Learning in Committee: How Racial Diversity Shapes Speech, Evidence Use, and Substantive Representation in Legislatures

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Abstract

Although increased racial diversity has expanded congressional attention to race, we know little about how committee diversity shapes interactions between nonwhite and white legislators—or whether those interactions alter behavior. I argue that in racially diverse committees, white Democrats learn from nonwhite colleagues, leading them to make more evidence-based claims when discussing race. To test this expectation, I combine large-scale text classification with a detailed content analysis of more than 11,000 race-based committee hearing statements and 87,000 full bill texts from the 105th–117th Congresses. Using a within-legislator identification strategy, I find that white Democrats are more likely to reference evidence when discussing race in diverse committees and to cite the same sources as their nonwhite colleagues. I also demonstrate that race-based expertise facilitates substantive representation, as legislators with such expertise are more effective at advancing race legislation. These findings demonstrate that descriptive representation fosters substantive representation in part through identity-based learning in legislative committees.

Keywords: legislatures, race, committees, descriptive and substantive representation, evidence-based policymaking

Word Count: $\approx 8,500$

Increased racial diversity in the U.S. Congress has expanded congressional attention to race. Nonwhite lawmakers are more likely than their white colleagues to sponsor racially salient legislation (Bratton and Haynie 1999; Pinney and Serra 2002; Sinclair-Chapman 2002; Wilson 2010, 2017), foreground race-related issues in committee hearings and floor debate (Minta and Sinclair-Chapman 2013; Wilson 2017; Dietrich and Hayes 2023; Lollis 2025), and—under certain conditions—support race-related bills and secure earmarks directed toward nonwhite constituencies (Kerr and Miller 1997; Canon 1999; Whitby 2000; Tate 2004; Grose, Mangum and Martin 2007; Grose 2011).[1] Nonwhite lawmakers also advance nonwhite interests by conducting congressional oversight (Minta 2011), contacting executive agencies (Lowande, Ritchie and Lauterbach 2019), providing constituency service (Broockman 2013), and increasing racially focused interest groups' access to committees (Minta 2021).

Although scholars have documented the consequences of racial diversity in Congress, committees remain understudied. In particular, we know little about how the racial diversity of a committee affects interactions between nonwhite and white legislators—and whether these interactions influence legislators' behavior. This omission is notable because nonwhite representation varies widely across committees, creating disparate opportunities for cross-group contact. And although policymaking authority is increasingly concentrated among party leaders, committees remain vital to policy development and act as gateways to policy success (Fenno 1973; Curry 2015; Curry and Rosenstiel Forthcoming).[2] Taken together, these observations imply that committee-level racial diversity—and the cross-group contact it fosters—could meaningfully affect substantive representation. Therefore, in order to fully understand the consequences of descriptive representation in Congress, it is necessary to examine how committee-level racial diversity influences legislators' speech and their ability to advance legislation related to race.

[1] Some scholars find that party identification and the percentage of Black and Latino constituents in a district better predict lawmakers' support for racially salient legislation than race (Swain 1995; Hero and Tolbert 1995; Knoll 2009; Grose 2011).

[2] Curry and Rosenstiel (Forthcoming) demonstrate that Senators are still able to secure increased federal funding for their states from formula grant programs in committee, regardless of whether these bills advance through regular order or unorthodox procedures. Thus, even with the decline of regular order in Congress, legislators' committee actions are not symbolic; they meaningfully influence whether bills advance through the lawmaking process.

In this paper, I examine how the racial diversity of committees in the U.S. House of Representatives shapes legislators' discussions of race in hearings and affects the advancement and passage of race legislation. I argue that in racially diverse committees, white and nonwhite legislators are more likely to interact repeatedly, leading white lawmakers to learn about race-related issues from nonwhite colleagues. To test my argument, I combine large-scale text classification with a detailed content analysis of more than 11,000 race-based committee hearing statements and 87,000 full bill texts introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives from the 105th to the 117th Congresses. Leveraging a within-legislator identification strategy, I find that white Democrats on racially diverse committees are more likely to cite evidence when discussing race than white lawmakers on predominantly white committees. White Democrats also reference the same sources of evidence as nonwhite lawmakers on racially diverse committees. Finally, I demonstrate that citing evidence in race discussions is linked to substantive representation, as legislators who frequently refer to evidence when discussing race are more likely to advance and pass race bills.

These findings advance scholarship on descriptive and substantive representation in two key ways. First, I find that identity-based learning occurs within racially diverse legislative committees. Committees are well established as sites where policy expertise is acquired and exchanged (Fenno 1973; Krehbiel 1992; Curry 2019; Ban, Park and You 2023), but I demonstrate that they also transmit race-related knowledge. Second, I find that race-based expertise is linked to the advancement and passage of race legislation. Scholars have long debated whether and under what conditions descriptive representation facilitates substantive representation (Canon 1999; Tate 2004; Minta 2011, 2021). My results indicate that race-related expertise gained in racially diverse committees constitutes a mechanism through which descriptive representation translates into substantive representation.

Race-Based Contact Effects, Learning, and Evidence Use in Committees

Existing research links lawmakers' racial identities to their committee behavior. Studies show that racially diverse committees hold more hearings on race (Ellis and Wilson 2013; Minta and

Sinclair-Chapman 2013; Nestor 2023), and in racially salient hearings, Black and Latino legislators participate more than their white colleagues (Gamble 2007; Minta 2009; Rouse 2023). Nonwhite legislators are also more likely to discuss race across hearing topics (Lollis 2025). And in oversight hearings, Black members press executive agencies more often for stronger civil-rights enforcement (Minta 2011).

Less is known, however, about how a committee's racial composition structures interactions between white and nonwhite members, and whether those interactions shape race-related discourse and the advancement of race legislation. Although Congress has become more racially diverse over the last half-century, nonwhite representation varies widely across committees. In the 117th Congress, for instance, roughly 40% of Judiciary Committee members were nonwhite, compared to only 15% on Rules. This uneven distribution of nonwhite lawmakers on committees creates systematically different opportunities for cross-racial contact: when committees are racially diverse, nonwhite and white legislators frequently interact; on predominantly white committees, cross-group contact is more limited. I argue that this variation in cross-group contact shapes how white lawmakers discuss race.

Indeed, intergroup contact theory holds that contact between white and nonwhite lawmakers in committees may alter the behavior of white lawmakers. (Allport, Clark and Pettigrew 1954; Pettigrew 1998; Enos 2014; Dyck and Pearson-Merkowitz 2014). Contact effects are most likely to occur when individuals share goals, have incentives to cooperate, maintain equal status, engage in repeated interactions, and operate under rules and norms that structure those interactions (Pettigrew 1998, p. 66). Although intergroup contact theory is most often applied in studies examining individuals' attitudes and behaviors, recent work demonstrates that the scope conditions of the theory closely align with the institutional design of legislative committees (Lollis 2025). Committee colleagues meet frequently, work within a common policy jurisdiction, hold equal formal status (except for the chair and ranking member), and interact under highly structured rules and procedures. Thus, while I do not claim that committee interactions alter legislators' underlying attitudes, it is reasonable to expect that nonwhite and white lawmakers' interactions in racially

diverse committees may systematically affect white legislators' behavior.[3]

Cross-group contact in racially diverse committees can influence white lawmakers' statements by fostering learning (Allport, Clark and Pettigrew 1954; Pettigrew 1998). Because committees are designed to transmit policy-relevant information (Krehbiel 1992; Battaglini, Lai, Lim and Wang 2019; Curry 2019), hearings repeatedly expose members to colleagues' expertise through their statements and questions. As a result, exposure to nonwhite colleagues' statements, policy frames, and lived experiences in racially diverse committees provides white lawmakers with race-related knowledge they might otherwise lack (Mansbridge 1999). If white lawmakers learn from their nonwhite colleagues in these settings, they should increasingly cite credible evidence when discussing race. Accordingly, I expect racially diverse committees to shape both the frequency and the content of white lawmakers' evidence usage.

More specifically, if white lawmakers learn from nonwhite members on their committee, they should cite evidence more often in their race-related remarks in racially diverse committees. Because nonwhite members routinely support race-related statements with evidence, exposure to their citation practices should increase white members' evidence use on more diverse committees, with no increase on predominantly white committees.[4] And if cross-group learning occurs in racially diverse committees, white lawmakers should cite the same sources of evidence as nonwhite lawmakers. Drawing on their lived experience and identity-based expertise (Mansbridge 1999; Minta 2011, 2021), nonwhite members rely on sources they view as authoritative on race. White lawmakers have different lived experiences and, as a result, may rely on different forms of evidence. Exposure to nonwhite colleagues in diverse committees should introduce white members to new sources for race-related arguments, producing greater overlap in citations.[5]

[3]Indeed, Pettigrew (1998) argues that behavioral change often precedes attitudinal change under repeated cross-group contact.

[4]One precondition of this argument is that nonwhite lawmakers regularly cite evidence when discussing race, creating the opportunity for white lawmakers to learn from their evidence use. Figure 2 and Appendix Table 4.3 show that nonwhite lawmakers are more likely than white lawmakers to cite evidence when discussing race.

[5]One concern is that citation convergence could reflect performative engagement rather than learning. For instance, white legislators may defensively or disingenuously repeat sources cited by nonwhite colleagues (i.e., "virtue signaling"). In a hand-coded training set of race-related hearing statements (n = 5,000), undergraduate research assistants coded each statement as "neutral" (i.e., no affect, just content) or "negative" (i.e., explicitly discussing nonwhite lawmakers in negative terms). 98% of race statements were coded as neutral. This does not suggest that negative

Contact effects, however, are unlikely to influence all white lawmakers equally. Cross-group contact is most effective when individuals share equal status and common goals (Pettigrew 1998). Because most nonwhite legislators are Democrats (Griffin 2014) and congressional parties are internally homogeneous (Lee 2016), white Democrats are more likely than white Republicans to share partisan ties, equal status, and policy objectives with nonwhite members. Democrats are also more likely to support racially progressive policies, suggesting that they also may be more open to learning from nonwhite lawmakers than Republicans (Grose 2011). If contact fosters learning, then white Democrats serving on racially diverse committees should be especially likely to alter both the frequency and content of their evidence-based statements about race.

H1 (Frequency of Evidence-Based Race Statements): The likelihood that a white Democrat makes evidence-based race statements in hearings is positively associated with the racial diversity of a committee.

H2 (Content of Evidence-Based Race Statements): The likelihood that a white Democrat cites the same sources as nonwhite lawmakers in their evidence-based race statements is positively associated with the racial diversity of a committee.

Even if white Democrats on racially diverse committees cite more evidence when discussing race, that pattern could reflect motives other than learning. For example, white lawmakers may repeat nonwhite lawmakers' sources without internalizing them or choose to cite evidence related to race because it is socially desirable. To isolate learning as the mechanism, I exploit over-time variation in exposure to racial diversity. If white Democrats are learning from nonwhite colleagues, greater committee diversity in a prior term (t-1) should predict more evidence-based race statements in the current term (t), even after controlling for current-term diversity. If white Democrats cited evidence disingenuously or merely for optics, prior exposure to committee diversity should not continue to predict increased race-related evidence use, particularly for white Democrats who no longer serve on racially diverse committees.

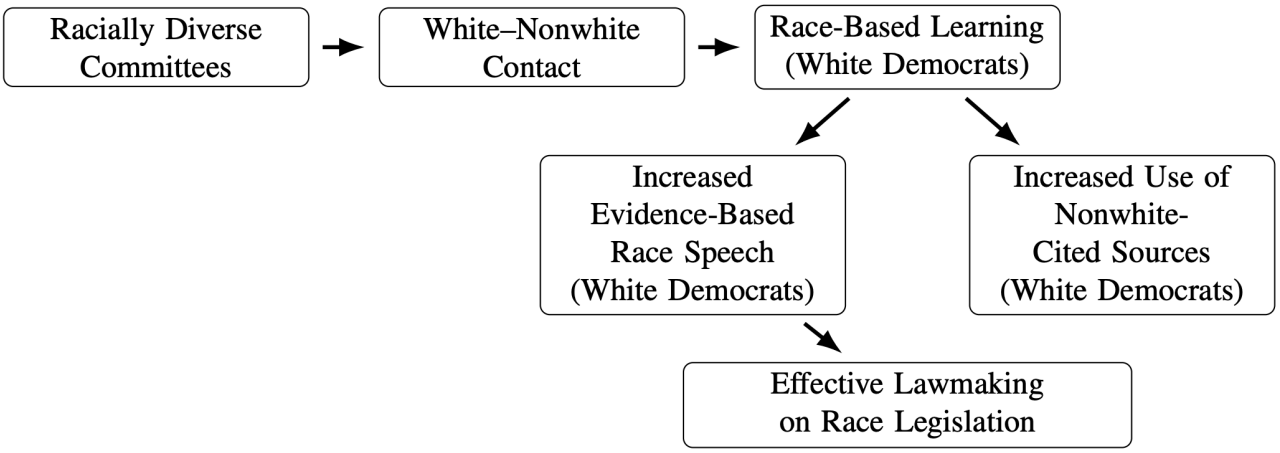
language toward nonwhite lawmakers or performative citations never occur in committee hearings, but it does demonstrate that such behavior is rare, not systematic, and unlikely to drive the results.

H3 (Learning Over Time): White Democrats who served on racially diverse committees in the previous term (t-1) are more likely to cite evidence in the current term (t), regardless of their committees' current racial diversity.

Finally, I argue that race-based expertise facilitates substantive representation through the advancement and passage of race legislation. Legislators who develop expertise in issues related to race are more knowledgeable about and motivated to advance and pass race-related policies. Indeed, the idea that expertise leads to effective lawmaking is not new (Volden and Wiseman 2014). In fact, the strongest and most consistent predictors of effectiveness are tied to legislators' experience, expertise, and influence: members who have spent decades in the House, acquired leadership positions, and developed narrow, specialized policy agendas are more effective than their peers (Volden and Wiseman 2014, 2020). Rank-and-file legislators also look to issue experts when deciding whether to support legislation (Curry 2015). Thus, legislators may seek information and guidance from race-based experts, increasing the likelihood that their sponsored race bills advance. Of course, if issue-area expertise is associated with effective lawmaking, race-based experts should not be systematically more effective at advancing legislation unrelated to race. Accordingly, legislators who frequently cite evidence when discussing race in committee hearings should be more effective at advancing race bills, but no more effective than their peers at advancing bills unrelated to race. Figure 1 summarizes my theoretical framework.

H4 (Evidence Usage and Effective Lawmaking): Citing evidence when discussing race is positively associated with effective lawmaking on race bills and is not associated with effective lawmaking on bills unrelated to race.

Figure 1: How Committee Diversity Promotes Race-Based Evidence Use and Policy Success



Note: Racially diverse committees increase contact between white and nonwhite lawmakers, fostering race-related learning among white Democrats. This learning is associated with (i) greater use of evidence in race-related speech and (ii) convergence in sources cited with nonwhite colleagues. Evidence use in race speech is associated with increased passage of race legislation.

Measuring Evidence in Committee Hearing Statements

Although legislators may acquire and cite evidence in many settings, I focus on measuring evidence usage in committee hearings. Unlike other stages of the lawmaking process—such as floor debates or speeches—committees are where legislators develop policy expertise (Kiewiet 1991; Krehbiel 1992; Battaglini et al. 2019). Legislators gain information from witness testimony (Ban, Park and You 2024), committee staff (Ommundsen 2023; Fong, Lowande and Rauh 2025), lobbyists (Ban, Park and You 2023), and experienced colleagues (Curry 2019). Committee hearings, in turn, provide lawmakers with opportunities to apply this knowledge by citing evidence—an act that, unlike merely mentioning a group or topic, signals expertise.

Although evidence is central to committee function, legislators may not always prioritize acquiring or citing it. Lawmakers do rely on information to decide how to vote, when to collaborate, and whether to compromise (Krehbiel 1992; Curry 2015). Yet, gathering relevant evidence requires substantial time and resources—both of which are scarce in an overburdened Congress

(LaPira, Drutman and Kosar 2020). And the costs may not always be worth bearing: in a polarized environment, grandstanding in hearings can be more strategically advantageous than citing evidence (Park 2021), especially since voters often reward such behavior (Park 2023). Thus, although evidence is integral to committee work, I expect its actual use to be modest, which makes it all the more important to understand the conditions that encourage evidence-based policymaking.

Despite the importance of understanding whether legislators cite evidence in committee hearings, the endeavor poses serious measurement challenges. Given the length and volume of committee hearing transcripts, existing research analyzing committee statements typically follows one of two methodological approaches: (1) content analysis on a limited number of hearings within a few committees in a single congressional term (Gamble 2007, 2011); or (2) automated coding using classification and machine learning methods (Park 2021; 2023; Lewallen, Park, and Theriault 2024; Ban, Park, and You 2024; Lollis 2024). Content analyses of this type allow scholars to create detailed, highly accurate measures, but they tend to be so time intensive that the findings are often limited to a specific committee or term, which is often a non-random sample of the corpus. Classification and machine learning methods address this limitation by coding a larger volume of statements, but they can struggle to identify complex and multidimensional latent concepts, and thus often produce less accurate measures than hand coding.

