

# Trump and Trade: Protectionist Politics and Redistributive Policy\*

Melinda N. Ritchie<sup>†</sup>      Hye Young You<sup>‡</sup>

## Abstract

Do redistributive policies intended to mitigate the costs of trade reduce protectionist backlash? To understand the link between policymaking and the electoral consequences of policy outcomes, we address this question using data on redistributive assistance to workers harmed by trade liberalization. By analyzing the 2016 US presidential primary and general election results, we show these redistributive policy benefits are associated with reduced support for then-presidential candidate, Donald Trump, who ran on an anti-globalization platform. These findings suggest redistributive trade assistance may have a political impact by mitigating support for protectionist platforms and anti-globalization rhetoric of presidential candidates. Our results suggest that the redistributive program we examine in this paper may accomplish one of its objectives: to make trade liberalization more politically palatable. This paper extends findings in the extant literature on anti-incumbency effects to suggest that policy outcomes affect electoral support for candidates with anti-globalization platforms.

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\*We are thankful for comments from Ben Bishin, Jason Coronel, Kevin Esterling, Indridi Indridason, Pam McCann, Jenn Merolla, Bruce Oppenheimer, Mitch Seligson, Liz Zechmeister, seminar participants at the University of Southern California and the University of California, San Diego.

<sup>†</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, University of California, Riverside. Email: [melinda.ritchie@gmail.com](mailto:melinda.ritchie@gmail.com)

<sup>‡</sup>Assistant Professor, Wilf Family Department of Politics, New York University. Email: [hyou@nyu.edu](mailto:hyou@nyu.edu)

Republican candidate Donald Trump’s arrival on the 2016 electoral stage ushered in a protectionist platform of which the Republican party, and nation, had not seen in decades from a major party nominee. His campaign rhetoric was accompanied by controversial tariffs and rumblings of a trade war, evidence that his anti-trade stances were not empty promises. His electoral victory came courtesy of Rust Belt states that were the hardest hit by trade liberalization and materialized the fears of a protectionist backlash.

In recent years, scholars studying changes in anti-globalization sentiment pointed to redistributive policies to assist workers harmed by trade as a defense against protectionist backlash (e.g., [Hays 2009](#); [Rodrik 1998](#)), even arguing that globalization may not be sustainable absent of trade adjustment compensation for the “losers” of trade liberalization ([Colantone and Stanig 2018](#)). Indeed, the electoral impact of the costs of trade is well-documented across the globe, leading to reduced support for incumbents in the U.S. ([Jensen, Quinn, and Weymouth, 2017](#); [Margalit, 2011](#)) and a shift in favor of nationalist and isolationist candidates in Western Europe ([Colantone and Stanig, 2018](#)).

Trade adjustment assistance for workers, such as temporary income, job training, and relocation resources, is intended to defend against such electoral consequences ([Hornbeck, 2013](#)). However, while such assistance has been shown to reduce anti-incumbency effects ([Margalit, 2011](#)), we do not know whether it is effective in curbing protectionism among voters. Moreover, some argue that current trade adjustment assistance policy is not adequately designed to curb the rise of protectionism (e.g., [Scheve and Slaughter 2007](#)).

In this short paper, we consider this question by leveraging the rise of Donald Trump’s presidency. We examine the effect of the U.S. Trade Adjustment and Assistance program (TAA) on support for Donald Trump in both the 2016 Republican primary and general elections. We find that trade adjustment assistance benefits are significantly associated with reduced support for Trump during both the primary and the general elections. While modest effect sizes constrain our substantive interpretation, our results suggest that trade adjustment compensation has electoral consequences and may reduce support for candi-

dates who display anti-globalization platforms.

Indeed, our research contributes to the literature on economic voting by suggesting that trade adjustment compensation can reduce the public backlash against trade liberalization. Previous work (Margalit 2011) has found that job loss due to trade has a particularly deleterious effect on support for incumbents, but that TAA lessens anti-incumbent electoral results. Our results build on findings of incumbency effects of TAA to show reduced support for an anti-globalization and protectionist campaign, suggesting that redistributive programs such as TAA can actually mitigate electoral backlash due to trade-related losses. More broadly, these findings suggest that policy outcomes can have an electoral impact and affect support for candidates who campaign on anti-globalization platforms.

It is important to note that the effect sizes are small, making the strength of the relationship and extent of the substantive implications of our findings unclear. The small effect size could be driven by slow implementation and the insufficient size of redistributive programs (D'Amico and Schochet 2012). This implies that redistributive policies should be significantly more robust to effectively curb protectionist sentiment of voters. Nonetheless, our results reveal a promising direction for follow-up studies that go beyond incumbency effects and partisan retrospection. These findings demonstrate the importance of examining how policies affect electoral support for campaign platforms.

## **Electoral Consequences of Redistributive Trade Policy**

Scholars have argued that governments increase spending in an attempt to soften the blow of domestic job losses and mitigate public backlash towards trade liberalization (Rodrik 1998). In fact, one of the admitted purposes of the Trade Adjustment Assistance program (TAA) in the U.S. is to make trade agreements politically palatable (Hornbeck 2013). While previous work (Margalit 2011) has found positive effects of favorable TAA decisions for presidential incumbents, it is less clear if TAA reduces negative public reaction to trade

liberalization.

We argue that voters may be influenced by redistributive assistance offered to workers in their communities who have been harmed by trade. Local economic hardship can have an effect on presidential elections (Healy and Lenz 2017), whether due to pocket-book or sociotropic considerations (Kinder and Kiewiet 1981). While the workers and their families are most obviously affected by trade-related job loss, import exposure can also indirectly affect residents in hard-hit communities facing long-term economic decline (Colantone and Stanig 2018). Moreover, voters may be more affected by the plight of their friends and neighbors than by their assessments of the national economy at large.

There are several sources for voters to learn about trade-related costs and TAA benefits within their communities. Plant and business closings are often covered in local news along with announcements when the displaced workers receive government trade adjustment assistance (e.g., Slater 2019). Additionally, unions are a major source of trade and labor-related information for its members and their families, the voters who are the most motivated to vote based on trade and labor policies (Kim and Margalit, 2017).

