesis that growth in a jurisdiction's foreign-born population share may promote local anti-immigration policies.

Other attributes and sensitivity to population change

Columns 3 and 4 in Tables 2 and 3 report results from Model 2, which introduces interactions between point change in percent foreign-born between 1990 and 2007 and a set of indicator variables identifying several classes of jurisdictions. In the county-level analysis, two of these interaction terms have associations with the probability of an anti-immigration policy proposal that are significantly different from zero: The interaction with the indicator for being in a Big Five traditional immigration state and the interaction with the indicator for being politically conservative. These coefficients imply that counties outside of Big Five states and conservative counties are more sensitive to changes in their

population makeup than their non-Big Five and non-conservative counterparts. Every one point increase in percent foreign-born in counties outside of a Big Five state is associated with a 1.4 percentage point greater risk of an anti-immigration policy proposal, relative to the same increase if it occurred in an otherwise similar jurisdiction inside a Big Five State. A one point increase in percent foreign-born in a conservative county is associated with a 1.7 percentage point greater risk of an anti-immigration policy proposal relative to the same change in an otherwise similar liberal county, assuming all other variables are the same.

To give a specific example, Loudon County, Virginia had a 14.2 point increase in percent foreign-born between 1990 and 2007, was located outside of the Big Five states and voted solidly Republican in the 2004 election. The model predicts that the county has a 40 percent probability of an anti-immigration proposal (Loudon County did, in fact, enact an anti-immigration policy). If that county had instead experienced no change in its foreign-born population share, the model would predict only a 5.3 percent probability of a policy proposal. An otherwise identical county, with the same 14.2 point change in percent foreign-born, but located in a Big Five State and with a liberal political constituency, would have a predicted probability of 16.4 percent.

The place-level analysis reveals a similar pattern of associations between anti-immigration policy proposals and the interactions between the various indicators and change in foreign-born population share. As with the county-level analysis, the associations between probability of an anti-immigration policy proposal and the interactions of change of foreign-born population share with being in a Big Five state and with being politically conservative are significantly different from zero. Every one point increase in percent foreign-born is associated with a 0.19 percentage point greater probability of an anti-immigration policy proposal if it occurs in a place outside a Big Five State, relative to the same change in an otherwise similar place in a Big Five state. Each one point increase in percent foreign-born is associated with a 0.24 percentage point greater probability of a policy proposal if it occurs in

conservative jurisdiction, relative to the same change in an otherwise similar place with a liberal voting record.

To give a concrete example at the place level, Morristown, Tennessee witnessed a 14.5 point increase in percent foreign-born between 1990 and 2007, was not in a Big Five state and voted heavily Republican in 2004. The model predicts an 8.9 percent probability of an anti-immigration policy proposal (The town did not consider any such policy). If the town instead had no change in its foreign-born share, the model would have predicted a three percent probability of an anti-immigration policy proposal. If it had the same 14.5 point change in foreign-born population share, but instead had been in a Big Five state and had liberal voting patterns, the model would have predicted a two percent probability of an anti-immigration proposal.

The association between changes in foreign-born population share in a place with low levels of education and the probability of an anti-immigration policy proposal is also negative and significantly different from zero. Given prior research showing associations between lower levels of education and less favorable opinions about immigration, this association is unexpected. One plausible substantive explanation is that communities with more well-educated people are better equipped to organize a policy response to immigration.

To summarize, in both the county-level and place-level analysis, the association between the probability of an anti-immigration policy and the interaction with the indicator for a low foreign-born population in 1990 is not statistically significant from zero when the other interaction terms are controlled. The novelty *per se* of immigration to a jurisdiction appears to be less important in moderating reactions to foreign-born population growth than other differences among jurisdictions, namely political orientation and location inside or outside of a traditional immigrant gateway state. Native population losses, immigrant-intensive manufacturing industries, increases in the unemployment

rate, Latin-dominated immigration populations and low proportions of naturalized immigrants among the foreign-born also do not appear to moderate the relationship between the change in foreign-born population share and the likelihood of anti-immigration policy proposals at either geographic level of analysis.