I employ a measurement strategy that combines large-scale classification with content analysis to address both limitations. Since my theory focuses on how legislators use evidence when discussing race, I rely on a dataset that systematically identifies race-based statements from all committee hearings over a 25-year period using classification methods. By systematically identifying all race-related statements in congressional committee hearings, I mitigate concerns about non-random sampling and term- or committee-specific findings. I then conduct a detailed and systematic content analysis of each race statement to determine whether it cites evidence. By manually coding each statement, I produce precise and valid measures that capture not only whether a statement cites evidence but also the specific source referenced.

Data & Methods

To identify race-based hearing statements, I used a bigram dictionary classification method to systematically identify race-based statements from more than 16,000 legislative and oversight committee hearings in the U.S. House of Representatives during the 105th–117th Congresses. To construct this measure, I created a hand-coded training set of 5,000 randomly sampled hearing statements, each labeled for whether it included racial references. From this training set, I extracted race bigrams—two-word pairs that reference race either broadly (e.g., "people [of] color," "racial minority") or identify specific racial groups (e.g., Black, Latino, Asian). Using a dictionary of these bigrams, I then predicted whether statements in the full corpus of hearing transcripts referenced race. The method accurately identified race-based hearing statements in a validation set comparing hand-coded and model-predicted classifications (AUC = 0.9, $\kappa = 0.87$). Of the 1.4 million committee hearing statements made by 1,164 unique members across 24 committees during the 105th–117th Congresses, 11,860 statements referenced race.[6] On average, legislators made 14 race statements per term, with an average length of 300 words.[7]

To identify evidence usage, I conducted a detailed and systematic content analysis of all 11,860 race statements to determine whether they mention evidence and, if so, the specific source cited. I define evidence usage as a legislator citing a credible source to substantiate a claim.[8] Legislators cite executive branch reports and rules (35%), legislation (32%), witness testimonies (8%), interest group reports (7%), court rulings (4%), news articles (4%), and academic scholarship (3%) as sources. I coded statements that met these criteria as evidence statements and extracted both the source category (e.g., Court Case) and the specific source (e.g., *Shelby County v. Holder)*. State-

[6]For a more detailed description of how the race statement measure was constructed, see Sections Two, Three, and Four of the appendix in Lollis (2025).

[7]One concern is that legislators may mention race not only as a form of representation but also in explicitly negative or racist ways. I address this possibility by coding for negative and neutral race statements in a training set of 5,000 randomly sampled race statements. Statements were coded as negative if the legislator spoke about nonwhite individuals in negative or racist ways, and neutral otherwise. 98% of all race statements were coded as neutral, meaning that the overwhelming majority of race statements were not explicitly negative. As a result, I do not incorporate tone as an independent variable in this analysis.

[8]Importantly, my definition of evidence differs from work measuring information in congressional committee hearings (Ban, Park and You 2024). Legislators *cite* evidence to make and defend arguments, while they *acquire* information through witness testimony, experts, staff, etc.

ments that relied on unsupported claims or did not make claims were coded as non-evidence statements. I deliberately defined evidence narrowly—requiring both a claim and a credible source—to ensure that the citations reflect deliberate, intentional engagement with evidence rather than offhand mentions of materials such as statutes, agencies, or court cases. By design, this conservative coding strategy likely undercounts the prevalence of race-based evidence in committee hearings, so my findings should be interpreted as lower-bound estimates.

Table 1 illustrates the coding decisions associated with three variations of the same race statement. I coded the first statement as evidence-based because it cites a source—the Census Bureau—to support a claim (i.e., African Americans were undercounted in the Census). The second version of this statement is not coded as evidence-based because it lacks a citation. The third neither cites a source nor makes a claim. Although validity is less of a concern since I read and manually coded all statements, Section 2 of the appendix assesses the measure's face validity and confirms that it accurately captures evidence usage.

Table 1: Coding Evidence-Based Race Statements

Coding Decision	Source	Race Statement
Evidence Statement	Census Bureau	"During the last census count in 2010, the **Census Bureau** found that *African Americans were under-counted by over 800,000*."
Non-Evidence Statement	—	"During the last census count in 2010, *African Americans were under-counted by over 800,000*."
Non-Evidence Statement	—	"I'm deeply concerned that African Americans are being undercounted in the Census. Does the Bureau have a goal or plan to improve the Black undercount and increase participation?"

Note: Examples are based on a statement made by Representative Steven Horsford (NV-4) in an Oversight Committee hearing in the 116th Congress.

After determining whether each race statement cited evidence, I created two dependent variables. The first, "Evidence," is a continuous variable that measures the total number of evidence-based race statements a legislator makes in each committee-term.[9] It ranges from 0 to 19, with a mean of 1.05. The second variable, "Matching Sources," is a continuous measure capturing the number of sources a white lawmaker cites that also appear in nonwhite lawmakers' statements within the same committee-term. For example, if a white and any nonwhite legislator in the Judiciary Committee during the 117th Congress cited *Shelby County v. Holder*, the Voting Rights Advancement Act, and the Census Bureau—without citing any other matching sources—the white lawmaker would receive a value of three for this variable. Given that the unit of analysis is at the legislator-committee-term level, this variable is *not* a dyadic measure identifying the number of matching citations between a white lawmaker and a specific nonwhite lawmaker. Rather, it captures the total number of sources cited by a white lawmaker that were also referenced by any nonwhite lawmakers on the same committee during the same term. The variable ranges from zero to eight, with a mean of 1.27. To address skewness, all models use a logged version of both dependent variables.[10]

Out of 11,860 race statements, 3,225 (27%) mention evidence. Though these statements are somewhat more common during Democratic majorities (110th, 111th, 116th, and 117th Congresses), variation across terms is minimal. Table 2 shows that legislators make an average of one to two evidence-based race statements per term. Although the total number of evidence-based race statements per term is relatively low, approximately half the legislators in the dataset make at least one per term (see Table 2, column 4). And, in most terms, more than 60% of Democrats

[9]I intentionally do not construct this variable at the statement level. Legislators' statements within a hearing are not independent. Rather, lawmakers often engage in dialogue with witnesses throughout their allotted speaking time, meaning multiple statements from the same legislator may be connected (Eldes, Fong and Lowande 2024). Therefore, calculating this variable at the member-committee-term level best reflects the structure of committee hearing discussions. Since many statements by the same lawmaker may be similar, I clustered standard errors by legislator in all models.

[10]Both dependent variables are right-skewed, so I transform them by adding one and then taking the natural log to better approximate a normal distribution. In Section 5 of the appendix, I present summary statistics that describe the skewness of each variable. To normalize the distributions, I add one and take the natural log of the variable. I use the logged version of the dependent variables in all in-text models; however, I also re-estimate the models presented in the main text using the non-transformed variables. The results, shown in Appendix Table 5.2 and Appendix Table 5.3, are consistent with those presented in the main text.

make at least one evidence-based race statement (see Table 2, column 5). In the 110th Congress, for example, roughly two-thirds of all legislators, and nearly three-quarters of Democrats, made an evidence-based race statement. This suggests that evidence usage in discussions about race is modest, but not concentrated among a small set of lawmakers.

Table 2: Average Number of Evidence-Based Race Statements Per Term

Term	Party in Majority	Mean Evidence-Based Race Statements Per Legislator	% of Legislators Making At Least One Evidence-Based Race Statement	% of Democrats Making At Least One Evidence-Based Race Statement	Range
105 (1997)	R	0.698	47.2%	63%	0 – 3
106 (1999)	R	0.902	49.6%	51.9%	0 – 15
107 (2001)	R	1.32	66.3%	69.8%	0 – 11
108 (2003)	R	1.71	62.4%	70.3%	0 – 11
109 (2005)	R	1.79	62.2%	70.9%	0 – 14
110 (2007)	D	2.07	65.7%	71.7%	0 – 23
111 (2009)	D	1.81	60.7%	67.4%	0 – 21
112 (2011)	R	1.35	58.2%	69.9%	0 – 11
113 (2013)	R	0.970	48.8%	55.1%	0 – 7
114 (2015)	R	1.13	56.1%	61.5%	0 – 10
115 (2017)	R	0.742	46.2%	59.8%	0 – 6
116 (2019)	D	1.55	51.6%	56.8%	0 – 19
117 (2021)	D	1.44	52.3%	59.6%	0 – 21

Note: Evidence-based race statements are infrequent, though a majority of legislators—particularly Democrats—make at least one per term. Table 2 includes the mean number of evidence-based race statements made by each legislator across all terms and the average maximum and minimum value per term. Column 4 displays the percentage of legislators making at least one evidence-based race statement per term. Column 5 reports the percentage of Democrats making at least one evidence-based race statement per term.

Results

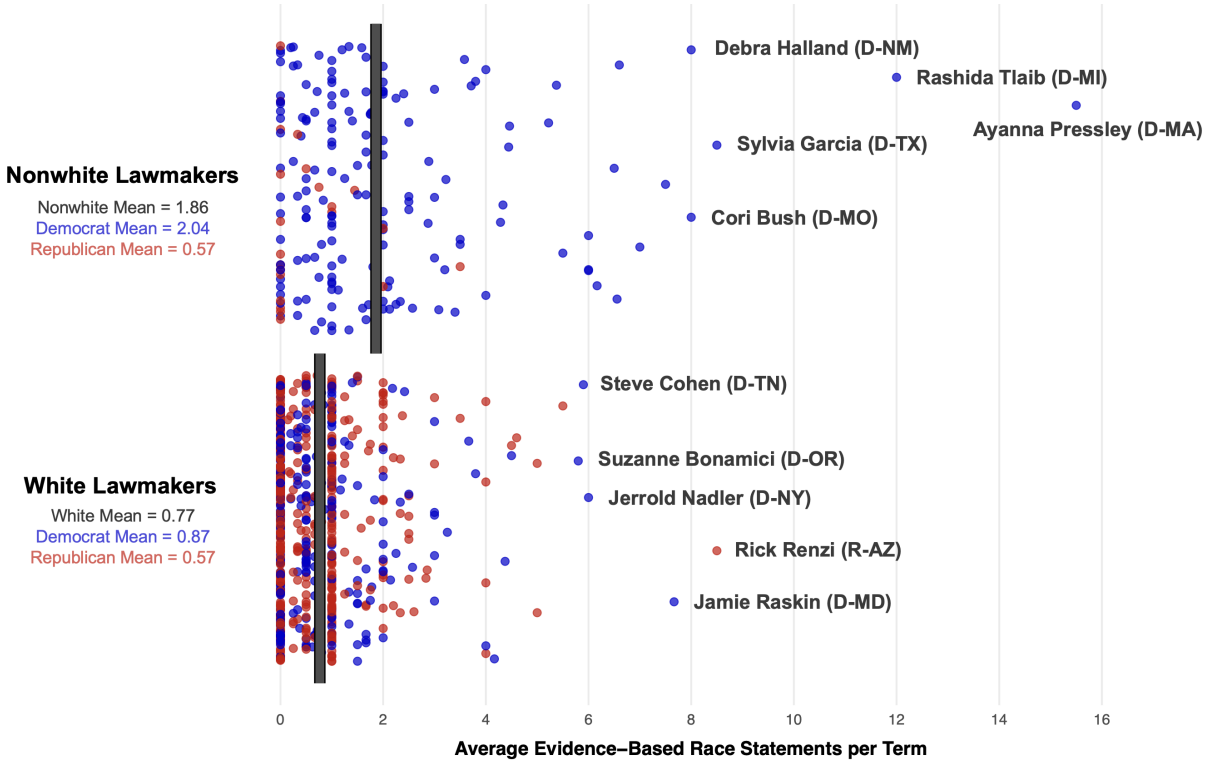
Although variation across congressional terms is limited, nonwhite and Democratic lawmakers consistently make more evidence-based race statements than their white and Republican colleagues. Figure 2 illustrates the average number of evidence-based race statements per term, disaggregated by legislators' race and party affiliation. Each dot represents an individual lawmaker: blue dots indicate Democrats, and red dots identify Republicans. On average, nonwhite legislators make nearly two evidence-based race statements per term, compared to fewer than one for white

legislators.[11] While this difference may appear modest, it is substantively meaningful given that the overall average is just one evidence-based race statement per term.

Figure 2 also highlights a strong partisan divide: Democrats—regardless of race—are more likely than Republicans to incorporate evidence when discussing race. Nonwhite Democrats, for instance, make one and a half more evidence-based race statements per term than nonwhite Republicans. Notably, the nonwhite lawmakers most likely to cite evidence are all women of color, which is consistent with existing research showing that Black women often collaborate to highlight racial and gender issues (Brown 2014). Ayanna Pressley and Rashida Tlaib made more than ten evidence-based race statements per term, while Sylvia Garcia, Debra Haaland, and Cori Bush made more than five. Among white lawmakers, Democrats representing racially diverse districts were most likely to reference evidence—an exception being Rick Renzi, a Republican from Arizona's first congressional district, who represented the Navajo Nation and Hopi Reservation.

[11]This finding holds in a multivariate model with member-level controls and term fixed effects. In Appendix Table 4.3, I regress the number of evidence-based race statements per term on an indicator for whether a lawmaker is nonwhite. The coefficient is positive and statistically significant (β = 0.249, p = 0.00), suggesting that nonwhite lawmakers are significantly more likely than white lawmakers to use evidence when discussing race in committee hearings.

Figure 2: Average Evidence-Based Race Statements By Race and Party



Note: Each dot in the jitter plot represents a unique lawmaker and indicates their average number of evidence-based race statements made per term. Blue dots indicate Democrats; red dots represent Republicans. The solid gray line indicates the mean value for each panel. Nonwhite lawmakers, on average, make one additional evidence-based race statement per term compared to white lawmakers. Democrats, on average, make more such statements than Republicans. This finding remains robust in a multivariate model with member-level controls and term fixed effects (see Appendix Table 4.3).

White Democrats Cite More Evidence on Diverse Committees

To estimate the relationship between committee racial diversity and evidence-based race statements, I exploit within-legislator variation. Legislator fixed effects control for all time-invariant member characteristics and term fixed effects absorb unobserved time-variant confounders. As a result, identification comes from changes in the racial composition of a legislator's committees. I do not include committee fixed effects because the key predictor—the share of nonwhite members on each committee—varies at the committee level. Instead, I control for whether a committee is a power committee (Appropriations, Ways and Means, Budget, and Judiciary) and for two committee-level features—the number of hearings held and the number of bills referred in a

term—that proxy workload and the breadth of policy jurisdiction. Under this specification, estimates can be interpreted as independent of all differences between white legislators and any changes over congressional terms. If, for example, legislators' racial attitudes or race-related expertise are stable within a term, combining legislator and term fixed effects mitigates confounding from these relevant (though unobservable) variables.[12]

To test my first hypothesis, I estimate six OLS regression models with legislator fixed effects, each with and without term fixed effects.[13] Table 3 reports the results. The dependent variable is **Evidence**. In columns 1 and 2, it is the natural log of the total number of evidence-based race statements made by white legislators in each committee-term; in columns 3 and 4, the models include only white Democrats; and in columns 5 and 6 only white Republicans. The independent variable of interest is the proportion of nonwhite lawmakers on each committee (0-1).[14] Standard errors are robust and clustered by legislator.

Consistent with my first hypothesis, white lawmakers make more evidence-based race statements as the proportion of nonwhite lawmakers on their committee increases. A 10 percentage point increase in nonwhite committee membership is associated with a 7.2% increase in the number of evidence-based race statements made by white lawmakers. In substantive terms, a white lawmaker on an all-white committee never mentions evidence when discussing race. That *same white lawmaker* is predicted to make one additional race statements per term on the most racially diverse committees in the House.[15]

[12]This identification strategy strengthens inference but does not establish causality. While combining legislator and term fixed effects controls for time-variant differences between members, they do not control for within-term, member-level unobservables.

[13]Two-way fixed effects rely on the assumption of linear additive effects (Imai and Kim 2021), which may be violated when including both unit- and time-specific fixed effects. To assess this, I also estimate each model in Table 3 without term fixed effects (Columns 2, 4, and 6). The results are consistent across both specifications.

[14]In models without legislator and/or term fixed effects, I include a variety of control variables, including member-level characteristics that could theoretically vary over time—such as party identification, district racial diversity, ideology, seniority, and vote share—all of which may influence white lawmakers' use of evidence. I also control for majority party status and the overall racial diversity of the House, as both factors may shape whether race-based evidence is referenced. Table 3.1 in the appendix reports this model with all controls included.