This issue of government assistance to workers harmed by international trade and its political consequences is particularly relevant to the dynamics of the 2016 presidential election during which trade-related job loss was one of the most salient issues. The then-Republican candidate, Donald Trump, capitalized on the anti-globalization sentiment. Trump’s anti-trade rhetoric was unusual, depicted in the press and by scholars as “challenging the last 200 years of economic orthodoxy that trade among nations is good, and that more is better,” and he was noted for being “the first Republican nominee in nearly a century who has called for higher tariffs, or import taxes, as a broad defense against low-cost imports,” with more reservations regarding trade liberalization than even his Democratic opponent (Appelbaum 2016). Given his unprecedented protectionist campaign, the 2016 primary and general elections offer an appropriate test of how TAA affects the electoral impact of international economic integration.

While studies of retrospective voting have found that economic conditions and policy actions can affect election results (e.g., [Healy and Lenz 2017](#)), we know less about whether these effects extend beyond attributing blame (or credit) to the incumbent or the incumbent’s party. Do policy outcomes affect how voters respond to candidates’ policy stances? We build on previous work to consider whether redistributive assistance for workers harmed by trade has an impact on electoral support for a protectionist candidate.

## Data, Methods, and Results

Congress created the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program with the passage of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 to help US workers and firms that have been negatively affected by trade liberalization by providing job training, temporary income, and other assistance. To be considered under this program, a petition must be filed with the DOL by or on behalf of a group of workers who have lost or may lose their jobs or experienced a reduction in wages as a result of foreign trade. A petition may be filed by a group of workers, an employer, a union, a state workforce official, or an American Job Center operator/partner. Members of Congress sometimes contact the DOL in support of petitions from their district or states ([Ritchie and You, 2019](#)). The Office of Trade Adjustment Assistance (OTAA) investigates the case to determine whether foreign trade was an important cause of job loss.<sup>1</sup> If the OTAA certifies the petition, petitioners may apply to their State Workforce Agency for benefits and services ([Hornbeck 2013](#)).

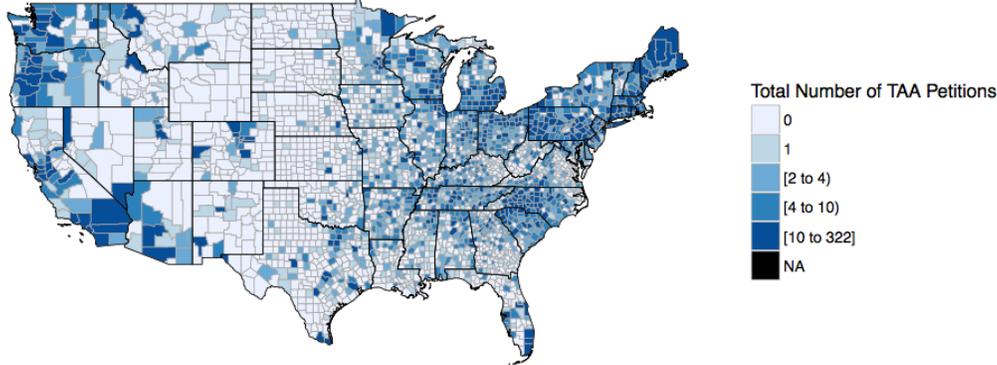
We obtain all TAA petitions submitted between 2005 through 2012 from the DOL website. Petitions include the name of the employer; location of a firm; whether the petition is made by workers, the company, or a union; Standard Industrial Classification (SIC); estimated number of affected workers; decision; and decision date. In total, there were 17,309 petitions made during the period, and 75% of them were approved. Figure 1

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<sup>1</sup>The TAA eligibility criteria include that the workers must have become separated from their employment or have been threatened with separation, and the role of foreign trade must be established by an increase in competitive imports, a shift of production to a foreign country, a decrease in sales to a TAA-certified firm, or by the US International Trade Commission.

presents the total number of petitions by county between 2005 and 2012.

Figure 1: TAA Petitions By County, 2005 - 2012



The average estimated number of workers affected by foreign trade for each petition is 88 and over 1.13 million workers in total were represented by petitions during the period.<sup>2</sup> Out of the total number of petitions, 40% were submitted by companies, 30% by workers, 18% by state agencies, and 10% by unions.

TAA benefits resulting from approved petitions would take time to be delivered and recognized, and so we expect that benefits from petition decisions occurring during 2005 through 2012 to have an observable impact on public sentiment by the 2016 election, particularly due to the salience of the issue during the entire campaign season.<sup>3</sup> Following this logic, we expect that higher petition approval rates are negatively associated with a shift in support for Trump from the Republican candidates in 2008 and 2012. As an

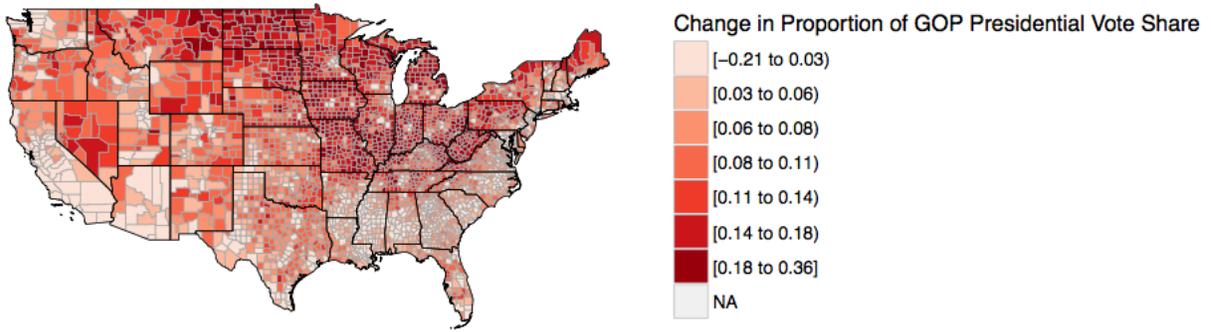
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<sup>2</sup>Around 20% of petitions do not have estimated number of workers. Petitions with missing information on the estimated number of affected workers are more likely to be submitted by workers instead of firms. To address this issue, we create two variables at the county level. For each county, we count the total number of petitions with the information on the number of estimated number of workers and the number of petitions submitted by workers. Then, we calculate the ratio of petitions that include the information on the estimated number of affected workers and the ratio of petitions submitted by workers. We include these variables as controls and re-run the main regression. Table A9 presents the results.