Simulation results

Table 5 describes predicted probabilities of an anti-immigration policy proposal for counties and Census places based on real data and a hypothetical case in which the immigrant population retained its 1990 geographic distribution as it grew. Based on these predictions, approximately what proportion of anti-immigration policy proposals might be attributed to geographic dispersal? To give a concrete example, I designate that a policy proposal occurs in every place with a predicted probability of 13.1 percent or greater and in every county with a predicted probability of 22.0 percent or greater. These thresholds would result in the same predicted number of proposals as actually occurred, based on the real data. At these thresholds, the "no dispersal" scenario predicts 56 percent fewer place-level proposals and 54 percent fewer county-level proposals, relative to the predictions generated from the real data. Thus, in this simulated case, dispersal of the immigrant population is implicated in about half of place and county-level anti-immigration proposals. This is a hypothetical counterfactual and must be interpreted as such. However, my regression model results clearly imply that geographic dispersal played a major role in raising the risk of anti-immigration policy proposals.

[TABLE 5 ABOUT HERE]

6. Conclusion

My findings, like those of others, support the contention that growth of the immigrant population as a share of a locality's overall population increases the likelihood that the local government consider an anti-immigration policy. However, my results argue that this relationship between

population change and policy reaction is not the same in every local community. Cities, towns and counties that are located outside of a traditional immigrant gateway state and whose electorates are more conservative appear to be more "sensitive" to immigration in my analysis, in the sense that I find a stronger association between change in the immigrant population share and probability of an anti-immigration policy proposal in these jurisdictions. My results argue that policymakers and citizens are aware of immigrant settlement locally and in many cases motivated to react defensively to it. They also show that other, more static, aspects of local context remain an important factor in determining how local governments respond to the challenge of immigrant settlement.

Surprisingly, the novelty of immigration to the new immigrant destinations, by itself, does not appear to increase the probability that a locality will consider an anti-immigration policy in reaction to growth of the immigrant population share. This finding warrants looking beyond the "new versus established" dichotomy of immigrant destinations to examine other aspects of local context, and to identify other ways in which geographic dispersal of the immigrant population has changed the immigrant experience and the American experience. These changes may be substantial. In the statistical model I use here, around half of local anti-immigration policy proposal might have never happened if the geographic distribution of the immigrant population never changed after 1990. The comparison is hypothetical, but could even understate the importance of geographic dispersal: the town that provided the spark for so much local legislation on immigration, Hazleton PA, was heavily settled by immigrants as part of this recent process of dispersal.

My results raise additional questions that deserve further research. Although being located in a traditional immigrant gateway state appears to dampen policy reactions to population change, it is not clear whether state-level policies or politics, experience with nearby immigrant populations or some other factor is responsible for the observed association. Similarly, the mechanisms tying conservative voting preferences at the local level to greater sensitivity to population change warrant exploration.

Further, geographic dispersal and the resulting changes in the local contexts of immigrant settlement could be an important explanation for the now-numerous state-level policy debates on immigration and in the contentious politics of immigration at the federal level. The popularity of local anti-immigration policies suggests that geographic dispersal of the immigrant population may be fundamentally altering the way Americans approach immigration policy, but as yet we have little information as to how and why.

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Tables and Figures

Table 1. Criteria for coding indicator variables.

Variable	Coded 1 if jurisdiction meets this criterion:
Low Immigrant In 1990	Less than 7.9% foreign-born in 1990.[#]
"Big Five State"	In NY, FL, IL, CA or TX.
Lost native population	Native population was unchanged or decreased between 1990 and 2007.
High Latin-American	68.5% or more of foreign-born population was from Latin America.[++]
Low naturalization	27.2% or less of foreign-born population was naturalized citizens.[+]
Conservative	Less than 46.6% of votes were cast for Republican Presidential candidate in 2004.[+]
Low native education	Less than 76.5% of blacks and non-hispanic whites had high school degree[+] OR less than 17.1 percent had bachelor's degree.[+]
Immigrant-heavy manufacturing	Greater than 3.9 of employment was in meatpacking, food processing, textiles, apparel, and leather and wood products.[++]
Increase in unemployment	Experienced year-to-year rise in the annual average unemployment rate of two percent or more between 2002 and 2008.
Location	
Urban	Is or overlaps central city of a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), 2000 Census definition.
Suburban	In MSA, but in not and does not overlap central city
Rural	Not in MSA.