[15]Given that I add one and take the natural log of the dependent variables, I use the following formula to substantively interpret the coefficients (with the independent variable measured as a proportion, 0–1):

$$\% \text{ change in DV for a 10-percentage-point increase} \approx \left(\exp(\beta_1 \cdot 0.10) - 1\right) \times 100.$$

As expected, the magnitude of the coefficient is largest in models subset to include only white Democrats, who are most likely to meet the conditions necessary to facilitate contact effects. In substantive terms, the models predict that a 10 percentage point increase in nonwhite committee membership is associated with a 10% increase in the number of evidence-based race statements made by white Democrats. In models subset to include only white Republicans, the coefficient is not statistically significant. Because the model includes legislator and term fixed effects, the relationship is independent of any factors that differ among white lawmakers or changes across congressional terms.[16] The results presented in Table 3 remain robust to several alternative specifications, including dropping legislator fixed effects, using the proportion of evidence-based to total race statements as the dependent variable, and using the non-logged dependent variable.[17]

Therefore, for the main model (Table 3, Column 1),

$$\big(\exp(0.693 \cdot 0.10) - 1\big) \times 100 = \big(\exp(0.0693) - 1\big) \times 100 \approx (1.0718 - 1) \times 100 = 7.18\% \ (\approx 7\%).$$

[16]One potential concern is that legislators with greater race-based expertise may be more likely to seek assignment on racially diverse committees. Since committee assignment is, to some degree, non-random, the effects reported here could reflect white legislators' committee preferences rather than the influence of committee diversity itself. However, the within-legislator identification strategy rules out this explanation. The findings show that all white lawmakers—regardless of their committee preferences or prior expertise on race-related issues—discuss race more frequently on racially diverse committees.

[17]In Sections 4 and 5 of the appendix, I demonstrate that this result is consistent across three alternative model specifications. First, Appendix Table 4.1 reports a model without legislator fixed effects, instead interacting a binary indicator for white lawmakers with the percentage of nonwhite lawmakers on the committee. Second, Appendix Table 4.2 uses a dependent variable measuring the proportion of evidence-based to total race statements. Third, Appendix Table 5.2 presents results using the original, non-transformed dependent variable. Across all three specifications, the results remain largely consistent with the main findings reported in the main text.

Table 3: White Democrats Make More Evidence-Based Race Statements on Racially Diverse Committees

	Evidence (White Lawmaker)		Evidence (White Democrat)		Evidence (White Republican)	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Proportion of Nonwhite Lawmakers on Committee	**0.693****	**0.754***	**0.945***	**0.848**$^{+}$	0.518	0.482
	(0.263)	(0.316)	(0.394)	(0.464)	(0.377)	(0.492)
Power Committee	0.139**	0.142*	0.107	0.174	0.174**	0.101
	(0.052)	(0.060)	(0.084)	(0.090)	(0.066)	(0.079)
# of Hearings	0.001**	0.001	0.002*	0.002*	0.001	−0.0003
	(0.0004)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
# of Bills Referred	0.0001*	0.0001	0.0002	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001
	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)
Intercept	0.354**	1.944***	−0.093	−0.702	0.373*	0.209
	(0.132)	(0.587)	(0.153)	(0.787)	(0.161)	(1.423)
Legislator Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Term Fixed Effects	✓		✓		✓	
Full Controls (Appendix)		✓		✓		✓
R^2	0.443	0.490	0.443	0.500	0.455	0.499
Adjusted R^2	0.150	0.123	0.205	0.198	0.091	0.037
Observations	1,935	1,181	875	575	1,060	606

$^{+}$p<0.1;*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: White Democrats cite more race-based evidence statements as the percentage of nonwhite lawmakers on their committees increases. The dependent variable is the natural log of the total number of evidence-based statements made by a white lawmaker in a given committee-term (DV = ln(Evidence + 1)). Standard errors are robust and clustered by legislator. **Full model reported in Appendix 3.1.**

Legislators Cite Similar Sources of Evidence on Diverse Committees

My second hypothesis posits that contact effects should also prompt white lawmakers on diverse committees to cite the same sources of evidence as their nonwhite colleagues. To test this expectation, I pair descriptive evidence from two committees—the Education and Labor and the Judiciary committees in the 116th Congress—with estimates from within-legislator OLS regression models. I descriptively analyze the sources cited in these committees for two reasons. First, they vary in racial composition: about one-fourth of Education and Labor members are nonwhite—

roughly the House average— compared to nearly 40% of Judiciary Committee members. Second, both committees play a significant role in policymaking, oversee consequential policy jurisdictions, and frequently engage in discussions about race.

Consistent with my expectation, white and nonwhite legislators frequently cited the same sources of evidence on the Judiciary Committee (the Department of Justice, the Equality Act, *Shelby County v. Holder*, and the FBI), but not on the Education and Labor Committee (see Table 4). Indeed, *Brown v. Board of Education* was the only overlapping source cited by both white and nonwhite members on the Education and Labor Committee throughout the term. This pattern, of course, does not suggest that lawmakers on less diverse committees cite irrelevant or unimportant sources. Both white and nonwhite legislators in the Education and Labor Committee frequently referenced significant and timely evidence, including the Civil Rights Act, the Affordable Care Act, and the Fair Labor Standards Act. Instead, the finding suggests that racial diversity within a committee influences the type of evidence white lawmakers cite.

Table 4: Similar Source Citations on Committee with Average and High % of Nonwhite Lawmakers

Education and Labor (116th Congress) *24% Nonwhite Legislators on Committee (Average)*		**Judiciary (116th Congress)** *39% Nonwhite Legislators on Committee (High)*	
Top Sources Nonwhite Lawmakers	**Top Sources White Lawmakers**	**Top Sources Nonwhite Lawmakers**	**Top Sources White Lawmakers**
Brown v. Board	**Brown v. Board**	**DOJ**	**DOJ**
Paycheck Fairness Act	Civil Rights Act	**Equality Act**	**Equality Act**
DOL	Equal Pay Act	**Shelby County v. Holder**	**Shelby County v. Holder**
Brookings	Government Accountability Office	**FBI**	**FBI**
Commonwealth Fund	Affordable Care Act	Pew	Voting Rights Act
Fair Labor Standards Act	AFL-CIO	Commission to Study Reparations	SUCCESS Act
Federal Reserve	America's College Promise Act	Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act	Bend the Arc
Maternal CARE Act	Bridge Magazine	National Institute of Standards and Technology	Census Bureau
Religious Freedom Restoration Act	Bureau of Labor Statistics	Social Security Act	Center for Police Equity

Note: White and nonwhite lawmakers are more likely to cite the same sources on the Judiciary committee (39% nonwhite lawmakers) than the Education and Labor committee (24% nonwhite lawmakers). The table reports the nine sources most frequently cited by white and nonwhite lawmakers on two committees in the 116th Congress.

When I model the relationship systematically, the multivariate analysis confirms the descriptive results (see Table 5).[18] Here again, I use a within-legislator identification strategy. The dependent variable, **Matching Sources**, is the natural log of the total number of sources a white lawmaker cites that are also referenced by nonwhite lawmakers in the same committee-term. The key independent variable is the proportion of nonwhite lawmakers on the committee. I estimate six OLS regression models—each with and without term fixed effects and the same committee-specific controls. Additionally, I control for the total number of unique sources a lawmaker cites in a given committee-term to rule out the possibility that variation in evidence breadth confounds the relationship between committee diversity and shared source citations.

White lawmakers serving on racially diverse committees are more likely to cite the same sources of evidence as their nonwhite colleagues than those on predominantly white committees (Table 5, Columns 1–2). As expected, the magnitude of this association is largest for white Democrats (Columns 3-4) and not statistically significant for white Republicans (Columns 5-6). Substantively, the estimates suggest that white Democrats on predominantly white committees cite zero sources also cited by nonwhite lawmakers. On the most racially diverse committees, however, *the same white lawmaker* cites one to two sources also referenced by nonwhite legislators on the same committee.

Importantly, these results remain robust when controlling for the total number of unique sources a legislator cites per term.[19] This indicates that white Democrats are not simply adding sources cited by their nonwhite colleagues to their existing pool of information; rather, they are replacing previously cited evidence with sources referenced by nonwhite lawmakers. In other words,

[18] In Appendix Table 5.3, I estimate the same model using the non-transformed dependent variable. The results are consistent.

[19] One possible concern is that white lawmakers have more opportunities to cite overlapping sources on racially diverse committees simply because there are more nonwhite lawmakers, increasing the chance of a match. However, this explanation is unlikely for several reasons. First, the presence of more nonwhite lawmakers does not necessarily make source matching more likely—white lawmakers may still choose to cite entirely different sources. Second, the analysis controls for the total number of unique sources a legislator cites per committee-term. This means the observed increase in source matching is not due to white lawmakers citing more sources overall. Instead, they appear to substitute previously used sources with those mentioned by nonwhite colleagues. This pattern is consistent with the claim that increased source matching on diverse committees reflects an intentional citation choice, rather than merely a greater opportunity.

white Democrats not only cite evidence more frequently in race-related discussions in racially diverse committees, but they also adapt their statements to incorporate sources used by nonwhite lawmakers, who have lived experiences and identity-based expertise in race-related issues.

Table 5: Nonwhite and White Legislators Cite Similar Sources on Racially Diverse Committees

	Matching Sources (White Lawmakers)		**Matching Sources (White Democrats)**		**Matching Sources (White Republicans)**	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Proportion of Nonwhite Lawmakers on Committee	**0.489****	**0.566****	**0.647****	**0.778****	0.312	0.252
	(0.165)	(0.193)	(0.245)	(0.295)	(0.206)	(0.224)
Total Race Statements	0.033***	0.043***	0.037***	0.038***	0.030	0.052***
	(0.009)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.011)	(0.016)	(0.008)
Total Unique Sources	0.072**	0.019	0.033	−0.011	0.109***	0.108**
	(0.023)	(0.023)	(0.023)	(0.027)	(0.030)	(0.036)
Power Committee	−0.019	−0.018	−0.046	−0.047	0.007	0.022
	(0.027)	(0.033)	(0.042)	(0.046)	(0.036)	(0.044)
# of Hearings	0.0004*	0.001**	0.0004	0.001*	0.0005*	0.001**
	(0.0002)	(0.0003)	(0.0004)	(0.001)	(0.0002)	(0.0004)
# of Bills Referred	0.00004	0.0001	0.0001*	0.0001**	0.00001	−0.00003
	(0.00003)	(0.00003)	(0.00004)	(0.00005)	(0.00005)	(0.0001)
Intercept	0.686***	−0.821	0.428***	0.813	0.675***	1.261
	(0.084)	(0.507)	(0.077)	(0.605)	(0.103)	(0.768)
Legislator Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Term Fixed Effects	✓		✓		✓	
Full Controls (Appendix)		✓		✓		✓
R^2	0.580	0.625	0.577	0.633	0.613	0.681
Adjusted R^2	0.357	0.353	0.393	0.408	0.353	0.384
Observations	1,935	1,181	875	575	1,060	606

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: White (Democrats) cite the same sources of evidence as nonwhite lawmakers on racially diverse committees. The dependent variable is the natural log of the total number of sources cited by white lawmakers that were also cited by nonwhite lawmakers in a committee-term (DV = ln(Matching Source + 1)). Standard errors are robust and clustered by legislator. **Full model reported in Appendix 3.2.**

Testing the Learning Mechanism: Prior-Term Diversity and Current Evidence Use

I argue that white Democrats cite more race-related evidence and matching sources on racially diverse committees because they learn from nonwhite colleagues' discussions of race. Despite the intuitive appeal of this claim, alternative mechanisms could also generate the results reported above. White Democrats, for instance, might cite evidence for optics rather than as a function of learning. To probe learning as the mechanism, I leverage temporal variation in exposure to nonwhite lawmakers in committees. If learning occurs, prior committee diversity should predict current evidence use even when current diversity is held constant.

I estimate six OLS regression models with legislator fixed effects, both with and without term fixed effects. The dependent variable is **Evidence**, estimated separately for white Democrats (Table 5, Columns 3–4) and white Republicans (Columns 5–6). The key independent variable is the prior-term proportion of nonwhite committee members (t-1). I control for the proportion of nonwhite lawmakers on each committee in the current term (t) and the standard committee-level controls used in prior models.

The results are consistent with my third hypothesis, offering empirical support for learning as a mechanism. In the pooled white lawmaker sample, only one of the two specifications is positive and statistically significant. In models subset to include only white Democrats, however, both coefficients on prior-term diversity are positive, statistically significant, and substantively large. A 10-percentage-point increase in nonwhite representation in the prior term is associated with a 27.7% increase in the number of evidence-based race statements referenced *by the same white lawmaker* in the current term, holding current-term committee diversity constant. As expected, the white-Republicans-only models are not statistically significant from zero.

These findings are robust to models estimated with non-logged dependent variables (Appendix Table 5.4). They also hold when restricting the sample to committees where legislators are most likely to grandstand (e.g., Budget, Ways and Means, Judiciary) (Park 2021), showing that race-based learning persists even in settings where performative comments are common (Appendix Table 4.5). Finally, additional models indicate that committee diversity does *not* predict increased

evidence use by nonwhite lawmakers in the current term, underscoring that it is white lawmakers who learn from their nonwhite colleagues already serving as experts on race-related issues (Appendix Table 4.4).

Table 6: Past Committee Diversity Predicts Present Evidence Use

	Evidence (White Lawmakers)		**Evidence (White Democrats)**		**Evidence (White Republicans)**	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Prop. Nonwhite on Committee in Prior Term (t-1)	**1.947****	1.300	**2.447***	**1.967**$^{+}$	1.720	1.471
	(0.664)	(0.805)	(1.014)	(1.021)	(0.934)	(0.978)
Prop. Nonwhite on Committee in Current Term (t)	1.230	1.439	1.694	1.109	2.131	2.445
	(1.050)	(1.130)	(1.529)	(1.759)	(1.597)	(1.829)
Democrat		0.417		–		–
		(18.678)				
Power Committee	−0.236	−0.242	−0.129	−3.355*	−0.824	0.669
	(0.900)	(0.880)	(2.053)	(1.684)	(1.171)	(1.130)
# of Hearings	–	−3.375	–	−1.764	–	−11.002*
		(5.997)		(11.031)		(4.341)
# of Bills Referred	–	0.005	–	0.023	–	0.110*
		(0.123)		(0.240)		(0.055)
Intercept	−0.336	−0.525	−1.929*	−10.006	0.659	3.629
	(1.018)	(11.422)	(0.815)	(14.996)	(0.952)	(16.576)
Legislator Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Term Fixed Effects	✓		✓		✓	
Full Controls (Appendix)		✓		✓		✓
R^2	0.635	0.636	0.699	0.707	0.598	0.601
Adjusted R^2	0.179	0.174	0.296	0.305	−0.050	−0.051
Observations	368	367	200	200	168	167

$^{+}$p<0.1; *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: White (Democrats) who were exposed to racially diverse committees in the prior term (t-1) continue to cite evidence in the present term (t), regardless of how racially diverse their committee is in the current term. The dependent variable is the natural log of the total number of evidence-based race statements (DV = ln(Evidence + 1)). Standard errors are robust and clustered by legislator. **Full model reported in Appendix 3.3.**

Evidence Usage Affects Substantive Representation

My final hypothesis examines whether race-based expertise is related to substantive representation. I expect that legislators who frequently cite evidence when discussing race are more effective

at advancing and passing the race bills they sponsor. To test this expectation, I scraped the full text of all 87,189 non-commemorative House bills introduced in the 105th–117th Congresses. On average, 6,707 non-commemorative bills were introduced per term, with a maximum of 9,698 in the 117th Congress. To identify which bills reference race, I applied the same race-bigram dictionary used to code committee hearing statements (Lollis 2024). Using a common dictionary for both committee hearing statements and bill text ensures measurement equivalence and allows me to directly test the hypothesized mechanism: whether race-related speech and expertise expressed in committee shape the content of race bills and increase the likelihood that they advance and pass. I validate this measure in Appendix Section 6.

A bill is coded as a race bill if it contains at least one race bigram.[20] Because my hypothesis concerns whether race is addressed—not how much of a bill is about race—a single reference is sufficient to identify race bills. This inclusive operationalization reflects the fact that expertise can shape targeted provisions or language even when a bill's main subject is not race. Likewise, a bill can afford substantive representation through a single sentence, clause, or amendment. As a robustness check, I re-estimate the models requiring bills to include three or more race references to be coded as a race bill (Appendix Table 6.1). The results are consistent across both specifications. Of the 87,189 non-commemorative bills, 6,385 (7%) include at least one race bigram and are coded as race bills. 80% of race bills were introduced by Democrats.