<sup>3</sup>In the Appendix we provide the robustness checks. Table A4 includes a commuting zone fixed effect. Table A5 presents the regression analysis that documents the effect of TAA decisions from 2005 to 2015. Table A6 varies the inclusion of the TAA variables. In the Appendix we also offer a discussion about myopic voters and the timing between TAA decisions/benefits and elections. Tables A10 and A11 examines TAA decisions broken down into three time periods (2005-08, 2009-12, 2013-15). The results are largely consistent. Also see Table A12 for the affect of TAA decisions from 2008-12 on Obama's re-election vote share.

additional and alternative measure of TAA benefits, we use the estimated number of workers affected by approved petitions, which we also expect to be negatively associated with support for Trump.<sup>4</sup> Figure 2 presents the changes in Republican vote share from the 2008 to the 2016 presidential election by county. It shows significant variation in terms of vote share changes across counties.

Figure 2: Change in Republican Vote Share, 2008 - 2016, by County



To estimate the electoral impact associated with a petition and its approval rate, we create a dataset at the county level. For each county in the data, we calculate the total number of TAA petitions submitted and approved during the period from 2005 to 2012. We estimate the following model:

$$\text{Trump Support}_{is} = \beta * \text{TAA}_{is} + \Gamma * X_{is} + \alpha_s + \varepsilon_{is} \quad (1)$$

, where  $i$  indicates county and  $s$  indicates state. We use three variables to measure *Trump Support*. First, we measure Trump’s vote share in the Republican primary. Second, we measure a change in Republican vote share (%) from 2008 to 2016 in the general election. Third, we measure a change in Republican vote share from 2012 to 2016 in the general election. The variable *TAA* includes the total number of TAA petitions submitted and

<sup>4</sup>In Table A8 in the Appendix, we also examine the impact on Bernie Sanders’ Democratic primary support but do not find significant results. However, Sanders stance on trade was not as stark as Trump’s in comparison with the party’s other candidates and historical platform. Hillary Clinton, also shifted to a more protectionist stance during the campaign.

Table 1: TAA Petitions and Support for Trump

<i>Outcome (vote percent) =</i>	Republican Primary		General Election			
	Trump Vote		$\Delta$ Rep.Vote 08-16		$\Delta$ Rep.Vote 12-16	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Total TAA Petition	-0.00680 (-0.63)	0.00242 (0.22)	-0.00766 (-1.17)	-0.00334 (-0.56)	-0.00600 (-0.96)	-0.00281 (-0.48)
TAA Petition Approval Rate	-0.903*** (-3.05)		-0.360** (-2.22)		-0.306* (-1.94)	
(ln) Number of Affected Workers by Approved TAA		-0.210*** (-3.31)		-0.0966*** (-3.21)		-0.0719** (-2.24)
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
State FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>N</i>	2886	2886	3116	3116	3116	3116
adj. <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.904	0.904	0.769	0.770	0.738	0.738

Note: *t* statistics in parentheses. \* $p < 0.1$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ . Standard errors are clustered at state level.

approved during the period between 2005 and 2012, as well as the total number of workers affected by approved TAA petitions.  $X_{is}$  includes demographic variables such as race and age composition, education, income, unemployment rate, foreign-born ratio, health insurance coverage rate, and manufacturing sector ratio in each county.<sup>5</sup> We also include the variable, *China Shock*, which captures the change in Chinese import exposure per worker, 1990 - 2007 (Autor, Dorn, and Hanson 2013).<sup>6</sup>

Columns (1) and (2) in Table 1 present the results for the Republican primary.<sup>7</sup> The results also show that while the total number of TAA petitions submitted is not significantly associated with support for Trump during Republican primaries, higher TAA approval (*TAA Petition Approval Rate*) and the number of workers who benefited from the TAA program in a county (*(ln) No. Affected Workers by Approved TAA*) are negatively related to Trump support, and the relationships are statistically significant.

Next, we investigate whether TAA petition approval is associated with a shift in

<sup>5</sup>Demographic data are from the American Community Survey 5-year average (2011-2015) and Table A1 in the Appendix presents the summary statistics for the variables.

<sup>6</sup>Autor, Dorn, and Hanson (2013)'s data do not include information for Alaska and Hawaii so counties in those two states are not included in the analysis.

<sup>7</sup> Table A2 in the Appendix presents the results for the bivariate regression between TAA petitions and the electoral outcomes. For the full regression results of Table 1, see Table A3 in the Appendix.

Republican vote share in each county in the 2016 general election. Given that we use the difference in Republican candidates' vote share in a county  $i$  from 2008 ( $\Delta Rep.Vote_{i,08-16}$ ) and 2012 elections ( $\Delta Rep.Vote_{i,12-16}$ ), the model we estimate controls time-invariant, county-level characteristics that are correlated with support for the Republican candidate, a model specification that is very similar to [Margalit \(2011\)](#).

Columns (3) through (6) in [Table 1](#) present the results for changes in support for Republican candidates in a general election. The results on TAA-related variables are similar to those of the Republican primary. However, counties where more TAA petitions were approved and more workers benefited from the TAA program are negatively associated with changes in Republican vote share in 2016 both from 2008 and 2012. Interestingly, the results appear to be primarily driven by Republican-leaning counties (see [Table A7](#) in the Appendix).

Following [Mummolo and Peterson \(2018\)](#)'s suggested method, our analysis indicates that one standard deviation change in a treatment (*(ln) Number of Affected Workers by Approved TAA*) would reduce the vote share change for Trump in 2016 from McCain in 2008 by 0.28%. Given that the average Republican vote share change from 2008 to 2016 is 8.9%, this implies that one standard deviation in the change of TAA petition approval rate accounts for 2.8% change of the mean value.<sup>8</sup> While these effects are modest, even such small effects can affect electoral outcomes in competitive elections. In the 2016 election, the razor-thin outcomes in three of the Rust Belt states (Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania) most affected by trade loss (and recipients of TAA) were critical to Trump's victory. He won these states by a total of 107,000 votes, 0.09% of the total votes cast in the 2016 election.<sup>9</sup> That said, the modest effects we find constrain our confidence in the extent of the substantive implications of our results but also suggest the need for follow-up studies.

