

Washington University in St. Louis

Washington University Open Scholarship

Spring 2018

Washington University
Senior Honors Thesis Abstracts

Spring 2018

Breaking Rank: Party Influence in Congressional Defense Voting Since the Cold War

Samuel Klein

Washington University in St. Louis

Follow this and additional works at: https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/wushta_spr2018

Recommended Citation

Klein, Samuel, "Breaking Rank: Party Influence in Congressional Defense Voting Since the Cold War" (2018). *Spring 2018*. 70.

https://openscholarship.wustl.edu/wushta_spr2018/70

This Abstract for College of Arts & Sciences is brought to you for free and open access by the Washington University

Senior Honors Thesis Abstracts at Washington University Open Scholarship. It has been accepted for inclusion in Spring 2018 by an authorized administrator of Washington University Open Scholarship. For more information, please contact digital@wumail.wustl.edu.

BREAKING RANK:
PARTY INFLUENCE IN CONGRESSIONAL DEFENSE
VOTING SINCE THE COLD WAR

Samuel Klein

Mentor: Steven Smith

Since the 1960s, studies of Congressional voting behavior on defense-related legislation have examined the influence of local interests. The Vietnam War seemed particularly divisive along partisan and ideological lines, and the literature suggests that Congress has grown even more polarized since then. Do district interests still influence voting behavior on defense? For selected Congresses in the post-Cold-War era, roll-call votes on House defense authorization bills are scaled. Consistent with broader trends, the influence of party seems to have increased in the realm of defense voting, while ideology has also remained a strong predictor. However, much of the variance is left unexplained by these factors, and I find evidence that defense-related district interests contribute to this discrepancy.