Table 7 reports five OLS models at the member–term level.[21] The models include term fixed effects, standard legislative effectiveness controls including the total number of bills introduced, and legislator-clustered standard errors. The dependent variables measure the number of legislators' race bills that (1) received action in committee, (2) were reported out of committee, (3) passed the House, (4) passed both chambers, and (5) became law. The key predictor is the total number

[20]The process of deriving these race bigrams is discussed in the first paragraph of the Data & Methods section. The top 100 most mentioned race bigrams are reported in Appendix Section 6.

[21]TThe results of these models are consistent (except for "Passed House") when estimated using negative binomial count models (Appendix Table 4.6). They also remain consistent when including legislator fixed effects and dropping term fixed effects, which suggests that unobserved, time-invariant factors—such as legislator attributes, district characteristics, committee assignment, pre-existing race-based expertise, or staff quality—do not confound the relationship between race-based expertise and effective lawmaking on race bills (Appendix Table 4.7).

of evidence-based race statements a member makes per term.

As expected, the results indicate a positive association between race-based expertise and substantive representation on race bills. In three of the five stages—committee action, committee reporting, and House passage—the coefficients are positive and statistically significant. Substantively, each additional evidence-based race statement per term is associated with 0.023 more sponsored race bills passing the House. Put differently, 10 additional evidence-based race statements correspond to about 0.23 House-passed bills, and roughly 44 statements correspond to 1 additional House-passed bill per term. The substantive effect per evidence statement is modest—as it should be—but it accumulates meaningfully for legislators who consistently ground their race-related arguments in evidence, especially those who do so far more than the chamber average.

There is no statistically significant association between race-based expertise and race bills passing both chambers or becoming law. This is unsurprising, as fewer than five percent of sponsored bills are enacted, and House members' committee-stage expertise has little direct influence over Senate agenda control or voting. Nonetheless, the fact that legislators with race-related expertise move their bills further through the House suggests that such expertise facilitates substantive representation within the chamber, even if the bicameral structure of Congress often prevents ultimate enactment.

To assess whether these findings are sensitive to my measure of race bills, I reestimate the models reported in Table 7 using legislative effectiveness scores (see Appendix Table 6.2) (Volden and Wiseman 2014; Volden, Wiseman and Wittmer 2018). Legislative effectiveness scores are composite indicators of legislators' success in advancing their bills. Unlike the in-text measure, in these models race bills are defined by the policy areas in which nonwhite lawmakers are most likely to sponsor legislation, rather than by whether an individual bill explicitly references race. Despite this alternative measurement strategy, the results are consistent: legislators who frequently cite evidence when discussing race in committee are more likely to advance their bills out of committee and secure passage in the House.

Table 7: Legislators Who Make More Evidence-Based Race Statements Are More Effective At Legislating Race Bills

	Action in Committee (Race Bills)	Action Beyond Committee (Race Bills)	Passed House (Race Bills)	Passed Both Chambers (Race Bills)	Became Law (Race Bills)
	1	2	3	4	5
Total Race-Based Evidence Statements	**0.040****	**0.035***	**0.023***	0.004	0.004
	(0.015)	(0.014)	(0.010)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Nonwhite	0.063	0.023	−0.030	−0.019	−0.019
	(0.065)	(0.057)	(0.040)	(0.019)	(0.019)
Democrat	−0.238	−0.222	−0.247*	−0.073	−0.073
	(0.162)	(0.133)	(0.097)	(0.052)	(0.052)
% Nonwhite in District	−0.172	−0.022	0.013	−0.033	−0.033
	(0.169)	(0.136)	(0.097)	(0.045)	(0.045)
Intercept	0.261	0.250	0.353	0.222	0.222
	(0.254)	(0.253)	(0.245)	(0.122)	(0.122)
Term Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Full Controls (Appendix)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.310	0.300	0.211	0.072	0.072
Adjusted R^2	0.296	0.286	0.195	0.054	0.054
Observations	1,344	1,344	1,344	1,344	1,344

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: Lawmakers who make more evidence-based race statements are more effective at advancing and passing race bills. Standard errors are robust and clustered by legislator. **Full model reported in Table 3.4 in the appendix**.

Expertise likely does not facilitate substantive representation equally for all legislators, in all terms, or across all policy domains. Since Democrats are most likely to learn about race from nonwhite legislators in committee, they should be most likely to translate committee-stage expertise into statutory language and bill passage. Consistent with this expectation, Table 8 indicates that, in models subset to include only Democrats (Column 1), evidence-based race statements are a positive and statistically significant predictor of race bills passing the House. Among Republicans (Column 2), the coefficient is not statistically significant, indicating that Republicans who cite evidence when discussing race are no more or less likely to pass their race bills in the House.

A second implication concerns issue specificity. If race-based expertise is the mechanism facilitating substantive representation, it should predict success on race bills, not on bills unrelated to race. Being adept at marshaling evidence on race should not, by itself, make a member more effective at legislating in other policy areas (e.g., agriculture or transportation). A model subset to include only non-race bills (Column 5) indicates that this is the case—race-based evidence use in committee hearings does not predict passage of non-race bills.

Finally, a reasonable concern is that the race bigram measure may identify both race legislation aimed at improving the lives of nonwhite Americans, which would constitute substantive representation, and bills that mention race while primarily restricting rights or reducing protections for nonwhite Americans. To address this, I re-estimate the models separately under Democratic and Republican House majorities. The coefficient on evidence-based race statements is positive and statistically significant under Democratic majorities (Column 3) and statistically indistinguishable from zero under Republican majorities (Column 4). This pattern suggests that race-based expertise translates into substantive representation primarily when Democrats control the House, which is also when race-related bills are most likely to expand rights and protections for nonwhite Americans.

Table 8: When Race-Based Expertise Leads to Race Bill Passage

	Passed House (Democrats)	Passed House (Republicans)	Passed House (Democratic Majority)	Passed House (Republican Majority)	Passed House (Non-Race Bills)
	1	2	3	4	5
Total Race-Based Evidence Statements	**0.022***	0.0001	**0.024***	0.007	0.026
	(0.011)	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.016)	(0.020)
Nonwhite	−0.009	−0.029	−0.019	0.008	−0.078
	(0.050)	(0.034)	(0.058)	(0.056)	(0.139)
Democrat	—	—	0.052	−0.262	−1.368**
			(0.102)	(0.123)	(0.452)
% Nonwhite in District	−0.0002	−0.161	0.073	−0.049	0.424
	(0.125)	(0.106)	(0.137)	(0.150)	(0.387)
Intercept	−0.012	0.307	−0.079	0.570**	1.619**
	(0.228)	(0.229)	(0.201)	(0.199)	(0.569)
Term Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Full Controls (Appendix)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.228	0.186	0.251	0.157	0.336
Adjusted R^2	0.204	0.150	0.231	0.124	0.323
Observations	818	526	807	537	1,344

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: Democrats and Democratic majorities are associated with race-based expertise facilitating race-bill passage in the House. There is not a statistically significant relationship between Republicans' race-based expertise and race-bill passage. As expected, race-based expertise is not associated with increased passage for bills unrelated to race. **Full model reported in Table 3.5 in the appendix.**

Conclusion

Despite extensive research examining how racial diversity in Congress has expanded attention to race, variation in committee-level diversity—and its consequences—has been overlooked. This paper demonstrates that committee diversity matters because it fosters cross-group learning: white Democrats exposed to nonwhite colleagues in diverse committees cite more evidence when discussing race, and this evidence use is associated with greater success in advancing and passing race legislation. Drawing on data from more than 11,000 committee hearing statements and 87,000

bills, I demonstrate that descriptive representation in committees facilitates substantive representation in policymaking.

These findings offer important insights into how race shapes legislative institutions and policymaking. They are among the first to show that committee-level racial diversity—not just the overall diversity of Congress—shapes legislative discourse and policy outcomes. This distinction is critical because nonwhite lawmakers are not equally represented across committees. This matters not only because race discussions in less diverse committees may lack empirical grounding, but also because legislators who ground their arguments in evidence are more likely to advance and pass race bills. As a result, the racial diversity of a committee influences the likelihood that race bills succeed. If parties or caucuses—such as the Congressional Black Caucus (Tate 2020)—seek to expand the legislative focus on issues of race, they must prioritize not only increasing overall congressional diversity but also ensuring that nonwhite lawmakers serve on a wide range of committees. Otherwise, given that committees are structured around policy jurisdictions, race-related policymaking risks becoming siloed within a narrow set of issue areas.

A clear partisan divide also emerges in these results. The connection between cross-group contact in committee, race-based expertise, and substantive representation only exists for white Democrats. White Republicans are no more likely to cite evidence in diverse committees than in predominantly white ones. This pattern is not surprising, given that Democrats face stronger incentives—from both their party and constituents—to engage in race-related representation (Grose 2011). Still, the contrast underscores that the effects of cross-group contact are conditional, emerging primarily among legislators who share relevant policy goals and partisan affiliations.

Finally, the results point to several avenues for future research. Beyond committee diversity, do legislators' lived experiences, occupational backgrounds, or district demographics foster expertise on race? Do witnesses in hearings shape lawmakers' engagement with race-related evidence? And do similar mechanisms operate for other underrepresented groups, such as women and LGBTQ+ legislators? Addressing these questions will clarify whether, how, and for whom committee diversity interacts with expertise to shape substantive representation.

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Online Supplemental Appendix

Contents

1 Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Unit of Analysis	Mean	Std. Deviation	Range
Dependent Variables				
Evidence (ln + 1)	Member-Committee-Term	0.50	0.60	0 – 2.996
Matching Sources (ln + 1)	Member-Committee-Term	0.75	0.37	0 – 2.2
(Race Issue Bills) Action Beyond Committee (ABC)	Member-Term	0.25	0.77	0 – 12
(Race Issue Bills) Passed House (PASS)	Member-Term	0.19	0.65	0 – 11
(Race Issue Bills) Signed Into Law (LAW)	Member-Term	0.04	0.27	0 – 6
(Race Issue Bills) Legislative Effectiveness Score (LES)	Member-Term	1.21	3.69	0 – 52
Primary Independent Variables				
% Nonwhite on Committee	Member-Committee-Term	0.2186819	0.07951854	0 – 0.62
White Lawmaker	Member-Committee-Term	0.63	0.48	0 – 1
Control Variables				
Democrat	Member-Committee-Term	0.64	0.48	0 – 1
Total Race Statements	Member-Committee-Term	3.86	5.49	1 – 68
Total Unique Sources	Member-Committee-Term	1.44	1.01	1 – 13
Nonwhite	Member-Committee-Term	0.37	0.48	0 – 1
% Nonwhite in House	Member-Term	20.4	5.44	13.6 – 28.3
% Nonwhite in District	Member-Term	0.36	0.21	0.034 – 0.932
Committee Chair	Member-Term	0.06	0.23	0 – 1
Nonwhite Chair	Member-Term	0.008	0.09	0 – 1
On Committee With Nonwhite Chair	Member-Term	0.132	0.336	0 – 1
Female Lawmaker	Member-Term	0.25	0.43	0 – 1
LGBTQ Lawmaker	Member-Term	0.015	0.121	0 – 1
In Majority Party Leadership	Member-Term	0.021	0.14	0 – 1
In Minority Party Leadership	Member-Term	0.018	0.131	0 – 1
Subcommittee Chair	Member-Term	0.25	0.44	0 – 1
Ideological Distance from Chamber Median	Member-Term	0.43	0.00	0 – 1.09
DW-Nominate (1st Dimension)	Member-Term	-0.035	0.456	-0.819 – 0.936
DW-Nominate (2nd Dimension)	Member-Term	-0.037	0.295	-0.992 – 0.995
Seniority	Member-Term	5.62	4.44	1 – 28
In Majority Party	Member-Term	0.541	0.498	0 – 1
Vote Share	Member-Term	68.3	13.1	43 – 100
Total Bills Sponsored	Member-Term	17.9	12.1	0 – 105

2 Validating Evidence Measure

To assess the face validity of my evidence measure, I report 20 randomly selected evidence statements and 20 randomly selected non-evidence statements. If the measure accurately captures evidence usage, references to evidence should be present in all selected evidence statements and absent from all non-evidence statements—exactly as Tables 2.1 and 2.2 confirm. In Table 2.1, I bolded the evidence references in all 20 evidence statements. While validity is less of a concern since I manually labeled the data rather than relying on automated coding, this face validity check reinforces that the measure accurately captures evidence usage.

Table 2.1: 20 Randomly Selected Evidence Statements

Number	Speech
1	"Thank you, Madam Chair. It was briefly mentioned before, **a report came out from the ACLU** about new facial recognition technology where t**hey downloaded 25,000 arrest records, used them against pictures of every current Member of Congress in the last term. There are 28 false matches**. People of color made up 20 percent of Congress at that time, more now, by the way. And 40 percent of the false matches were people of color, including legendary civil rights hero John Lewis. Obviously, the software as it stood there would disproportionately target minorities. This is a technology that is being used in my hometown of Orlando, only voluntarily, to track officers to test the technology, but certainly it is something that is concerning for us."
2	"My bill, H.R. 4604, the **CFPB Data Collection Security Act**, once again tries to stop some of **CFPB's massive data collection by allowing consumers to opt out of all CFPB data collection**. The provision has been modeled after the successful National Do Not Call Registry."
3	"This is kind of a long set of data, that I am going to mention, but **according to the central personnel data file**, as of September 2006, **the percentage of women in the career SES Government-wide was 28.4 percent and the percentage of minorities was 15.9 percent. Of these, African Americans constituted 8.6 percent, Hispanics 3.6 percent, Asian American/Pacific Islanders 2.3 percent, and American Indian/Alaska Natives 1.3 percent.**"
4	"Thank you very much. Now let's go to another college, and that is the Coast Guard Academy. The C**omprehensive Climate and Cultural Optimization Review** effort conducted at the Academy, dated February 2007, found that "**The number of African American high school students who are academically ready for an Academy experience, eligible and interested in military services estimated at only 640 young people per year in the Nation.**" Where does this number come from and what is limiting this number? Is it academic qualification or interest in military service, or both?"
5	"I want to talk collections. **ProPublica**, in 2015, conducted an investigation into collection lawsuits, and it was very troublesome because one of the things they discovered was **that debts in most African-American communities were, on average, 20 to 25 percent smaller than the debts in predominantly non-minority communities.** And you had nothing to do with creating that, but I want to know if there is anything afoot in the CFPB to address that issue and reduce the pain it is causing."
6	"Thank you. Dr. Goodwin, in **October 2021 GAO reported data on missing and murdered Indigenous women is unknown because Federal data bases do not contain comprehensive national data**. I'm deeply concerned about this as Indigenous populations in Oklahoma are affected by these crimes, including human trafficking. What steps can be taken to improve data collection and analysis to better understand and identify these trends of crimes?"
7	"The original bill, the **Dodd-Frank Act**, **created new data reporting requirements that are aimed at helping regulators understand credit conditions for small, women-owned, and minority-owned businesses.**"
8	"Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, when you were in Laredo, as you know, Laredo, percentage-wise, according to the **U.S. Census**, is the **most Hispanic city in the country, 96 percent Hispanic.**"
9	"A **2017 report by the Government Accountability Office** found hat violence from the far right has actually accounted for **73 percent of deadly attacks since 9/11**. Last week, the **FBI** urged that White supremacy is a, quote, **"persistent and pervasive threat,"** unquote. Yet, the Administration's response has been to rescind grants and ask Congress to eliminate DOJ's community relations service dedicated toward hate crimes and which is dedicated toward preventing hate crimes and combating racial tensions, and DOJ has prosecuted hate crimes at a 20 percent decrease, despite acknowledging the rise in such crimes. What is your organization doing to ensure that there is an appropriate enforcement against these types of hate crimes?" "
10	"There is a provision in the **Workforce Investment Act** that **prohibits discrimination based on race, color, creed, national origin or sex**. Is there any reason why we ought to change that? Anyone suggesting that we change that so that people would be able to discriminate? "
11	"The issues raised here today impact far too many people in this country. According to a study by the **Center for American Progress**, **women are the primary sole, or co-bread winners in 64 percent of families.**"
12	"Although Tribal Labor Relations Ordinances have been adopted by some tribes, these ordinances vary greatly in the levels of workforce protection. I have **Section 3107 of the 2010 Blackfeet Tribal Employment Rights Ordinance and Safety Enforcement Act of 2010**, which I ask to insert in the record. It reads **''Unions are prohibited in the Blackfeet Indian reservation."** So, there are tribes that discourage unions in their organizations."
13	"Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I have intelligence indicating that a **2020 Rand survey commissioned by FEMA** found serious cultural issues at the agency for people of color and minorities. The survey assessed gender bias, sexual harassment, and gender discrimination. **This survey found that 29 percent of the employees expressed the views that their civil rights were being violated. Twenty percent reported having experienced civil rights violations based on sex.** Eighteen percent reported having experienced civil rights violations based on race or ethnicity. So, this begs the question, what is FEMA doing to address these allegations? So, Madam Administrator, thank you for being with us today. Sorry, to rush right into this. I have been busy with some other committee assignments as well and if this has already broached–this issue has been brought to your attention, I beg that you would forgive me for asking it twice. But these are things of concern to me."
14	"Ms. Patterson, you wrote **in your article "Climate Change and Civil Rights Issues"** that the **Black community tends to have a greater dependence on public transportation, that Black individuals are more likely to live in inner cities, and are disproportionately affected in rises in home energy costs.** I would imagine all of these factors play a role in how COVID-19 is impacting the Black community. Is that true? And if yes, how so?"
15	"Mr. Attorney General, in the 2013 decision, **Shelby County v. Holder**, the Supreme Court gutted section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, rendering its preclearance provision inoperative. As a direct result of this decision, the right to vote has come under a renewed and steady assault and States have spent the past eight years enacting a slew of barriers to voting to target or impact communities of color and other historically disenfranchised groups. "
16	"As I have explored in previous hearings, there are many racial disparities in the unbanked population, and we need to do everything we can to address the underlying factors that inhibit access to basic financial services so that people of color can save and invest for their future. **According to a 2019 FDIC survey**, **nearly half of the unbanked households didn't even have enough money to start a bank account. About one-third of unbanked households cited both high bank fees and unpredictable bank fees as barriers to getting banked.** "
17	"Earlier we hard that the Navajo Nation, **EPA has a list of 80 to 90 homes they suspect may have elevated levels of radon. In other words, they believe these homes may be radioactive.** They aren't sure how many of these homes are currently occupied. Let me ask you, for the record, the Navajo Nation EPA says that it provided a list of these homes to U.S. EPA in 2001. Is that true, and has U.S. EPA had a list of these homes for the past 6 years?"
18	"**The New York Times**, in June 2021, **reported that White disaster victims received more from FEMA than people of color, even when the amount of damage to their homes and properties is the same.** Could you explain why this occurred?"
19	"Yes. But they looked at **31 million HMDA records in a year-long analysis** and found that **61 municipal areas across the United States had denied people of color, black and brown people, the right to take on a mortgage compared to equally qualified whites.** What is the economic impact of that discrimination, in your view? When people can afford a mortgage and are told you can't have one, what sort of impacts could we expect to see when that happens on a systematic basis?"
20	"The **National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals** predicted that **foreclosures in the Hispanic community alone are expected to reach nearly $25 billion in 2007, and almost twice that–$52 billion–in 2008**. "