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<sup>8</sup>For more detailed explanations on the analysis on the substantive effect of TAA petition approvals, see [Appendix page A4](#).

<sup>9</sup><https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/politics/2016-election/swing-state-margins/>

Our results suggest that government programs such as TAA have a broader electoral impact and may discourage voters from supporting a protectionist candidate. These findings also indicate that citizens' responses to TAA benefits go beyond evaluations of incumbents, suggesting that TAA may reduce support for candidates who run on anti-globalization platforms, which is increasingly common across the developed world. The implications present a more positive evaluation of the program; TAA works as intended by making trade politically palatable, despite critiques that TAA is not effective.

## Conclusion

In this paper, we offer evidence that trade adjustment assistance for workers harmed by trade is associated with reduced support for Donald Trump, suggesting that TAA may have mitigated public opposition to trade liberalization and cooled the protectionist sentiment on which the Trump campaign capitalized. Specifically, we find that approved TAA petitions are negatively associated with county-level vote share for Donald Trump in both the 2016 primary and general elections. It is important to note that, like some studies of electoral outcomes in presidential elections, the effects we document are small, and so the extent of the substantive implications is unclear. The processing of TAA petitions and benefits takes several months, and the TAA program's impact on affected workers' job prospects is small (D'Amico and Schochet 2012). This may explain the small effect of the TAA program on electoral outcomes. However, the outcomes of competitive elections, including the 2016 election, are often determined by razor-thin victories in a few key states. Our results compel further study of how the outcomes and the magnitudes of redistributive policies affect the success of campaign platforms, stances, and rhetoric.

Our study is limited to the unusual case of Donald Trump, unique as a Republican candidate with a strong protectionist platform and notable for rhetoric beyond anti-globalization statements. While this makes for a unique opportunity to study public backlash to globalization, it also may not be generalizable to other candidates with more

moderate protectionist policies that are not in such stark contrast with their party. However, given similar and timely concerns of trade compensation and protectionist backlash in Europe, our results may have global implications for evaluations of trade and redistributive adjustment policies.

What do our findings imply about the broader relationship between policy outcomes and electoral impact? Our results build on contributions from the retrospective voting literature to suggest that policy outcomes can have influence beyond incumbency effects. Policy outcomes may have an impact on electoral support for candidates based on the issues emphasized in their campaigns. This offers a promising direction for follow-up studies to consider whether the electoral impact we find could incentivize presidents to strategically allocate trade benefits (Lowande, Jenkins, and Clarke, 2018).

While the economic voting literature (e.g., Lewis-Beck 1986) emphasizes the effect of economic conditions on voting, we show that redistributive policy outcomes may mitigate the relationship between economic conditions and voting. This implication is important because it suggests that redistributive programs can effectively supplement policies by reducing the public’s perception of the policies’ costs. While our data do not allow for a direct test this implication, our results suggest this is a promising direction for further research. Given the importance of localized electoral reactions to trade-related job loss in battleground states (Margalit, 2011), our findings may reveal an incentive for proponents of trade liberalization to advocate for redistributive policies that compensate those bearing the costs of trade.

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# A Appendix

Table A1: Summary Statistics of the Variables

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	Min.	Max
Republican Primary Trump Vote Share	2892	45.27	17.66	0.14	91.50
$\Delta$ Republican Vote Share 08-16	3125	8.91	6.74	-21.48	35.98
$\Delta$ Republican Vote Share 12-16	3125	5.84	5.26	-18.06	24.29
China Shock	3123	3.66	3.60	0	49.00
Total TAA, 2005-2012	3125	5.30	15.15	0	322.00
TAA Approved Ratio	3125	0.42	0.43	0	1.00
(ln) Affected Number of Workers	3125	2.67	2.90	0	9.83
(ln) Population	3125	10.29	1.47	4.7707	16.12
Senior Ratio	3125	0.31	0.06	0.0708	0.68
White Ratio	3125	0.78	0.20	0.0095	1.00
Lower Education Ratio	3125	0.49	0.11	0.0983	0.79
(ln) Per Capita Income	3125	10.07	0.23	9.0232	11.09
Unemployment Rate	3125	0.08	0.04	0.0017	0.29
White Unemployment Rate	3125	0.07	0.03	0.0014	0.27
Manufacturing Employment Ratio	3125	0.12	0.07	0	0.45
Foreign Born Ratio	3125	0.05	0.06	0	0.52
No Health Insurance Ratio	3125	0.13	0.05	0.0185	0.49

Table A2: TAA Petitions and Support for Trump in 2016 - Bivariate Regression Results

DV (Vote percent)	Republican Primary		General Election			
	Trump Vote		$\Delta$ Rep. VS 08-16		$\Delta$ Rep. VS 12-16	
Total TAA Petition	-0.0555*** (-4.59)	-0.0287*** (-3.35)	-0.0764*** (-4.60)	-0.0585*** (-3.84)	-0.0654*** (-4.53)	-0.0499*** (-3.73)
TAA Petition Approval Rate	-2.569*** (-6.12)		-1.512*** (-4.84)		-1.294*** (-4.68)	
(ln) Number of Affected Workers by Approved TAA		-0.558*** (-6.82)		-0.358*** (-5.35)		-0.307*** (-5.02)
<i>N</i>	2892	2892	3125	3125	3125	3125
adj. <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.860	0.862	0.519	0.527	0.454	0.464

*Note:* *t* statistics in parentheses. \**p* < 0.1, \*\**p* < 0.05, \*\*\**p* < 0.01. Standard errors are clustered at the state level.