* = County-level variable is used for both county and place-level analysis. #= cutpoint is national population proportion. + = Cutpoint is 25th percentile for counties. ++ = Cutpoint is 75th percentile for counties.

Table 2. Mean characteristics of Counties and Census places of 5000 persons that did or did not consider an anti-immigration policy proposal 2000-2009.

	Counties		Places	
	Proposal (77)	No Proposal (2,756)	Proposal (106)	No Proposal
Key Indicator Variables (% of jurisdictions)				
Low immigrant share in 1990	90.9	95.1	65.7	76.2
"Big Five State"	14.3	17.2	29.6	33.5
Lost native population, 1990-2007	7.8	28.2	30.6	34.8
High Latin-American share of foreign born	19.5	23.6	27.8	17.5
Low naturalization	19.5	23.7	27.8	17.7
Conservative	79.2	72.5	62.0	49.8
Low native education	9.1	16.7	8.3	15.0
Immigrant-heavy manufacturing	26.0	26.4	14.8	11.2
Increase in unemployment	14.3	14.4	21.3	14.5
Population growth and urbanity				
Change in percent foreign-born, 1990 to 2007	5.4	1.9	8.3	4.1
Percent foreign-born, 1990	4.2	2.2	8.0	6.3
Percent foreign-born, 2007	9.6	4.1	16.4	10.4
Total Population, 2007 (1000s)	573.0	93.0	124.5	30.4
Population density (persons per sq. mile)	740.6	269.0	3,289.8	2,868.2
Native population growth (%), 1990 to 2007	40.2	14.3	30.8	38.6
Central city (% of jurisdictions)	61.0	16.0	32.4	8.2
Suburban (% of jurisdictions)	20.8	12.4	55.6	68.3
Rural (% of jurisdictions)	18.2	71.1	12.0	23.5
Foreign-born Population Characteristics				
Percent naturalized, ACS	37.2	41.3	36.8	46.1
Percent from Latin America	48.8	42.6	53.4	35.5
Percent arrived after 2000, ACS	33.7	30.7	31.8	27.9
Population and Economic Characteristics				
Percent voting for Kerry, 2004[b]	38.8	40.0	44.8	46.4
% of adults without high school degree, 2000	16.2	23.3	15.6	15.6
Percent with bachelor's degree, 2000	25.4	19.3	25.0	25.5
Percent employed in selected manufacturing[a]	3.1	3.7	2.4	2.1
Largest year-to-year unemployment increase(%)	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.4
Unemployment (%), 2001-2004 mean	4.9	5.7	5.0	5.5
Unemployment (%), 2005-2008 mean	4.6	5.4	4.6	5.1

Sources: 1990 US Census. 2007 values are from American Community Survey 2005-9 pooled estimates.

a. Includes food processing, meatpacking, furniture, textiles, wood and leather goods. Source: Count Business Patterns 2007. b. Source: Haines Stewart, n.d..

Table 3. OLS regressions of indicator for anti-immigration policy proposal on county characteristics and their interaction with point change in percent foreign-born. Coefficients and (standard errors).