Table 2.2: 20 Randomly Selected Non-Evidence Statements

Number	Speech
1	"Would you, please? Because that would kind of answer some of the questions I have. And then, how many other agencies are involved, or should be involved, besides Fish and Wildlife and the National Institute of Health for being able to determine the status of the health concerns? CDC? What about BIA, Bureau of Indian Affairs? What role do they play in being able to notify Native American tribes? Are they immediate, do you work with them, or do you get them involved immediately and task them with doing the outreach? "
2	"How do you structure a counseling program to not just reach people who are low income and who recognize that they have problems buying a home? That is an obvious target group for you to reach. I am sure there are fairly easy ways to reach them. How do you take it a step further, though, to proactively reach what may be affluent, but discriminated-against homeowners who may be African American or Latino, Puerto Rican? "
3	"Housing is a fundamental human right, yet across the country and in my district, the Massachusetts 7th, millions of people do not have access to a safe, decent, and affordable place to call home. For decades, Black families have been locked out of homeownership opportunities due to discriminatory lending. And now, private-equity-backed institutional landlords have pushed this dream even further out of reach by gobbling up single-family homes and worsening the housing crisis across this country. "
4	"Dr. Fradkin, my first questions nicely piggyback on Mr. Shimkus's question because one of the big concerns of the Diabetes Caucus for a long time has been the disparities between minority populations like African Americans, Latinos and American Indians and Alaska Natives and Anglos, and we are not really sure why those disparities exist other than a combination of factors of health access, community, environment, genetics, so I am wondering if you can talk a little bit more about any ongoing research by NIH to address the cause of the disparities because until we find out the cause, we can't really address how to deal with it."
5	"Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for this very important hearing on how COVID-19 has increased racial inequities in the country. The shift to distance learning has exposed the educational inequities many students of color have been facing for decades as States start to open back up and grapple with the depleted budgets. It is the role of the Federal Government historically to ensure equity in every sector. And, recently, many competitive colleges, like the University of California's system, private schools such as Harvard University, have suspended the use of ACT and SAT scores in their admissions process to help level the playing field. Mr. King, from your experience, how much of the college admissions process is reliant on these test scores?"
6	"Wages were up, taxes have been cut, regulations reduced, unemployment at its lowest in 50 years, unemployment for African Americans, Hispanic Americans, stock market up, the best economy we've seen. I have had businessowners in our district say best economy they've seen in their entire 30, 35 years in business, best economy ever. "
7	"Are there any African American executive producers types in the audience? Are there any Latino executive producers in the audience? Do you know of any African American and Latino or Asian executive producers?"
8	"It is part racial discrimination– I am just going to submit this for the record. I am new here and this timing thing, there is nothing that Chairwoman Waters can do, but it really–it is just awful, and I come from the Michigan legislature and we never had this like timing thing. But I want to submit this for the record. But I think it is really important to show that right now black applicants were almost twice as likely to be denied conventional home purchase loans as white applicants in 2016, and Detroit alone ranked 44 out of 48 communities nationally that found blacks were denied loans at a higher rate. "
9	"Mr. Lappin, 50 percent, as Mr. Davis indicated, of felons are African American men. I mean, I understand that there have been court suits and we want to make sure we are not segregating people, but of the values, penology values, the notion that–I suppose I would have to ask you."
10	"Great. So, you know, Chicago residents are–that are most impacted by lead service lines are often in communities of color and more low-income communities. So, Mr. Regan, how does investing in drinking water infrastructure contribute to your environmental justice agenda?"
11	"The Coast Guard invited 50 African Americans to the Academy earlier this year and helped them to complete applications. How many of these individuals were subsequently offered appointments to the Academy?"
12	"Thank you. Ms. Sharp, should this committee make the climate justice investments in every Native American nation in this country, as we do in our bill and as we did for COVID-19 funding?"
13	"What specific recommendations do you propose to members of this committee to enact to ensure economic empowerment to the Hispanic community, and what should be the consequences of hearing focused on and what legislative steps can we take?"
14	"Can you tell us how this collaboration between law enforcement and fossil fuel companies puts indigenous women, in particular, at heightened risk of abduction and murder?"
15	"And building off of that a moment, ma'am, targeting amongst the groups that you indicated, minorities, women, lower income communities, and other populations currently underrepresented in the energy sector, how do we assure that they have access to the training and employment in that offshore–as we try to bring offshore wind to market?"
16	"Mr. Chairman, I just simply want to ask permission that my opening statement be included in the record and point out that I am a lead co-sponsor of the bill to End Racial Profiling Act and am very interested in this hearing. Thank you."
17	"Mr. Watts, that is not a protected right. There are certain protected rights. Racial discrimination is a protected right. Discrimination based upon sex is a protected right. But you can discriminate against people because of their views. That is not a protected right under our system. You can do that."
18	"Hey, Chair Castor, this is Garret. Thank you very much for the opportunity for the certainly appropriate honoring of John Lewis. It has been an incredible experience to be able to serve with someone who has played such an amazing role in the Civil Rights Act. You read about these iconic figures, but to be able to serve alongside of him has just been an awing experience. "
19	"Thank you very much. Even though I had not planned on asking this question, I am very interested in knowing what is happening with the evaluation of homes in the Black community, and what is happening with the way that the discrimination appears to have been taking place for so many years."
20	"The gentleman from North Carolina and Ranking Member of the Subcommittee is also the Chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus and has been extraordinarily busy with the passing of Rosa Parks, and so he has been concerned about his time. I leaned over and asked him if he thought I should tap, and his response was more or less no, this is great because we don't have to read it. And so I suggest that is exactly my view, by the way. And so we are going to be a little bit liberal, in fact, forget the clock. Just be interesting and, if you see one of us nodding off, then you know you have probably gone on too long."

3 In-Text Models

3.1 Table 3.1: White Legislators Make More Evidence-Based Race Statements on Racially Diverse Committees

	Evidence (White Lawmaker)		**Evidence (White Democrat)**		**Evidence (White Republican)**	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
% Nonwhite on Committee	**0.693****	**0.754***	**0.945***	**0.848**$^{+}$	0.518	0.482
	(0.263)	(0.316)	(0.394)	(0.464)	(0.377)	(0.492)
Power Committee	0.139**	0.142*	0.107	0.174	0.174**	0.101
	(0.052)	(0.060)	(0.084)	(0.090)	(0.066)	(0.079)
# of Hearings	0.001**	0.001	0.002*	0.002*	0.001	−0.0003
	(0.0004)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
# of Bills Referred	0.0001*	0.0001	0.0002	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001
	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)
Democrat		−2.457*				
		(1.109)				
DW-NOMINATE (1st Dimension)		−1.411		−1.862		0.122
		(1.331)		(1.429)		(2.677)
DW-NOMINATE (2nd Dimension)		−1.358*		−1.809**		−0.560
		(0.550)		(0.682)		(0.938)
Committee Chair		−0.010		0.082		−0.127
		(0.151)		(0.228)		(0.186)
Majority Party Member		0.079		0.187		−0.091
		(0.046)		(0.112)		(0.072)
Unified Government		−0.019		0.038		−0.101
		(0.050)		(0.065)		(0.070)
% Nonwhite in District		0.517		−0.001		0.928
		(0.428)		(0.599)		(0.702)
% Nonwhite in House		−3.528		−4.623		−8.666***
		(2.304)		(3.826)		(2.371)
Seniority (Terms)		0.035		0.074		0.124**
		(0.048)		(0.084)		(0.044)
Vote Share (Lagged)		0.002		−0.0004		0.006
		(0.002)		(0.003)		(0.004)
Intercept	0.354**	1.944***	−0.093	−0.702	0.373*	0.209
	(0.132)	(0.587)	(0.153)	(0.787)	(0.161)	(1.423)
Legislator Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Term Fixed Effects	✓		✓		✓	
R^2	0.443	0.490	0.443	0.500	0.455	0.499
Adjusted R^2	0.150	0.123	0.205	0.198	0.091	0.037
Observations	1,935	1,181	875	575	1,060	606

$^{+}$p<0.1;*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: White Democrats cite more race-based evidence as the percentage of nonwhite lawmakers on their committees increases. The dependent variable is the natural log of the total number of evidence-based statements made by a white lawmaker in a given committee-term (DV = ln(Evidence + 1)). Standard errors are robust and clustered by legislator.

3.2 Table 3.2: Nonwhite and White Legislators Cite Similar Sources on Racially Diverse Committees

	Matching Sources (White Lawmakers)		Matching Sources (White Democrats)		Matching Sources (White Republicans)	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
% Nonwhite on Committee	**0.489****	**0.566****	**0.647****	**0.778****	0.312	0.252
	(0.165)	(0.193)	(0.245)	(0.295)	(0.206)	(0.224)
Total Race Statements	0.033***	0.043***	0.037***	0.038***	0.030	0.052***
	(0.009)	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.011)	(0.016)	(0.008)
Total Unique Sources	0.072**	0.019	0.033	−0.011	0.109***	0.108**
	(0.023)	(0.023)	(0.023)	(0.027)	(0.030)	(0.036)
Power Committee	−0.019	−0.018	−0.046	−0.047	0.007	0.022
	(0.027)	(0.033)	(0.042)	(0.046)	(0.036)	(0.044)
# of Hearings	0.0004*	0.001**	0.0004	0.001*	0.0005*	0.001**
	(0.0002)	(0.0003)	(0.0004)	(0.001)	(0.0002)	(0.0004)
# of Bills Referred	0.00004	0.0001	0.0001*	0.0001**	0.00001	−0.00003
	(0.00003)	(0.00003)	(0.00004)	(0.00005)	(0.00005)	(0.0001)
Democrat		1.266				
		(0.956)				
DW-NOMINATE (1st Dimension)		−0.299		0.365		−2.407
		(1.107)		(1.158)		(1.556)
DW-NOMINATE (2nd Dimension)		0.551		0.537		0.373
		(0.469)		(0.665)		(0.661)
Committee Chair		−0.071		−0.018		−0.098
		(0.069)		(0.090)		(0.069)
Majority Party Member		0.100***		0.075		−0.013
		(0.029)		(0.087)		(0.051)
Unified Government		0.055		0.066		0.074*
		(0.031)		(0.040)		(0.037)
% Nonwhite in District		−0.173		−0.307		−0.410
		(0.302)		(0.438)		(0.425)
% Nonwhite in House		3.327*		5.650		1.458
		(1.667)		(3.003)		(1.732)
Seniority (Terms)		−0.068		−0.105		−0.039
		(0.036)		(0.066)		(0.034)
Vote Share (Lagged)		−0.002		−0.003		−0.002
		(0.002)		(0.002)		(0.003)
Intercept	0.686***	−0.821	0.428***	0.813	0.675***	1.261
	(0.084)	(0.507)	(0.077)	(0.605)	(0.103)	(0.768)
Legislator Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Term Fixed Effects	✓		✓		✓	
R^2	0.580	0.625	0.577	0.633	0.613	0.681
Adjusted R^2	0.357	0.353	0.393	0.408	0.353	0.384
Observations	1,935	1,181	875	575	1,060	606

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: White (Democrats) cite the same sources of evidence as nonwhite lawmakers on racially diverse committees. The dependent variable is the natural log of the total number of sources cited by white lawmakers that were also cited by nonwhite lawmakers in a committee-term (DV = ln(Matching Source + 1)). Standard errors are robust and clustered by legislator.

3.3 Table 3.3: Past Committee Diversity Predicts Present Evidence Use

	Evidence (White Lawmakers)		**Evidence (White Democrats)**		**Evidence (White Republicans)**	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
% Nonwhite on Committee in Prior Term (t-1)	**1.947****	1.300	**2.447***	**1.967**$^{+}$	1.720	1.471
	(0.664)	(0.805)	(1.014)	(1.021)	(0.934)	(0.978)
% Nonwhite on Committee in Current Term (t)	1.230	1.439	1.694	1.109	2.131	2.445
	(1.050)	(1.130)	(1.529)	(1.759)	(1.597)	(1.829)
Democrat		0.417				
		(18.678)				
Power Committee	−0.236	−0.242	−0.129	−3.355*	−0.824	0.669
	(0.900)	(0.880)	(2.053)	(1.684)	(1.171)	(1.130)
# of Hearings		−3.375		−1.764		−11.002*
		(5.997)		(11.031)		(4.341)
# of Bills Referred		0.005		0.023		0.110*
		(0.123)		(0.240)		(0.055)
DW-NOMINATE (1st Dimension)		−0.0001		−0.010		0.020
		(0.005)		(0.005)		(0.010)
DW-NOMINATE (2nd Dimension)	0.059	0.097	−0.017	0.024	0.578	0.782
	(0.127)	(0.133)	(0.139)	(0.135)	(0.487)	(0.530)
Committee Chair	0.003*	0.003*	0.004*	0.003	0.0005	−0.001
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.003)
Nonwhite Chair	0.0002	0.0001	0.0003	0.0003	−0.001	−0.001*
	(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0004)	(0.0005)
Majority Party Member		1.263		−33.396		−6.830
		(22.555)		(50.437)		(28.622)
Unified Government		0.122		−3.177		−1.785
		(8.625)		(13.826)		(10.104)
% Nonwhite in District		0.303		0.480		0.177
		(0.232)		(0.370)		(0.256)
Seniority (Terms)		0.175		0.399		−0.134
		(0.093)		(0.249)		(0.127)
Vote Share (Lagged)		0.018		0.119		−0.014
		(0.101)		(0.154)		(0.166)
Intercept	−0.336	−0.525	−1.929*	−10.006	0.659	3.629
	(1.018)	(11.422)	(0.815)	(14.996)	(0.952)	(16.576)
Legislator Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Term Fixed Effects	✓		✓		✓	
R^2	0.635	0.636	0.699	0.707	0.598	0.601
Adjusted R^2	0.179	0.174	0.296	0.305	−0.050	−0.051
Observations	368	367	200	200	168	167

$^{+}$p<0.1; *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: White (Democrats) who were exposed to racially diverse committees in the prior term (t-1) continue to cite evidence in the present term (t), regardless of how racially diverse their committee is in the current term. The dependent variable is the natural log of the total number of evidence-based race statements (DV = ln(Evidence + 1)). Standard errors are robust and clustered by legislator.