Table A3: TAA Petitions and Support for Trump in 2016

<i>Outcome (vote percent) =</i>	Republican Primary		General Election			
	Trump Vote		$\Delta$ Rep.VS 08-16		$\Delta$ Rep.VS 12-16	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Total TAA Petition	-0.00680 (-0.63)	0.00242 (0.22)	-0.00766 (-1.17)	-0.00334 (-0.56)	-0.00600 (-0.96)	-0.00281 (-0.48)
TAA Petition Approval Rate	-0.903*** (-3.05)		-0.360** (-2.22)		-0.306* (-1.94)	
(ln) Number of Affected Workers by Approved TAA		-0.210*** (-3.31)		-0.0966*** (-3.21)		-0.0719** (-2.24)
China Shock <sup>a</sup>	-0.00151 (-0.02)	0.00333 (0.05)	0.0295 (1.09)	0.0322 (1.19)	0.0356* (1.80)	0.0373* (1.88)
(ln) Population	0.397 (1.33)	0.466 (1.63)	-0.0926 (-0.76)	-0.0552 (-0.45)	-0.223** (-2.10)	-0.199* (-1.89)
Senior Ratio <sup>b</sup>	27.43*** (5.31)	27.60*** (5.40)	6.134** (2.12)	6.216** (2.16)	5.366** (2.60)	5.421** (2.65)
White Ratio	3.859* (1.78)	3.824* (1.78)	13.53*** (11.84)	13.52*** (11.71)	4.691*** (4.37)	4.679*** (4.33)
Lower Education Ratio <sup>c</sup>	34.27*** (8.95)	33.93*** (8.88)	24.70*** (10.34)	24.57*** (10.41)	21.40*** (10.66)	21.31*** (10.67)
(ln) Income	-0.628 (-0.35)	-0.772 (-0.42)	-2.401*** (-3.20)	-2.454*** (-3.31)	-1.926** (-2.08)	-1.962** (-2.14)
Unemployment Ratio	34.04*** (2.88)	33.77*** (2.90)	0.199 (0.03)	0.140 (0.02)	-4.000 (-0.78)	-4.067 (-0.79)
White Employment Ratio	17.53* (1.87)	17.36* (1.88)	10.34 (1.59)	10.19 (1.57)	16.30*** (3.47)	16.22*** (3.42)
Manufacturing Employment Ratio	-14.66*** (-3.05)	-14.09*** (-2.90)	1.554 (0.78)	1.832 (0.92)	3.882* (1.71)	4.051* (1.76)
Foreign Born Ratio	0.260 (0.03)	0.0211 (0.00)	-12.31*** (-3.96)	-12.41*** (-3.99)	-17.25*** (-5.61)	-17.31*** (-5.59)
No Health Insurance Ratio	-0.948 (-0.13)	-1.076 (-0.15)	-2.793 (-0.79)	-2.860 (-0.81)	-1.294 (-0.43)	-1.343 (-0.44)
Constant	17.29 (0.91)	18.28 (0.96)	9.577 (1.12)	9.843 (1.16)	11.40 (1.20)	11.60 (1.24)
State FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>N</i>	2886	2886	3116	3116	3116	3116
adj. <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.904	0.904	0.769	0.770	0.738	0.738

*Note: t statistics in parentheses.* \* $p < 0.1$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ . Standard errors are clustered at state level. **a:** Change in Chinese import exposure per worker, 1990-2007. **b:** Ratio of population over age 65. **c:** Ratio of population with high school or less than high school education.

## Substantive Interpretation of the Regression Results

Mummolo and Peterson (2018) suggest that researchers need to consider a plausible variation in the treatment when fixed effects estimates are used to describe the substantive significance of the results. Given that the variation within-unit is quite limited compared to variation across units, the coefficients of the interest from the fixed effect models may overestimate the substantive effect of the treatment if the plausible variation would be smaller than a unit change in the treatment. Following the checklists suggested in Mummolo and Peterson (2018), we regress the treatment (*TAA Petition Approval Rate*) on the state dummy which comprises the fixed effects in the model and store residuals. The standard deviation for the residual for the treatment variable, *TAA Petition Approval Rate*, is 0.42. Therefore, a plausible counterfactual shift in our treatment will be one standard deviation. If we multiply the estimated coefficient from the main result in Table A3 (column (3)) by the standard deviation of the residuals of the treatment variable ( $-0.360 * 0.42$ ), this would result in  $-0.151$ , which suggests that one standard deviation change in a treatment (*TAA Petition Approval Rate*) in the framework of within-variation (state FE) would reduce the vote share change for Trump from McCain by 0.151%. Given that the average Republican vote share change from 2008 to 2016 is 8.9%, this implies that one standard deviation in the change of TAA petition approval rate accounts for 1.5% change of the mean value.

We do a similar exercise for another treatment variable, *(ln) Number of Affected Workers by Approved TAA*. The standard deviation for the residual for the treatment variable is 2.9 within the framework with the state fixed effect. If we multiply the estimated coefficient from the main result in Table A3 (column (4)) by the standard deviation of the residuals of the treatment variable ( $-0.0966 * 2.9$ ), this would result in  $-0.28$ , which suggests that one standard deviation change in a treatment (*(ln) Number of Affected Workers by Approved TAA*) in the framework of within-variation (state FE) would reduce the vote share change for Trump in 2016 from McCain in 2008 by 0.28%. Given that the average Republican vote share change from 2008 to 2016 is 8.9%, this implies that one standard deviation in the change of TAA petition approval rate accounts for 2.8% change of the mean value.

Table A4: TAA Petitions and Support for Trump in 2016 (Commuting Zone FE)

<i>Outcome (vote percent) =</i>	Republican Primary		General Election			
	Trump Vote		$\Delta$ Rep.Vote 08-16		$\Delta$ Rep.Vote 12-16	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Total TAA Petition	-0.0102 (-0.73)	-0.00523 (-0.38)	-0.0102* (-1.78)	-0.00705 (-1.32)	-0.00528 (-1.04)	-0.00249 (-0.51)
TAA Petition Approval Rate	-0.566 (-1.25)		-0.209 (-1.18)		-0.265* (-1.80)	
(ln) Number of Affected Workers by Approved TAA		-0.132* (-1.79)		-0.0826*** (-2.66)		-0.0725*** (-2.73)
(ln) Population	0.116 (0.37)	0.168 (0.54)	-0.209 (-1.64)	-0.158 (-1.23)	-0.197** (-2.01)	-0.163* (-1.68)
Senior Ratio	16.30*** (3.12)	16.43*** (3.15)	2.217 (1.04)	2.317 (1.08)	2.486 (1.41)	2.570 (1.47)
White Ratio	2.747 (1.17)	2.678 (1.15)	11.60*** (10.55)	11.57*** (10.51)	4.515*** (5.11)	4.479*** (5.06)
Lower Education Ratio	33.61*** (7.19)	33.42*** (7.16)	26.46*** (14.52)	26.31*** (14.49)	24.48*** (14.02)	24.37*** (14.00)
(ln) Income	-0.881 (-0.37)	-0.932 (-0.39)	-1.037 (-1.14)	-1.073 (-1.18)	-1.062 (-1.11)	-1.085 (-1.13)
Unemployment Ratio	16.67 (0.71)	16.61 (0.71)	5.960 (0.99)	6.030 (1.00)	0.657 (0.13)	0.659 (0.13)
White Unemployment Ratio	19.21 (0.88)	18.96 (0.87)	2.209 (0.37)	1.909 (0.32)	10.40** (2.21)	10.23** (2.17)
Manufacturing Employment Ratio	-4.393 (-0.88)	-4.111 (-0.82)	1.018 (0.48)	1.330 (0.63)	1.044 (0.59)	1.222 (0.69)
Foreign Born Ratio	-16.44** (-2.34)	-16.50** (-2.35)	-18.08*** (-6.32)	-18.17*** (-6.34)	-21.09*** (-7.24)	-21.14*** (-7.22)
No Health Insurance Ratio	-3.703 (-0.33)	-3.889 (-0.35)	-5.811* (-1.76)	-5.897* (-1.79)	-3.868 (-1.29)	-3.968 (-1.32)
Constant	28.36 (1.15)	28.55 (1.15)	-0.221 (-0.02)	-0.213 (-0.02)	2.946 (0.29)	2.959 (0.29)
Commuting Zone FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>N</i>	2886	2886	3116	3116	3116	3116
adj. <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.859	0.859	0.841	0.842	0.819	0.819