	Model 1		Model 2	
	Coef.	**(S.E)[1]**	**Coef.**	**(S.E)**
Point change in % foreign born, 1990 to 2007	0.009*	(0.004)	0.008	(0.006)
Point change in % foreign born interacted with indicators for:				
Low immigrant share in 1990			0.000	(0.006)
"Big Five State"			-0.014***	(0.004)
Lost native population, 1990-2007			-0.007	(0.004)
High Latin-American			-0.003	(0.005)
Low naturalization			-0.007	(0.004)
Conservative			0.017***	(0.004)
Low native education			-0.005	(0.004)
Immigrant-heavy manufacturing			0.002	(0.005)
Increase in unemployment			0.004	(0.004)
Classes of counties (indicators):				
Low Immigrant In 1990	0.074	(0.039)	0.037	(0.037)
"Big Five State"	-0.030*	(0.012)	0.003	(0.007)
Lost native population 1990-2007	-0.001	(0.005)	0.011	(0.007)
High Latin-American	-0.011	(0.008)	-0.013	(0.010)
Low naturalization	-0.006	(0.005)	0.009	(0.007)
Conservative	0.029**	(0.009)	-0.001	(0.007)
Low native education	0.003	(0.006)	0.010	(0.007)
Immigrant-heavy manufacturing	0.004	(0.007)	-0.001	(0.009)
Increase in unemployment	0.002	(0.007)	-0.007	(0.006)
Other Controls:				
Log population, 2007	0.026**	(0.009)	0.025**	(0.009)
Log population density	-0.004	(0.004)	-0.005	(0.004)
Percent foreign born, 2007	0.002	(0.002)	0.002	(0.003)
Suburb	-0.031	(0.027)	-0.036	(0.025)
Rural	-0.030	(0.023)	-0.030	(0.021)
Constant	-0.365*	(0.147)	-0.324*	(0.142)
Observations	2,832		2,832	
R-squared	0.097		0.127	

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05 1. Standard errors are robust to clustering at the state level.

Table 4. OLS regressions of indicator for anti-immigration policy proposal on Census place characteristics and their interaction with point change in percent foreign-born. Coefficients and (standard errors).

	Model 1		Model 2	
	Coef.	(S.E)[1]	Coef.	(S.E)
Point change in % foreign born, 1990 to 2007	0.0019***	(0.0005)	0.0021	(0.0013)
Point change in % foreign born interacted with indicators for:				
Low immigrant share in 1990			-0.0008	(0.0010)
"Big Five State"			-0.0019*	(0.0008)
Lost native population, 1990-2007			-0.0005	(0.0011)
High Latin-American			-0.0004	(0.0017)
Low naturalization			0.0019	(0.0014)
Conservative			0.0024**	(0.0009)
Low native education			-0.0026**	(0.0009)
Immigrant-heavy manufacturing			-0.0007	(0.0024)
Increase in unemployment			0.0022	(0.0013)
Classes of counties (indicators):				
Low Immigrant In 1990	-0.0001	(0.0068)	0.0022	(0.0053)
"Big Five State"	-0.0113*	(0.0043)	-0.0031	(0.0035)
Lost native population 1990-2007	-0.0016	(0.0052)	0.0008	(0.0041)
High Latin-American	0.0038	(0.0067)	0.0015	(0.0078)
Low naturalization	0.0084	(0.0061)	-0.0008	(0.0055)
Conservative	0.0143**	(0.0045)	0.0062	(0.0038)
Low native education	-0.0085	(0.0051)	0.0028	(0.0032)
Immigrant-heavy manufacturing	0.0048	(0.0093)	0.0065	(0.0073)
Increase in unemployment	0.0080	(0.0044)	-0.0022	(0.0068)
Other Controls:				
Log population, 2007	0.0200***	(0.0053)	0.0196***	(0.0051)
Log population density	-0.0055	(0.0028)	-0.0058*	(0.0028)
Percent foreign born, 2007	0.0002	(0.0002)	0.0003	(0.0003)
Suburb	-0.0139	(0.0135)	-0.0134	(0.0130)
Rural	-0.0205	(0.0144)	-0.0188	(0.0137)
Observations	5,895		5,895	
R-squared	0.0401		0.0458	

*** p<0.001, ** p<0.01, * p<0.05 1. Standard errors are robust to clustering at the state level.

Table 5. Predicted probabilities of an anti-immigration policy proposal from real data and from a dataset simulating no dispersal of the immigrant population after 1990.

	Places		Counties	
	Real Data	No Dispersal	Real Data	No Dispersal
Predicted probabilities				
Mean	1.8%	1.4%	2.7%	1.9%
75th percentile	1.7%	1.4%	1.8%	1.4%
Number of jurisdictions with predicted probabilities above:				
5%	428	278	348	250
10%	165	82	184	114
20%	47	22	90	47
30%	13	9	43	20
Predicted number of anti-immigration policy proposals[1]				
	106	49	77	35

1. Assumes that proposals occur in places with predicted probabilities above 13.1% and counties with predicted probabilities above 22.0%.