3.4 Table 3.4: Legislators Who Make Evidence-Based Race Statements In Hearings Are More Effective At Legislating Race Bills

	Action in Committee (Race Bills)	Action Beyond Commitee (Race Bills)	Passed House (Race Bills)	Passed Both Chambers (Race Bills)	Become Law (Race Bills)
	1	2	3	4	5
Total Race-Based Evidence Statements	**0.040****	**0.035***	**0.023***	0.004	0.004
	(0.015)	(0.014)	(0.010)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Nonwhite	0.063	0.023	−0.030	−0.019	−0.019
	(0.065)	(0.057)	(0.040)	(0.019)	(0.019)
Democrat	−0.238	−0.222	−0.247*	−0.073	−0.073
	(0.162)	(0.133)	(0.097)	(0.052)	(0.052)
% Nonwhite in District	−0.172	−0.022	0.013	−0.033	−0.033
	(0.169)	(0.136)	(0.097)	(0.045)	(0.045)
Nonwhite Chair	0.370	−0.091	−0.043	0.139	0.139
	(0.850)	(0.683)	(0.457)	(0.226)	(0.226)
Committee Chair	0.895***	0.859***	0.533***	0.118*	0.118*
	(0.171)	(0.173)	(0.126)	(0.058)	(0.058)
In Majority Leadership	0.108	0.042	0.048	0.098	0.098
	(0.137)	(0.117)	(0.092)	(0.076)	(0.076)
In Minority Leadership	−0.118	−0.126	−0.089*	−0.027	−0.027
	(0.105)	(0.073)	(0.043)	(0.018)	(0.018)
Subcommittee Chair	0.197**	0.184**	0.048	0.021	0.021
	(0.066)	(0.061)	(0.040)	(0.021)	(0.021)
Ideological Distance from Floor Median	0.030	−0.048	−0.0001	−0.084	−0.084
	(0.219)	(0.180)	(0.131)	(0.054)	(0.054)
Served in State Legislature	0.091*	0.069	0.035	0.009	0.009
	(0.045)	(0.040)	(0.028)	(0.013)	(0.013)
Female	0.014	0.036	−0.015	−0.016	−0.016
	(0.059)	(0.049)	(0.033)	(0.016)	(0.016)
LGBTQ	−0.004	0.004	−0.050	−0.025	−0.025
	(0.139)	(0.112)	(0.077)	(0.040)	(0.040)
DW-NOMINATE (1st Dimension)	−0.353	−0.282	−0.334**	−0.104	−0.104
	(0.197)	(0.154)	(0.112)	(0.055)	(0.055)
DW-NOMINATE (2nd Dimension)	0.121	0.084	−0.012	−0.011	−0.011
	(0.075)	(0.067)	(0.044)	(0.021)	(0.021)
Seniority	0.032***	0.033***	0.013***	0.005*	0.005*
	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.002)	(0.002)
In Majority Party	0.235*	0.195*	0.122	−0.005	−0.005
	(0.103)	(0.090)	(0.063)	(0.026)	(0.026)
Vote Share (Lagged)	−0.005*	−0.003	−0.001	−0.0005	−0.0005
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Total Bills Introduced	0.010***	0.006**	0.004**	0.001	0.001
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Intercept	0.261	0.250	0.353	0.222	0.222
	(0.254)	(0.253)	(0.245)	(0.122)	(0.122)
Term Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.310	0.300	0.211	0.072	0.072
Adjusted R^2	0.296	0.286	0.195	0.054	0.054
Observations	1,344	1,344	1,344	1,344	1,344

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: Lawmakers who make more evidence-based race statements are more effective at advancing and pass race bills. Standard errors are robust and clustered by legislator.

3.5 Table 3.5: When Race-Based Expertise Leads to Race Bill Passage

	Passed House (Democrats)	Passed House (Republicans)	Passed House (Democratic Majority)	Passed House (Republican Majority)	Passed House (Non-Race Bills)
	1	2	3	4	5
Total Race-Based Evidence Statements	**0.022***	0.0001	**0.024***	0.007	0.026
	(0.011)	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.016)	(0.020)
Nonwhite	−0.009	−0.029	−0.019	0.008	−0.078
	(0.050)	(0.034)	(0.058)	(0.056)	(0.139)
Democrat	—	—	0.052	−0.262	−1.368**
			(0.102)	(0.123)	(0.452)
% Nonwhite in District	−0.0002	−0.161	0.073	−0.049	0.424
	(0.125)	(0.106)	(0.137)	(0.150)	(0.387)
Nonwhite Chair	−0.205	—	−0.258	—	−0.108
	(0.481)		(0.477)		(0.614)
Committee Chair	0.748***	0.257	0.679***	0.276*	2.412***
	(0.190)	(0.137)	(0.186)	(0.140)	(0.442)
In Majority Leadership	0.102	−0.156**	0.083	−0.212***	0.829
	(0.110)	(0.060)	(0.112)	(0.057)	(0.436)
In Minority Leadership	−0.139*	0.027	0.015	−0.069	−0.094
	(0.054)	(0.029)	(0.049)	(0.040)	(0.367)
Subcommittee Chair	0.071	−0.016	0.048	−0.019	0.263
	(0.051)	(0.063)	(0.051)	(0.066)	(0.137)
Ideological Distance from Floor Median	−0.550	−0.172	0.249	−0.541	−1.052*
	(0.775)	(0.194)	(0.166)	(0.720)	(0.436)
Served in State Legislature	0.064	0.007	0.038	0.031	−0.162
	(0.040)	(0.035)	(0.039)	(0.035)	(0.107)
Female	0.006	−0.066*	0.012	−0.029	0.079
	(0.038)	(0.029)	(0.048)	(0.039)	(0.125)
LGBTQ	−0.057	—	−0.112	0.018	0.266
	(0.069)		(0.058)		(0.190)
DW–NOMINATE (1st Dimension)	−0.785	−0.143	−0.225	−0.399	−0.865
	(0.771)	(0.147)	(0.146)	(0.703)	(0.504)
DW–NOMINATE (2nd Dimension)	0.004	0.001	0.014	−0.108	0.748***
	(0.059)	(0.099)	(0.051)	(0.060)	(0.167)
Seniority	0.013**	0.013***	0.022***	0.005	−0.035*
	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.015)
In Majority Party	−0.091	0.687	—	—	0.160
	(0.306)	(0.478)			(0.212)
Vote Share (Lagged)	−0.002	−0.002	−0.004	0.001	−0.004
	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.005)
Total Bills Introduced	0.005*	0.003	0.006**	0.002	0.047***
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.005)
Intercept	−0.012	0.307	−0.079	0.570**	1.619**
	(0.228)	(0.229)	(0.201)	(0.199)	(0.569)
Term Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.228	0.186	0.251	0.157	0.336
Adjusted R^2	0.204	0.150	0.231	0.124	0.323
Observations	818	526	807	537	1,344

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: Democrats and Democratic majorities are associated with race-based expertise facilitating race-bill passage in the House. There is not a statistically significant relationship between Republicans' race-based expertise and race-bill passage. As expected, race-based expertise is not associated with increased passage for bills unrelated to race.

4 Additional Models

4.1 Table 4.1: White Legislators Make More Evidence-Based Race Statements on Racially Diverse Committees (Interaction Model)

	Evidence	**Evidence (Democrat)**	**Evidence (Republican)**
	1	2	3
% Nonwhite on Committee	−0.323	−0.281	0.845
	(0.253)	(0.259)	(1.342)
White	−0.167*	−0.178	0.205
	(0.082)	(0.095)	(0.387)
% Nonwhite on Committee * White	0.718	**0.787***	−0.724
	(0.297)	(0.347)	(1.333)
Power Committee	0.036	0.045	0.003
	(0.026)	(0.033)	(0.041)
# of Hearings	−0.0005	−0.001	−0.0003
	(0.0003)	(0.0003)	(0.0004)
# of Bills Referred	0.00003	0.00001	0.0001
	(0.00003)	(0.00003)	(0.00005)
Democrat	0.062		
	(0.079)		
DW-NOMINATE (1st Dimension)	−0.004	−0.139	0.080
	(0.091)	(0.148)	(0.148)
DW-NOMINATE (2nd Dimension)	0.004	−0.010	0.029
	(0.040)	(0.051)	(0.077)
Committee Chair	0.028	0.059	−0.037
	(0.048)	(0.062)	(0.082)
Nonwhite Chair	0.286	0.261	
	(0.198)	(0.188)	
Majority Party Member	−0.044*	−0.112	−0.117
	(0.020)	(0.168)	(0.190)
Unified Government	−0.043	−0.068	−0.040
	(0.030)	(0.051)	(0.061)
% Nonwhite in District	−0.072	0.018	−0.285*
	(0.079)	(0.100)	(0.141)
% Nonwhite in House	−1.919	−1.302	−2.488
	(1.063)	(2.642)	(3.046)
Seniority (Terms)	0.004	0.004	0.003
	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.006)
Vote Share (Lagged)	0.0003	−0.002	0.003
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)
LGBTQ Lawmaker	0.111	0.107	
	(0.064)	(0.065)	
Female Lawmaker	0.021	0.020	0.025
	(0.027)	(0.031)	(0.046)
Total Race Statements	0.068***	0.065***	0.092***
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.007)
Intercept	0.682*	0.697	0.322
	(0.302)	(0.556)	(0.912)
Term Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.478	0.510	0.369
Adjusted R^2	0.471	0.501	0.348
Observations	1,917	1,274	643

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: Consistent with the primary finding reported in Table 3, White (Democratic) lawmakers cite more evidence when serving on racially diverse committees. In this model, I estimate the relationship between the racial diversity of a committee and white lawmakers' race-based evidence usage as an interaction term, rather than including legislator fixed effects. Member-level controls are included given that legislator fixed effects are omitted alongside term fixed effects. Standard errors are robust and clustered by legislator. In both model specifications, the results are consistent.

4.2 Table 4.2: White Legislators Make More Evidence-Based Race Statements on Racially Diverse Committees (Proportion Models)

	Evidence (White Lawmaker)		**Evidence (White Democrat)**		**Evidence (White Republican)**	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
% Nonwhite on Committee	**5.230***	4.240	**7.738***	6.344	3.408	0.249
	(2.553)	(3.158)	(3.582)	(5.032)	(3.715)	(4.462)
Power Committee	0.708	1.203*	0.696	1.681*	0.541	0.266
	(0.453)	(0.517)	(0.634)	(0.745)	(0.647)	(0.815)
# of Hearings	−0.001	−0.007	−0.002	−0.004	0.00001	−0.009
	(0.003)	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.010)	(0.004)	(0.006)
# of Bills Referred	0.001	0.00000	0.001	−0.001	0.001	0.001
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Democrat		−22.990*				
		(9.942)				
DW-NOMINATE (1st Dimension)		−20.748		−27.501*		8.984
		(11.478)		(13.951)		(28.013)
DW-NOMINATE (2nd Dimension)		−14.679*		−18.849**		−5.002
		(5.813)		(7.160)		(10.595)
Committee Chair		−0.464		0.517		−1.691
		(1.015)		(1.351)		(1.598)
Majority Party Member		−0.601		0.944		−0.979
		(0.390)		(1.669)		(0.725)
Unified Government		−0.326		−0.092		−0.872
		(0.471)		(0.704)		(0.688)
% Nonwhite in District		5.648		2.297		8.778
		(4.513)		(7.146)		(6.322)
% Nonwhite in House		−61.497***		−115.074		−74.139***
		(16.256)		(76.029)		(16.288)
Seniority (Terms)		0.815*		1.841		1.208***
		(0.338)		(1.627)		(0.267)
Vote Share (Lagged)		0.034		0.031		0.042
		(0.030)		(0.036)		(0.055)
Intercept	−3.136**	17.569**	−1.712	−8.754	−2.969	−6.873
	(1.206)	(5.445)	(1.281)	(9.431)	(1.530)	(14.235)
Legislator Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Term Fixed Effects	✓		✓		✓	
R^2	0.429	0.481	0.396	0.459	0.471	0.518
Adjusted R^2	0.127	0.108	0.138	0.132	0.118	0.074
Observations	1,935	1,181	875	575	1,060	606

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: Consistent with the primary finding reported in Table 3, White (Democratic) lawmakers cite more evidence when serving on racially diverse committees. In this model, I examine the relationship between committee racial diversity and the proportion of race-based statements that include evidence. The dependent variable captures the proportion of race-based evidence statements to total race-based statements. The results show that white (Democrats) on more racially diverse committees make a higher proportion of evidence-based race statements than those on less diverse committees. Standard errors are robust and clustered by legislator. Findings are consistent across both model specifications.

4.3 Table 4.3: Nonwhite Legislators Make More Evidence-Based Race Statements Than White Lawmakers

	Evidence (White Lawmaker)	Evidence (White Lawmaker)
	1	2
Nonwhite	**0.249****	−0.040
	(0.076)	(0.121)
Democrat	−0.178	−0.222
	(0.147)	(0.146)
Nonwhite * Democrat		**0.342***
		(0.145)
DW-NOMINATE (1st Dimension)	−0.238	−0.250
	(0.176)	(0.175)
DW-NOMINATE (2nd Dimension)	−0.254**	−0.247**
	(0.080)	(0.080)
Committee Chair	0.104	0.104
	(0.116)	(0.115)
Nonwhite Chair	0.431*	0.410*
	(0.178)	(0.178)
Majority Party Member	0.066*	0.068*
	(0.032)	(0.032)
% Nonwhite in District	0.146	0.100
	(0.177)	(0.184)
Seniority (Terms)	0.008	0.008
	(0.005)	(0.005)
Vote Share (Lagged)	0.004*	0.003*
	(0.002)	(0.002)
LGBTQ Lawmaker	0.086	0.088
	(0.105)	(0.106)
Female Lawmaker	0.148*	0.155*
	(0.060)	(0.060)
Intercept	0.286	0.332
	(0.271)	(0.271)
Term Fixed Effects	✓	✓
R^2	0.162	0.166
Adjusted R^2	0.150	0.154
Observations	1,350	1,350

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: Consistent with descriptive plot reported in Figure 1, nonwhite lawmakers make more evidence-based race statements than white lawmakers. Nonwhite Democrats are most likely to mention race-based evidence statements. Consistent with Figure 1, the dependent variable captures the natural log of the number of evidence-based race statements a legislator makes per term (DV = ln(Evidence + 1). Standard errors are robust and clustered by legislator.

4.4 Table 4.4: Previous Exposure to Racially Diverse Committees Does Not Predict Evidence Usage for Nonwhite Legislators

	Evidence (Nonwhite Lawmaker)		Evidence (Nonwhite Democrat)	
	1	2	3	4
% Nonwhite on Committee in Prior Term (t-1)	−0.333	0.156	−0.340	0.176
	(0.924)	(0.834)	(0.922)	(0.832)
% Nonwhite on Committee in Current Term (t)	0.548	0.666	0.541	0.672
	(1.002)	(1.133)	(1.016)	(1.153)
Democrat		−17.080		
		(21.458)		
Power Committee	0.171	0.117	0.173	0.121
	(0.131)	(0.134)	(0.131)	(0.134)
# of Hearings	0.003*	0.002	0.003**	0.003
	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.002)
# of Bills Referred	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001
	(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)
DW-NOMINATE (1st Dimension)		−31.102		−32.786
		(36.344)		(35.320)
DW-NOMINATE (2nd Dimension)		−1.788		−1.448
		(5.921)		(5.770)
Committee Chair		−0.314		−0.324
		(0.266)		(0.263)
Nonwhite Chair		0.807*		0.811*
		(0.348)		(0.348)
Majority Party Member		0.056		0.040
		(0.102)		(0.136)
Unified Government		−0.020		0.006
		(0.084)		(0.083)
% Nonwhite in District		0.405		0.381
		(0.497)		(0.538)
% Nonwhite in House		2.656		3.394
		(3.795)		(5.162)
Seniority (Terms)		−0.074		−0.084
		(0.076)		(0.104)
Vote Share (Lagged)		0.0003		0.001
		(0.005)		(0.006)
Intercept	0.556	6.901	0.529	−10.953
	(0.327)	(8.702)	(0.343)	(12.761)
Legislator Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Term Fixed Effects	✓		✓	
R^2	0.462	0.493	0.456	0.490
Adjusted R^2	0.263	0.210	0.263	0.211
Observations	534	350	519	340

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: Unlike white lawmakers, nonwhite lawmakers' previous committee diversity does not predict evidence use in the current term. This is consistent with my argument that white lawmakers learn from nonwhite lawmakers who already have race-based expertise. The dependent variable captures the number of evidence-based race statements a nonwhite lawmaker makes per committee-term. Standard errors are robust and clustered by legislator.