*Note:* *t* statistics in parentheses. \* $p < 0.1$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ . Standard errors are clustered at commuting zone level. “Commuting zones and Labor Market Areas combine counties into units intended to more closely reflect the geographic interrelationship between employers and labor supply” (<https://catalog.data.gov/dataset/commuting-zones-and-labor-market-areas>). In the US, there are 740 commuting zones. *China Shock* variable is not identified when we use a commuting zone fixed effect because the variable is originally constructed at the commuting zone level.

Table A5: TAA Petitions and Support for Trump in 2016 (Including all TAA Petitions from 2005 to 2015)

<i>Outcome (vote percent) =</i>	<b>Republican Primary</b>		<b>General Election</b>			
	<b>Trump Vote</b>		<b><math>\Delta</math> Rep.Vote 08-16</b>		<b><math>\Delta</math> Rep.Vote 12-16</b>	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Total TAA Petition	-0.00618 (-0.67)	0.00161 (0.18)	-0.00790 (-1.30)	-0.00440 (-0.78)	-0.00647 (-1.11)	-0.00417 (-0.75)
TAA Petition Approval Rate	-0.963*** (-3.14)		-0.353* (-1.89)		-0.214 (-1.24)	
(ln) Number of Affected Workers by Approved TAA		-0.216*** (-3.70)		-0.0966*** (-2.89)		-0.0638* (-1.94)
(ln) Population	0.418 (1.37)	0.498* (1.68)	-0.0836 (-0.68)	-0.0386 (-0.31)	-0.224** (-2.05)	-0.192* (-1.78)
Senior Ratio	27.49*** (5.32)	27.64*** (5.40)	6.176** (2.12)	6.257** (2.16)	5.372** (2.58)	5.429** (2.63)
White Ratio	3.823* (1.75)	3.783* (1.76)	13.51*** (11.79)	13.50*** (11.64)	4.684*** (4.35)	4.676*** (4.31)
Lower Education Ratio	34.31*** (8.95)	33.90*** (8.89)	24.70*** (10.37)	24.54*** (10.46)	21.38*** (10.71)	21.27*** (10.74)
(ln) Per capita Income	-0.574 (-0.32)	-0.713 (-0.39)	-2.404*** (-3.23)	-2.455*** (-3.33)	-1.957** (-2.10)	-1.992** (-2.17)
Unemployment Ratio	34.17*** (2.89)	33.92*** (2.90)	0.181 (0.03)	0.153 (0.02)	-4.122 (-0.80)	-4.130 (-0.80)
White Unemployment Ratio	17.54* (1.87)	17.32* (1.87)	10.38 (1.60)	10.17 (1.57)	16.48*** (3.49)	16.33*** (3.43)
Manufacturing Employment	-14.68*** (-3.05)	-14.00*** (-2.89)	1.545 (0.78)	1.885 (0.95)	3.826* (1.70)	4.069* (1.78)
Foreign Born Ratio	0.237 (0.03)	-0.0543 (-0.01)	-12.33*** (-4.00)	-12.45*** (-4.03)	-17.31*** (-5.67)	-17.40*** (-5.64)
No Health Insurance Ratio	-0.935 (-0.13)	-0.958 (-0.14)	-2.787 (-0.79)	-2.815 (-0.79)	-1.278 (-0.42)	-1.298 (-0.43)
Constant	16.61 (0.87)	17.47 (0.91)	9.535 (1.12)	9.718 (1.16)	11.72 (1.24)	11.84 (1.26)
State FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>N</i>	2892	2892	3123	3123	3123	3123
adj. <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.904	0.904	0.770	0.771	0.738	0.739

Note: *t* statistics in parentheses. \* $p < 0.1$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ . Standard errors are clustered at state level.

Table A6: Different Measures of TAA Petitions

<i>Outcome (vote percent) =</i>	(1) Primary Trump Vote	(2) $\Delta$ Rep.VS 08-16	(3) $\Delta$ Rep.VS 12-16	(4) Primary Trump Vote	(5) $\Delta$ Rep.VS 08-16	(6) $\Delta$ Rep.VS 12-16
(ln) Total TAA Petitions Approved	-0.657*** (-3.47)	-0.285** (-2.33)	-0.264** (-2.61)			
(ln) Total TAA Petitions Denied	0.123 (0.52)	-0.136 (-0.72)	-0.0160 (-0.13)			
(ln) Population	0.506* (1.76)	-0.0170 (-0.14)	-0.173 (-1.60)			
Total TAA Petitions				0.00335 (0.30)	-0.00282 (-0.47)	-0.00261 (-0.44)
(ln) Number of Workers Affected by Approved TAA				-0.203*** (-3.20)	-0.0934*** (-3.08)	-0.0720** (-2.21)
(ln) Civilian Employeed				0.404 (1.42)	-0.0855 (-0.69)	-0.197* (-1.88)
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
State FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>N</i>	2892	3123	3123	2892	3123	3123
adj. <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.904	0.771	0.739	0.904	0.771	0.739

Note: *t* statistics in parentheses. \* $p < 0.1$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ . Standard errors are clustered at the state level.

Table A7: Heterogeneous Effects of TAA Petitions by County Partisanship

<i>Outcome (vote percent) =</i>	Republican Leaning County			Democratic Leaning County		
	(1) Rep. Primary	(2) $\Delta$ Rep.VS 08-16	(3) $\Delta$ Rep.VS 12-16	(4) Rep. Primary	(5) $\Delta$ Rep.VS 08-16	(6) $\Delta$ Rep.VS 12-16
Total TAA Petition	-0.00236 (-0.15)	0.00550 (1.18)	0.00116 (0.20)	0.00920 (0.63)	-0.0106 (-1.13)	0.000490 (0.08)
(ln) Number of Affected Workers by Approved TAA	-0.272*** (-3.86)	-0.0887** (-2.45)	-0.0666* (-2.00)	-0.128 (-1.35)	-0.0634 (-1.50)	-0.0669 (-1.46)
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
State FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>N</i>	1483	1561	1561	1409	1562	1562
adj. <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.913	0.844	0.817	0.905	0.709	0.668

Note: *t* statistics in parentheses. \* $p < 0.1$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ . Standard errors are clustered at the state level.

Table A8: TAA Petitions and Support for Sanders in 2016 Democratic Primary

<i>DV = Sander Vote %</i>	<b>All Counties</b>		<b>Democrat Winning</b>	<b>Republican Winning</b>
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Total TAA Petition	-0.0135 (-0.96)	-0.0141 (-1.08)	0.00286 (0.43)	-0.00653 (-0.28)
TAA Petition Approval Rate	0.135 (0.37)			
(ln) Number of Affected Workers by Approved TAA		0.0164 (0.22)	0.0368 (0.22)	0.00722 (0.10)
China Shock	-0.00543 (-0.12)	-0.00514 (-0.11)	-0.0662 (-0.60)	0.0101 (0.21)
(ln) Population	-0.222 (-0.45)	-0.220 (-0.42)	-0.516 (-1.41)	-0.0244 (-0.04)
Senior Ratio	-31.30*** (-6.06)	-31.30*** (-6.07)	-45.55*** (-5.10)	-25.00*** (-3.59)
White Ratio	39.11*** (7.03)	39.12*** (7.05)	41.34*** (5.68)	42.70*** (5.07)
Lower Education Ratio	-30.99*** (-6.45)	-30.97*** (-6.52)	-41.07*** (-5.95)	-23.97*** (-4.58)
(ln) Per Capita Income	-9.083*** (-4.80)	-9.079*** (-4.81)	-13.92*** (-6.41)	-6.306*** (-3.08)
Unemployment	12.48 (0.49)	12.53 (0.49)	-18.05 (-0.63)	40.37 (1.28)
White Unemployment Ratio	-17.47 (-0.76)	-17.50 (-0.76)	9.954 (0.39)	-47.10 (-1.64)
Manufacturing Employment	-7.026 (-1.10)	-7.018 (-1.07)	-9.142 (-0.99)	-8.502 (-1.38)
Foreign Born Ratio	29.51*** (3.25)	29.51*** (3.24)	10.10 (1.39)	54.83*** (3.89)
No Health Insurance Ratio	35.37*** (4.14)	35.37*** (4.14)	50.49*** (2.78)	26.64*** (3.46)
State FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>N</i>	2874	2874	475	2399
adj. <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.808	0.808	0.926	0.770

*Note:* *t* statistics in parentheses. \**p* < 0.1, \*\**p* < 0.05, \*\*\**p* < 0.01. Standard errors are clustered at the state level. Column (3) presents the results when we restrict the sample to counties where a Democratic candidate (Clinton) received more votes in the 2016 general election. Column (4) presents the results when we restrict the sample to counties where a Republican candidate (Trump) received more votes in the 2016 general election.

Table A9: TAA Petitions and Support for Trump in 2016 - Addressing Issues of Missing Estimated Number of Workers Variable

	(1) Rep. Primary	(2) $\Delta$ Rep.VS 08-16	(3) $\Delta$ Rep.VS 12-16
Total TAA Petition	0.00367 (0.33)	-0.00278 (-0.45)	-0.00152 (-0.26)
(ln) Number of Affected Workers by Approved TAA	-0.238*** (-3.89)	-0.106*** (-2.71)	-0.0945** (-2.59)
Ratio of Petitions with Complete Information on Estimated Number of Workers	0.281 (0.68)	0.0731 (0.30)	0.223 (1.37)
Ratio of Petitions Submitted by Workers	-0.188 (-0.55)	0.0111 (0.05)	-0.161 (-0.68)
Controls	✓	✓	✓
State FE	✓	✓	✓
$N$	2892	3123	3123
adj. $R^2$	0.904	0.770	0.739

Note:  $t$  statistics in parentheses. \* $p < 0.1$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ . Standard errors are clustered at the state level.

## Myopic Voters and TAA Benefits

Given research on myopic voters, we consider election impacts in relation to the timing of TAA decisions and benefits prior to elections. The average processing time between a TAA decision and the date that the petition was submitted is 110.8 days, and it is reported that the actual delivery of TAA benefits (unemployment benefits checks and trainings) take multiple months or sometimes years.<sup>1</sup> This implies that it takes a substantial time for voters to experience the actual benefits of TAA programs.

To examine heterogeneous effects of TAA decisions depending on how close they were from the election, we divide the TAA petitions into three periods: 2005—2008 (under Bush), 2009—2012 (under Obama’s 1st term), and 2013—2015 (under Obama’s 2nd term). For each period, we calculate the total number of TAA petitions decided, the ratio of certified TAA petitions, and the (ln) number of affected workers by approved TAA petitions at the county level. Table A10 presents the results when we run the main regression with TAA petition-related variables separately for each period (We do not include the analysis for the Republican vote share change from 2012 to 2016 in this table for the sake of the presentation of the results. The results are similar to the analysis on Republican vote share change from 2008 to 2016 (Columns (4) through (6)). TAA-related variables in all periods are strongly correlated with support for Trump. The coefficients from the TAA petitions from the Bush era are smaller than the coefficients from Obama’s first and second terms and the differences are statistically significant. However, there is no statistical difference in terms of the size of the coefficients between Obama’s first and second terms.