4.5 Table 4.5: Previous Exposure to Racially Diverse Committees Predicts Evidence Usage for White Democrats on "Grandstanding Committees"

	Evidence (White Lawmaker)		Evidence (White Democrat)		Evidence (White Republican)	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
% Nonwhite on Committee in Prior Term (t-1)	2.085	−0.140	**4.182****	**5.748*****	−0.815	−3.300*
	(1.535)	(1.908)	(1.297)	(1.237)	(3.625)	(1.614)
% Nonwhite on Committee in Current Term (t)	4.585*	3.667*	6.047***	6.664**	−1.021	4.714
	(1.795)	(1.776)	(1.443)	(2.561)	(9.676)	(3.280)
Democrat		19.900				
		(33.088)				
Power Committee	0.095	0.177	−0.103	−0.172	1.232	1.080
	(0.216)	(0.194)	(0.184)	(0.146)	(0.931)	(1.305)
# of Hearings	0.007**	0.007*	0.008***	0.008***	0.002	0.003
	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.007)	(0.005)
# of Bills Referred	0.0002	0.0001	0.0003	0.0002	−0.0002	0.0004
	(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.001)	(0.001)
DW-NOMINATE (1st Dimension)		24.389		−93.165		51.228
		(36.321)		(48.388)		(53.560)
DW-NOMINATE (2nd Dimension)		8.884		−38.467*		15.938
		(18.706)		(15.854)		(19.508)
Committee Chair		0.329		0.163		0.426
		(0.334)		(0.356)		(0.490)
Majority Party Member		0.299*		−1.353		0.096
		(0.151)		(2.247)		(0.296)
Unified Government		0.168		0.809**		0.003
		(0.180)		(0.280)		(0.259)
% Nonwhite in District		0.252		−4.813		1.529
		(1.451)		(3.313)		(1.068)
% Nonwhite in House		−4.213		92.659		−7.867
		(8.963)		(105.854)		(8.427)
Seniority (Terms)		0.099		−1.984		0.060
		(0.168)		(2.296)		(0.135)
Vote Share (Lagged)		0.002		−0.025**		0.047**
		(0.011)		(0.009)		(0.018)
Intercept	−1.565*	−13.998	−2.295***	−26.265	−0.202	−34.083
	(0.705)	(20.833)	(0.466)	(16.736)	(2.120)	(32.433)
Legislator Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Term Fixed Effects	✓		✓		✓	
R^2	0.672	0.747	0.740	0.872	0.708	0.815
Adjusted R^2	0.298	0.350	0.468	0.635	0.109	0.260
Observations	262	165	136	92	126	73

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: Among white Democrats, exposure to racially diverse committees in the prior term (t–1) predicts greater use of evidence in the current term (t), holding constant current-term committee diversity. The sample is restricted to committees where performance-oriented hearings are common—Judiciary, Ways and Means, House Administration, Education, Budget, Energy and Commerce, Rules, and Foreign Affairs (Park 2021). Standard errors are robusted and clustered by legislator.

4.6 Table 4.6: Legislators Who Make More Evidence-Based Race Statements Are more Effective At Legislating Race Bills (Negative Binominal)

	Action in Committee (Race Bills)	Action Beyond Commitee (Race Bills)	Passed House (Race Bills)	Passed Both Chambers (Race Bills)	Become Law (Race Bills)
	1	2	3	4	5
Total Race-Based Evidence Statements	**0.031***	**0.028**$^{+}$	0.030	0.039	0.039
	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.020)	(0.035)	(0.035)
Nonwhite	0.281	0.182	−0.042	−0.379	−0.379
	(0.165)	(0.170)	(0.215)	(0.378)	(0.378)
Democrat	−0.842*	−0.879*	−1.614**	−1.149	−1.149
	(0.428)	(0.426)	(0.539)	(0.924)	(0.924)
% Nonwhite in District	−0.408	−0.127	0.133	−0.526	−0.526
	(0.393)	(0.375)	(0.463)	(0.785)	(0.785)
Nonwhite Chair	−0.077	−0.370	−0.395	0.878	0.878
	(0.445)	(0.473)	(0.521)	(0.774)	(0.774)
Committee Chair	0.951***	0.932***	1.032***	0.929*	0.929*
	(0.164)	(0.161)	(0.208)	(0.403)	(0.403)
In Majority Leadership	0.168	0.122	0.121	0.967	0.967
	(0.198)	(0.220)	(0.292)	(0.503)	(0.503)
In Minority Leadership	−0.791	−31.643***	−33.996***	−32.803***	−32.803***
	(1.062)	(0.216)	(0.208)	(0.334)	(0.334)
Subcommittee Chair	0.353**	0.362**	0.167	0.265	0.265
	(0.124)	(0.121)	(0.155)	(0.286)	(0.286)
Ideological Distance from Floor Median	−0.775	−0.767	−1.017	−3.270**	−3.270**
	(0.580)	(0.564)	(0.698)	(1.085)	(1.085)
Served in State Legislature	0.315*	0.252*	0.219	0.247	0.247
	(0.128)	(0.126)	(0.150)	(0.250)	(0.250)
Female	0.036	0.079	−0.065	−0.278	−0.278
	(0.146)	(0.132)	(0.162)	(0.308)	(0.308)
LGBTQ	0.053	0.083	−0.198	−0.411	−0.411
	(0.385)	(0.383)	(0.538)	(1.070)	(1.070)
DW-NOMINATE (1st Dimension)	−1.277*	−1.148*	−2.336***	−2.903*	−2.903*
	(0.527)	(0.489)	(0.631)	(1.223)	(1.223)
DW-NOMINATE (2nd Dimension)	0.216	0.215	−0.097	−0.187	−0.187
	(0.209)	(0.218)	(0.251)	(0.454)	(0.454)
Seniority	0.070***	0.082***	0.052***	0.061*	0.061*
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.016)	(0.027)	(0.027)
In Majority Party	0.952**	1.108***	0.889*	−0.129	−0.129
	(0.292)	(0.315)	(0.383)	(0.647)	(0.647)
Vote Share (Lagged)	−0.012	−0.007	−0.007	−0.007	−0.007
	(0.007)	(0.007)	(0.009)	(0.011)	(0.011)
Total Bills Introduced	0.017***	0.011**	0.014**	0.007	0.007
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.005)	(0.010)	(0.010)
Intercept	−1.175	−1.587*	−0.948	−0.359	−0.359
	(0.661)	(0.683)	(0.816)	(1.350)	(1.350)
Term Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	1,344	1,344	1,344	1,344	1,344

$^{+}$p<0.1; *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: Lawmakers who make more evidence-based statements are more effective at advancing and passing race bills when estimated using Negative Binominal models. Standard errors are robust and clustered by legislator.

4.7 Table 4.7: Legislators Who Make More Evidence-Based Race Statements Are more Effective At Legislating Race Bills (Legislator FE)

	Action in Committee (Race Bills)	**Action Beyond Commitee (Race Bills)**	**Passed House (Race Bills)**	**Passed Both Chambers (Race Bills)**	**Become Law (Race Bills)**
	1	2	3	4	5
Total Race-Based Evidence Statements	**0.040***	0.032	**0.028***	−0.005	−0.005
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.014)	(0.006)	(0.006)
Nonwhite	−0.191	−0.073	−0.011	0.034	0.034
	(0.162)	(0.140)	(0.116)	(0.059)	(0.059)
Democrat	4.503	2.379	1.156	0.284	0.284
	(2.783)	(2.108)	(2.130)	(1.011)	(1.011)
% Nonwhite in District	0.539	0.447	0.215	−0.049	−0.049
	(0.370)	(0.342)	(0.248)	(0.107)	(0.107)
Nonwhite Chair	1.288	0.600	0.387	0.390	0.390
	(0.873)	(0.784)	(0.547)	(0.292)	(0.292)
Committee Chair	0.994***	1.001***	0.553***	0.089	0.089
	(0.214)	(0.213)	(0.166)	(0.074)	(0.074)
In Majority Leadership	0.268	0.111	0.073	0.111	0.111
	(0.164)	(0.146)	(0.108)	(0.080)	(0.080)
In Minority Leadership	−0.166	−0.278	−0.156	−0.068	−0.068
	(0.194)	(0.202)	(0.118)	(0.096)	(0.096)
Subcommittee Chair	0.314***	0.310***	0.069	0.023	0.023
	(0.087)	(0.082)	(0.057)	(0.032)	(0.032)
Ideological Distance from Floor Median	0.576	0.263	−0.303	0.292	0.292
	(1.369)	(1.173)	(1.157)	(0.413)	(0.413)
Served in State Legislature	1.819**	1.511**	1.140*	−0.032	−0.032
	(0.671)	(0.550)	(0.558)	(0.246)	(0.246)
Female	1.101	0.574	1.459	0.024	0.024
	(0.953)	(0.773)	(0.762)	(0.350)	(0.350)
LGBTQ	1.403	0.602	1.289	−0.023	−0.023
	(1.214)	(0.987)	(0.910)	(0.434)	(0.434)
DW-NOMINATE (1st Dimension)	4.585	2.630	1.370	0.492	0.492
	(2.897)	(2.207)	(2.128)	(0.965)	(0.965)
DW-NOMINATE (2nd Dimension)	1.631	0.721	0.183	−0.038	−0.038
	(1.034)	(0.832)	(0.760)	(0.367)	(0.367)
Seniority	0.051*	0.057**	0.013	0.005	0.005
	(0.021)	(0.020)	(0.014)	(0.008)	(0.008)
In Majority Party	0.501	0.343	0.021	0.174	0.174
	(0.621)	(0.525)	(0.517)	(0.184)	(0.184)
Vote Share (Lagged)	−0.003	−0.003	−0.001	−0.001	−0.001
	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Total Bills Introduced	0.007	0.006	0.005	0.001	0.001
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Intercept	−3.991	−2.164	−1.971	−0.285	−0.285
	(2.327)	(1.814)	(1.777)	(0.851)	(0.851)
Legislator Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.639	0.610	0.518	0.431	0.431
Adjusted R^2	0.300	0.244	0.066	−0.102	−0.102
Observations	1,344	1,344	1,344	1,344	1,344

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: Lawmakers who make more evidence-based statements are more effective at advancing and passing race bills when estimated using legislator fixed effects. Standard errors are robust and clustered by legislator.

5 Log Transformation of Dependent Variables

5.1 Explanation of Transformation

Two primary dependent variables—"Evidence" and "Matching Sources"—exhibit right-skewed distributions. This means that most observations are concentrated at the lower end of the scale, with a smaller number of extreme values extending the upper tail. The first two rows of Table 5.1 report the mean, standard deviation, range, and kurtosis for each variable prior to transformation. The relatively low means compared to the upper bounds of the ranges suggest substantial skewness. In addition, both variables have kurtosis values exceeding three—the benchmark for a normal distribution—indicating heavy tails and the presence of outliers. Because non-normally distributed dependent variables can violate key assumptions of Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression, I apply a natural log transformation to both variables. Specifically, I add one to each value and then take the natural logarithm. Rows three and four of Table 5.1 display the same summary statistics for the transformed variables. As expected, the upper bound of the range is compressed, and the kurtosis values move closer to those expected under a normal distribution.

Table 5.1: Summary Statistics for Skewed Dependent Variables

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Range	Kurtosis
Evidence	1.05	1.87	0 – 19	22.6
Matching Sources	1.27	0.369	0 – 8	5.29
Evidence (Natural Log Transformation)	0.496	0.597	0 – 3	0.89
Matching Sources (Natural Log Transformation)	1.27	0.854	0 – 8	0.70

Although transforming the dependent variables is necessary due to the severity of the skew, such transformations can introduce irregularities that may alter regression results. To assess this, Tables 5.2 and 5.3 present the main regression models using the original, untransformed dependent variables. The results are consistent to those reported in the main text. This suggests that the log transformations do not alter the core findings of the analysis. However, by reducing skewness, the

transformed variables better satisfy the assumptions of Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression and thus are more appropriate dependent variables.

5.2 Table 5.2: White Legislators Make More Evidence-Based Race Statements on Racially Diverse Committees (Non-Transformed DV)

	Evidence (White Lawmaker)		**Evidence (White Democrat)**		**Evidence (White Republican)**	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
% Nonwhite on Committee	**1.826***	**1.821***	**2.637**$^{+}$	1.667	1.275	1.396
	(0.769)	(0.791)	(1.366)	(1.319)	(0.925)	(1.120)
Power Committee	0.379*	0.332	0.285	0.413	0.526**	0.273
	(0.161)	(0.199)	(0.278)	(0.332)	(0.192)	(0.176)
# of Hearings	0.004**	0.004*	0.007**	0.008*	0.003	−0.001
	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.002)	(0.001)
# of Bills Referred	0.0004*	0.0004*	0.001	0.001	0.0001	0.0001
	(0.0002)	(0.0002)	(0.0003)	(0.0004)	(0.0002)	(0.0002)
Democrat		−6.284**				
		(2.312)				
DW-NOMINATE (1st Dimension)		−0.001		−0.008		0.009
		(0.006)		(0.007)		(0.007)
DW-NOMINATE (2nd Dimension)		−2.418		−2.747		−1.822
		(2.531)		(2.764)		(5.425)
Committee Chair		−2.837**		−3.082*		−2.510
		(1.056)		(1.308)		(1.912)
Nonwhite Chair		0.379		0.878		−0.278
		(0.645)		(1.073)		(0.470)
Unified Government		0.354*		0.528		−0.243
		(0.153)		(0.271)		(0.177)
% Nonwhite in District		−0.047		0.110		−0.253
		(0.129)		(0.167)		(0.163)
% Nonwhite in House		0.433		−1.126		1.681
		(1.017)		(1.573)		(1.609)
Seniority (Terms)		−6.616		−3.290		−26.587*
		(9.650)		(6.233)		(10.625)
Vote Share (Lagged)		0.093		0.104		0.421
		(0.201)		(0.141)		(0.219)
Intercept	−0.001	4.939***	−1.070*	−1.419	0.270	2.285
	(0.374)	(1.223)	(0.488)	(1.685)	(0.387)	(2.894)
Legislator Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Term Fixed Effects	✓		✓		✓	
R^2	0.375	0.450	0.394	0.470	0.381	0.460
Adjusted R^2	0.045	0.054	0.135	0.150	−0.032	−0.037
Observations	1,935	1,181	875	575	1,060	606

$^{+}$p<0.1;*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: Consistent with the primary finding reported in Table 3, White (Democratic) lawmakers cite more evidence when serving on racially diverse committees. In this model, I use the non-transformed version of the Evidence variable. Standard errors are robust and clustered by legislator. In both model specifications, the results are consistent.

5.3 Table 5.3: Nonwhite and White Legislators Cite Similar Sources on Racially Diverse Committees (Non-Transformed DV)

	Matching Sources (White Lawmakers)		**Matching Sources (White Democrats)**		**Matching Sources (White Republicans)**	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
% Nonwhite on Committee	**0.977****	**1.141****	**1.180***	**1.471****	0.700	0.539
	(0.323)	(0.363)	(0.467)	(0.544)	(0.439)	(0.418)
Total Race Statements	0.089***	0.120***	0.104***	0.112***	0.082	0.134***
	(0.025)	(0.021)	(0.020)	(0.028)	(0.045)	(0.020)
Total Unique Sources	0.241***	0.116	0.142*	0.026	0.342***	0.363***
	(0.062)	(0.064)	(0.062)	(0.072)	(0.086)	(0.106)
Power Committee	−0.041	−0.031	−0.075	−0.072	−0.010	0.015
	(0.052)	(0.065)	(0.077)	(0.085)	(0.072)	(0.090)
# of Hearings	0.001*	0.002**	0.001	0.002*	0.001	0.002**
	(0.0004)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.0005)	(0.001)
# of Bills Referred	0.0001	0.0001	0.0002	0.0003**	0.00005	−0.00003
	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)
Democrat		2.524				
		(2.227)				
DW-NOMINATE (1st Dimension)		−1.359		−0.017		−5.127
		(2.608)		(2.660)		(3.313)
DW-NOMINATE (2nd Dimension)		0.829		0.700		0.752
		(1.057)		(1.481)		(1.402)
Committee Chair		−0.113		0.053		−0.217
		(0.142)		(0.184)		(0.158)
Majority Party Member		0.151**		0.142		−0.041
		(0.057)		(0.151)		(0.109)
Unified Government		0.069		0.085		0.119
		(0.065)		(0.074)		(0.075)
% Nonwhite in District		−0.055		−0.468		−0.275
		(0.683)		(0.819)		(1.008)
% Nonwhite in House		5.561		8.741		2.381
		(3.480)		(4.723)		(3.764)
Seniority (Terms)		−0.119		−0.163		−0.065
		(0.076)		(0.106)		(0.078)
Vote Share (Lagged)		−0.003		−0.005		−0.006
		(0.004)		(0.005)		(0.006)
Intercept	0.933***	−2.596*	0.384**	0.726	0.822**	2.152
	(0.186)	(1.174)	(0.142)	(1.311)	(0.255)	(1.682)
Legislator Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Term Fixed Effects	✓		✓		✓	
R^2	0.658	0.699	0.667	0.721	0.673	0.738
Adjusted R^2	0.477	0.481	0.522	0.550	0.454	0.494
Observations	1,935	1,181	875	575	1,060	606

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: Consistent with the primary finding reported in Table 4, White (Democratic) lawmakers cite the same sources of evidence when serving on racially diverse committees as nonwhite lawmakers. In this model, I use the non-transformed version of the Matching Source variable. Standard errors are robust and clustered by legislator. In both model specifications, the results are consistent.