In Table A11, we also present the results when we include all TAA-related variables from the three different periods at the same time. The results show that TAA approvals and the number of affected workers by approved TAA petitions are negatively correlated with support for Trump, although the most robust relationship comes from the petition approvals from Obama’s first term (2009—2012). Bush-era TAA approvals are either weakly correlated or not correlated with support for Trump when we include TAA-related variables from the Obama period. The overall results in Table A11 could be explained by two factors. First, TAA-related variables across different time periods in a given county are highly correlated so the results could suffer from multicollinearity issues. Second, the fact that TAA approval decisions from the Obama’s first term has the most consistent and robust relationship with support for Trump suggests that, given the delivery of TAA benefits take months and sometimes years, redistributive policy has the clear electoral impact when the policy’s impact is experienced by voters.

Finally, we also examine the effect of TAA approvals between 2008 and 2012 on Obama’s re-election vote share to consider the impact on an incumbent when the benefits are very recent. Table A12 in the Appendix presents the results when we regress the change in Obama’s vote share percentage on the total number of TAA petitions decided from 2008 to 2012 and the approval rates (and the number of affected workers by approved TAAs) during the same period in a given county. Although signs on the coefficients are in the right direction, we do not observe a statistically significant relationship between TAA-related variables and the changes in Obama’s vote share from 2008 to 2012. This could be

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<sup>1</sup>[https://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/docs/taa\\_management\\_q3\\_2017.pdf](https://www.doleta.gov/tradeact/docs/taa_management_q3_2017.pdf)

driven by two factors. First, as we have argued, experiencing the TAA benefits take time and given that we use the TAA petitions decided between 2008 and 2012, the electoral effects of TAA programs may not be immediately materialized for the incumbent president in 2012 election. Second, this result may highlight the importance of a candidate's platform. Trump's campaign is distinctive in terms of emphasizing anti-globalization and free trade rhetoric, whereas Obama did not run campaigns based on globalization.

Table A10: TAA Petitions and Support for Trump in 2016 - Heterogeneous Effects

	Republican Primary			$\Delta$ Rep.VS 08-16		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<i>Panel A: TAA Petitions 2005 - 2008</i>						
Total TAA Petitions 05 - 08	-0.00875 (-0.52)			-0.000143 (-0.01)		
(ln) Number of Affected Workers by Approved TAA 05 - 08	-0.140** (-2.10)			-0.0728** (-2.31)		
<i>Panel B: TAA Petitions 2009 - 2012</i>						
Total TAA Petitions 09 - 12		0.0146 (0.73)			-0.00924 (-0.86)	
(ln) Number of Affected Workers by Approved TAA 09 - 12		-0.211*** (-4.02)			-0.0981*** (-3.82)	
<i>Panel C: TAA Petitions 2013 - 2015</i>						
Total TAA Petitions 13 - 15			0.0450 (0.99)			-0.0388 (-1.02)
(ln) Number of Affected Workers by Approved TAA 13 - 15			-0.173*** (-2.76)			-0.0945** (-2.07)
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
State FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>N</i>	2892	2892	2892	3123	3123	3123
adj. <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.904	0.904	0.904	0.770	0.771	0.771

Note: *t* statistics in parentheses. \**p* < 0.1, \*\**p* < 0.05, \*\*\**p* < 0.01. Standard errors are clustered at the state level.

Table A11: TAA Petitions and Support for Trump in 2016 - Heterogeneous Effects

DV (Vote percent)	Republican Primary		General Election			
	Trump Vote		$\Delta$ Rep. VS 08-16	$\Delta$ Rep. VS 12-16		
Total TAA Petitions 05 - 08	-0.0591** (-2.65)	-0.0536** (-2.58)	0.0338** (2.08)	0.0383** (2.52)	0.0374** (2.10)	0.0418** (2.44)
Total TAA Petitions 09 - 12	0.0365 (0.92)	0.0508 (1.39)	-0.0256 (-1.39)	-0.0179 (-1.05)	-0.0226 (-1.26)	-0.0160 (-1.01)
Total TAA Petitions 13 - 15	0.0568 (0.85)	0.0733 (1.04)	-0.0663* (-1.81)	-0.0641* (-1.71)	-0.0906*** (-3.11)	-0.0946*** (-3.25)
Ratio of Approved TAA 05 - 08	-0.355 (-1.28)		-0.241 (-1.31)		-0.247 (-1.57)	
Ratio of Approved TAA 09 - 12	-0.978*** (-4.68)		-0.277** (-2.12)		-0.221* (-1.95)	
Ratio of Approved TAA 13 - 15	-0.616** (-2.05)		-0.344* (-1.74)		0.00671 (0.04)	
(ln) Number of Affected Workers by Approved TAA 05 - 08		-0.0743 (-1.17)		-0.0580* (-1.89)		-0.0564* (-1.92)
(ln) Number of Affected Workers by Approved TAA 09 - 12		-0.176*** (-3.83)		-0.0748*** (-3.11)		-0.0633** (-2.22)
(ln) Number of Affected Workers by Approved TAA 13 - 15		-0.136** (-2.08)		-0.0599 (-1.41)		-0.00191 (-0.05)
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
State FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
$N$	2892	2892	3123	3123	3123	3123
adj. $R^2$	0.904	0.904	0.771	0.771	0.740	0.740

Note:  $t$  statistics in parentheses. \* $p < 0.1$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ . Standard errors are clustered at the state level.

Table A12: TAA Petitions and Changes in Obama's Vote Percent from 2008 to 2012

<i>DV = Δ Obama Vote 08 - 12</i>	(1)	(2)
Total TAA Petitions 2008 - 2012	0.00164 (0.36)	-0.000198 (-0.05)
Ratio of Approved TAA Petitions 2008 - 2012	0.105 (1.29)	
(ln) Number of Affected Workers by Approved TAA 2008 - 2012		0.0230 (1.26)
Controls	✓	✓
State FE	✓	✓
<i>N</i>	3123	3123
adj. <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.545	0.545

*Note:* *t* statistics in parentheses. \**p* < 0.1, \*\**p* < 0.05, \*\*\**p* < 0.01. Standard errors are clustered at the state level.