5.4 Table 5.4: Past Committee Diversity Predicts Present Evidence Use (Non-Transformed DV)

	Evidence (White Lawmakers)		**Evidence (White Democrats)**		**Evidence (White Republicans)**	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
% Nonwhite on Committee in Prior Term (t-1)	3.649	3.061	4.825	**8.809***	4.159	1.313
	(2.490)	(2.719)	(3.923)	(4.465)	(2.378)	(2.492)
% Nonwhite on Committee in Current Term (t)	2.937	2.932	5.432	1.068	3.707	7.247
	(3.573)	(4.236)	(5.993)	(7.178)	(3.700)	(5.086)
Democrat		−14.854				
		(72.528)				
Power Committee	0.376	0.245	−0.069	−0.033	1.515*	2.403
	(0.480)	(0.413)	(0.628)	(0.491)	(0.705)	(1.454)
# of Hearings	0.017**	0.014*	0.018**	0.017*	0.012	−0.003
	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.010)	(0.008)
# of Bills Referred	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	−0.002*	−0.002
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
DW-NOMINATE (1st Dimension)		−14.379		−225.212		−36.814
		(89.036)		(226.890)		(66.209)
DW-NOMINATE (2nd Dimension)		−5.433		1.672		−15.312
		(27.423)		(50.208)		(23.067)
Committee Chair		1.691		3.012		0.599
		(1.357)		(2.294)		(0.687)
Majority Party Member		0.682		1.304*		−0.446
		(0.386)		(0.652)		(0.303)
Unified Government		0.150		0.647		0.010
		(0.292)		(0.593)		(0.377)
% Nonwhite in District		−1.819		−17.627		1.755
		(3.184)		(9.606)		(2.634)
% Nonwhite in House		0.482		15.711		−32.084**
		(28.373)		(18.554)		(12.206)
Seniority (Terms)		0.011		−0.025		0.380
		(0.573)		(0.337)		(0.206)
Vote Share (Lagged)		−0.009		−0.050		0.065*
		(0.016)		(0.026)		(0.030)
Intercept	−0.819	7.416	−0.183	−65.519	−2.661	20.335
	(1.707)	(44.347)	(3.147)	(66.557)	(1.834)	(37.948)
Legislator Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Term Fixed Effects	✓		✓		✓	
R^2	0.474	0.561	0.541	0.643	0.495	0.533
Adjusted R^2	−0.013	0.003	0.154	0.153	−0.151	−0.231
Observations	585	367	290	200	295	167

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: Consistent with the primary finding reported in Table 6, White (Democrats) who are exposed to racially diverse committees in the prior term (t-1) continue to cite evidence in the present term (t), regardless of how racially diverse their committee is in the current term. In this model, I use the non-transformed version of the Evidence variable. Standard errors are robust and clustered by legislator. In both model specifications, the results are consistent.

6 Validating Race Bills Measure

Top 100 Race Bigrams from Training Set

Race Bigrams				
“african american”	“racial profil”	“asian american”	“peopl color”	“women color”
“nativ american”	“black women”	“racial wealth”	“black american”	“hispan communiti”
“racial ethnic”	“american indian”	“communiti color”	“race ethnic”	“latino communiti”
“base race”	“black communiti”	“black latino”	“american latino”	“ethnic minor”
“hispan worker”	“racial bias”	“racial minor”	“african-american communiti”	“close racial”
“critic race”	“hispan caucus”	“minor communiti”	“race theori”	“racial dispar”
“racial justic”	“affirm action”	“american hispan”	“black brown”	“black caucus”
“color women”	“congression black”	“hispan women”	“impact black”	“impact racial”
“minor women”	“minority-own busi”	“percent african-american”	“percent black”	“percent latino”
“race discrimin”	“racial discrimin”	“racial equiti”	“racial group”	“african-american hispan”
“alleg racial”	“among african”	“among asian”	“among hispan”	“asian communiti”
“believ racial”	“black live”	“black male”	“black matern”	“black mother”
“black white”	“color skin”	“director asian”	“hispan american”	“hispan black”
“hispan latino”	“hispan latinx”	“hispan popul”	“issu racial”	“jim crow”
“latino parent”	“minority- women-own”	“pacif island”	“percent hispan”	“race gender”
“racial divers”	“racial gender”	“racial inequ”	“rate black”	“women african”
“women black”	“aapi communiti”	“abort race”	“advanc racial”	“african-american borrow”
“african-american latino”	“african-american parent”	“african-american women”	“american asian”	“among black”
“among racial”	“anoth hispan”	“asian-american voter”	“associ hispan”	“black student”
“black wealth”	“black woman”	“born hispan”	“brown communiti”	“center racial”
“color disproportion”	“color low-incom”	“communiti asian”	“concentr hispan”	“concern hispan”
“congression hispan”	“end racial”	“environment racism”	“ethnic racial”	“femal african-american”
“first black”	“group hispan”	“hbcus district”	“hispan asian”	“hispan chamber”
“hispan group”	“hispan male”	“impact hispan”	“latino district”	“latino senior”
“latino worker”	“level hispan”	“minority-own firm”	“minority-serv institut”	“multiraci categori”

Top 25 Bills by Race Bigram Count

Bill Title	Sponsor	Term	Race Bigram Count	Race Sentences
Jobs and Justice Act of 2020	Rep. Bass, Karen (D-CA)	116	921	0.66%
Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2022	Rep. Kelly, Robin L. (D-IL)	117	729	1.32%
Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2020	Rep. Garcia, Jesus G. "Chuy" (D-IL)	116	437	1.45%
Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2018	Rep. Lee, Barbara (D-CA)	115	361	1.47%
Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2016	Rep. Kelly, Robin L. (D-IL)	114	353	1.55%
Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2014	Rep. Roybal-Allard, Lucille (D-CA)	113	333	1.53%
Health Equity and Accountability Act of 2011	Rep. Lee, Barbara (D-CA)	112	317	1.69%
Navajo-Hopi Little Colorado River Water Rights Settlement Act of 2012	Rep. Quayle, Benjamin (R-AZ)	112	297	7.12%
Jobs and Justice Act of 2018	Rep. Richmond, Cedric L. (D-LA)	115	240	0.62%
Native American Languages Amendments Act of 2006	Rep. Case, Ed (D-HI)	109	237	22.09%
Healthcare Equality and Accountability Act	Rep. Honda, Michael M. (D-CA)	109	203	1.41%
EHDC Act of 2020	Rep. Kelly, Robin L. (D-IL)	116	202	1.26%
Honoring Promises to Native Nations Act	Rep. Kilmer, Derek (D-WA)	117	200	2.82%
Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021	Rep. Cuellar, Henry (D-TX)	116	190	0.13%
Higher Education Opportunity Act	Rep. Miller, George (D-CA)	110	180	0.50%
Native Culture, Language, and Access for Success in Schools Act	Rep. Baca, Joe (D-CA)	112	175	3.43%
Native Culture, Language, and Access for Success in Schools Act	Rep. Kildee, Dale E. (D-MI)	112	175	3.43%
Healthcare Equality and Accountability Act	Rep. Cummings, Elijah E. (D-MD)	108	168	1.25%
BLUE Pacific Act	Rep. Case, Ed (D-HI)	117	156	9.87%
Native American Languages Act Amendments Act of 2003	Rep. Wilson, Heather (R-NM)	108	155	23.24%
College Affordability Act	Rep. Scott, Robert C. "Bobby" (D-VA)	116	151	0.34%
PRO–LIFE Act of 2022	Rep. Phillips, Dean (D-MN)	117	150	1.69%
Black Maternal Health Momnibus Act of 2021	Rep. Underwood, Lauren (D-IL)	117	147	2.71%
Native American Languages Act Amendments of 2003	Rep. Case, Ed (D-HI)	108	143	22.56%
Native American Languages Act Amendments Act of 2001	Rep. Mink, Patsy T. (D-HI)	107	138	22.48%

As a robustness check, I re-estimate the relationship between race-based evidence use and substantive representation using Legislative Effectiveness Scores (LES) (Volden and Wiseman 2014). I operationalize race-issue legislation with Lollis' (2025) measure of "race bills." Following the Policy Agendas Project major topics (as coded in the Congressional Bills Project) (Baumgartner and Jones 2002), Lollis identifies three policy areas—Education, Housing, and Law and Crime—in which nonwhite lawmakers introduce more legislation than white lawmakers (see also (Volden, Wiseman and Wittmer 2018) for a similar approach to gender-issue bills). All bills in these three categories were coded as race-issue bills; all others are coded as non-race bills. This measure trades specificity for breadth relative to the bill-text approach in the main text: "race bills" are

defined by policy area rather than by each bill's language. Demonstrating robustness with this broader classification is useful precisely because it does not rely on the presence of race-related bigrams in statutory text.

Table 6.1 reports four OLS models. The dependent variables are, per legislator–term, the number of race-issue bills that (i) advanced beyond committee (ABC), (ii) passed the House (PASS), (iii) became law (LAW), and (iv) the legislator's LES on race-issue bills. The key independent variable is the total number of evidence-based race statements a member makes per term. Each model includes standard legislative effectiveness controls and term fixed effects (Volden and Wiseman 2014).

The results are consistent with the main-text findings. Legislators who more frequently cite evidence when discussing race are more likely to advance race-issue bills beyond committee, pass the House, and attain higher LES. As in the main text, the LAW coefficient is not statistically significant, which is unsurprising given that fewer than 5% of bills become law. Substantively, citing four additional evidence-based race statements per term corresponds to roughly the same effectiveness advantage as serving in the majority party, and citing ten such statements is comparable to serving as a committee chair. Other analyses reveal that, similar to the findings presented in-text, members who frequently cite evidence when discussing race are no more (or less) effective on bills outside race-issue domains.

6.1 Table 6.1: Legislators Who Make Evidence-Based Race Statements In Hearings Are More Effective At Legislating Race Bills (3 Bigram Measure)

	Action in Committee (Race Bills)	Action Beyond Commitee (Race Bills)	Passed House (Race Bills)	Passed Both Chambers (Race Bills)	Become Law (Race Bills)
	1	2	3	4	5
Total Race-Based Evidence Statements	**0.034***	**0.027***	**0.019***	−0.001	−0.001
	(0.014)	(0.013)	(0.009)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Nonwhite	0.078	0.049	−0.003	−0.004	−0.004
	(0.048)	(0.042)	(0.027)	(0.012)	(0.012)
Democrat	−0.155	−0.131	−0.139	−0.034	−0.034
	(0.120)	(0.100)	(0.071)	(0.035)	(0.035)
% Nonwhite in District	−0.078	−0.010	0.045	−0.024	−0.024
	(0.126)	(0.103)	(0.076)	(0.034)	(0.034)
Nonwhite Chair	0.389	0.049	0.027	0.026	0.026
	(0.755)	(0.608)	(0.408)	(0.131)	(0.131)
Committee Chair	0.577***	0.552***	0.391***	0.107*	0.107*
	(0.136)	(0.131)	(0.103)	(0.049)	(0.049)
In Majority Leadership	0.175	0.125	0.073	0.043	0.043
	(0.111)	(0.102)	(0.062)	(0.047)	(0.047)
In Minority Leadership	−0.023	−0.053	−0.045	−0.013	−0.013
	(0.068)	(0.035)	(0.024)	(0.010)	(0.010)
Subcommittee Chair	0.092*	0.081	0.011	0.006	0.006
	(0.046)	(0.043)	(0.029)	(0.015)	(0.015)
Ideological Distance from Floor Median	0.030	−0.003	0.037	−0.039	−0.039
	(0.164)	(0.141)	(0.107)	(0.037)	(0.037)
Served in State Legislature	0.068*	0.065*	0.036	0.002	0.002
	(0.032)	(0.029)	(0.019)	(0.009)	(0.009)
Female	0.003	0.011	−0.021	−0.015	−0.015
	(0.042)	(0.036)	(0.024)	(0.012)	(0.012)
LGBTQ	0.039	0.046	0.002	−0.038**	−0.038**
	(0.093)	(0.077)	(0.047)	(0.012)	(0.012)
DW-NOMINATE (1st Dimension)	−0.208	−0.162	−0.193*	−0.055	−0.055
	(0.147)	(0.119)	(0.089)	(0.039)	(0.039)
DW-NOMINATE (2nd Dimension)	0.086	0.074	0.015	−0.010	−0.010
	(0.053)	(0.046)	(0.031)	(0.013)	(0.013)
Seniority	0.016***	0.018***	0.007**	0.003*	0.003*
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)
In Majority Party	0.125	0.110	0.085	0.011	0.011
	(0.076)	(0.067)	(0.052)	(0.020)	(0.020)
Vote Share (Lagged)	−0.003*	−0.002	−0.002	−0.0004	−0.0004
	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)
Total Bills Introduced	0.004*	0.002	0.002	−0.0001	−0.0001
	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.0005)	(0.0005)
Intercept	0.228	0.197	0.245	0.205	0.205
	(0.146)	(0.140)	(0.130)	(0.116)	(0.116)
Term Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	
R^2	0.231	0.221	0.172	0.058	0.058
Adjusted R^2	0.216	0.206	0.156	0.039	0.039
Observations	1,344	1,344	1,344	1,344	1,344

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: Lawmakers who make more evidence-based race statements are more effective at advancing and pass race bills. Dependent variables in this model require a bill to mention at least 3 race bigrams to be classified as a race bill. Standard errors are robust and clustered by legislator.

6.2 Table 6.2: Legislators Who Make Evidence-Based Race Statements In Hearings Are More Effective At Legislating Race Issue Bills

	ABC (Race Bills)	PASS (Race Bills)	LAW (Race Bills)	LES (Race Bills)
	1	2	3	4
Total Race-Based Evidence Statements	**0.076****	**0.054****	0.008	**0.261*****
	(0.024)	(0.019)	(0.005)	(0.069)
Nonwhite	−0.035	−0.029	−0.020	−0.284
	(0.051)	(0.043)	(0.013)	(0.255)
Democrat	−0.198	−0.166	0.015	−0.459
	(0.142)	(0.125)	(0.032)	(0.627)
% Nonwhite in District	0.039	0.071	0.040	0.149
	(0.119)	(0.100)	(0.037)	(0.596)
Nonwhite Chair	−0.326	−0.340	−0.118	−1.900
	(0.263)	(0.238)	(0.098)	(1.430)
Committee Chair	0.444*	0.369*	0.149*	2.740*
	(0.205)	(0.181)	(0.058)	(1.240)
In Majority Leadership	0.305	0.302	0.049	1.360
	(0.221)	(0.192)	(0.047)	(1.420)
In Minority Leadership	−0.026	0.005	−0.020	−0.199
	(0.082)	(0.076)	(0.013)	(0.279)
Subcommittee Chair	0.040	0.059	0.006	0.294
	(0.061)	(0.054)	(0.019)	(0.281)
Ideological Distance from Floor Median	0.315	0.066	−0.055	1.140
	(0.186)	(0.151)	(0.037)	(0.849)
Served in State Legislature	−0.038	−0.042	−0.019	−0.091
	(0.043)	(0.039)	(0.011)	(0.211)
Female	−0.004	0.001	0.002	0.156
	(0.054)	(0.048)	(0.015)	(0.252)
LGBTQ	−0.018	−0.008	−0.038**	0.036
	(0.131)	(0.100)	(0.014)	(0.691)
DW-NOMINATE (1st Dimension)	−0.116	−0.078	0.036	−0.331
	(0.178)	(0.154)	(0.035)	(0.782)
DW-NOMINATE (2nd Dimension)	0.217**	0.116	0.004	0.509
	(0.077)	(0.063)	(0.013)	(0.322)
Seniority	−0.002	−0.002	0.001	−0.018
	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.002)	(0.026)
In Majority Party	0.315***	0.142	−0.009	1.170**
	(0.091)	(0.073)	(0.022)	(0.418)
Vote Share (Lagged)	−0.00001	0.001	0.0004	−0.001
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.010)
Total Bills Introduced	0.007**	0.005**	0.001	0.034***
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.008)
Intercept	−0.076	0.044	−0.051	0.388
	(0.234)	(0.217)	(0.048)	(1.400)
Term Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.172	0.134	0.064	0.124
Adjusted R^2	0.155	0.116	0.046	0.106
Observations	1,347	1,347	1,347	1,347

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Note: Lawmakers who make more evidence-based race statements are more effective at legislating race-issue bills. ABC = bill received action beyond committee, PASS = bill passed the House, LAW = bill was signed into law, LES = legislative effectiveness score. Race-issue bills include education, housing, and law and crime bills. Standard errors are robust and clustered by legislator.