The Political Calculus of Anticorruption Reform*

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Abstract

Anticorruption policies face challenges because the same group they aim to monitor and punish is in charge of their advancement. Yet, some politicians still support and advance these policies. Why? I argue that politicians weigh the benefits and drawbacks of anticorruption reform, sponsoring policies to gain votes without jeopardizing their political careers and rents. Using data on anticorruption initiatives introduced to the Mexican Chamber of Deputies, I explore three ways in which the benefits of anticorruption sponsorship can outweigh the costs—external changes to the status quo, legislator positioning, and type of anticorruption policy. I show that legislators are more likely to sponsor anticorruption initiatives after high-profile corruption scandals, and when they belong to the opposition or have reelection incentives. Legislators also prefer to sponsor punitive policies, which are less likely to become law, to demonstrate a credible commitment to anticorruption. These findings have broad implications for democratic governance and could inform anticorruption policy design and advocation strategies.

Keywords: Anticorruption, legislative studies, Comparative Politics, Mexico

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Introduction

While activists, civil society, and international actors have decried the ills of corruption and advocated for anticorruption measures (Johnston and Fritzen, 2021; Klasnja and Pop-Echeles, 2023; Sampson, 2010), anticorruption policies rarely receive widespread political support or effective implementation (Johnston and Fritzen, 2021; Mungiu-Pippidi and Johnston, 2017). One of the main reasons why anticorruption reform faces challenges is related to the perverse incentives political actors face: the same group meant to be monitored and punished by anticorruption policies is in charge of their advancement and implementation (Rotberg, 2020; Pozsgai-Alvarez, 2022). It should be no surprise that politicians often eschew anticorruption reform, since anticorruption policies could be costly for them—forcing politicians to disclose information on their assets or conflicts of interest, placing them under investigator's scrutiny, or imposing severe fines and jail time.

Nevertheless, the potential costliness of these policies has not deterred some politicians from advancing anticorruption reform. Agencies that prosecute politicians have been established in widely different contexts (Doig and Riley, 1998; Pozsgai-Alvarez, 2022), access to information policies have institutionalized transparency in governments (Berliner and Erlich, 2020; Honig and Parks, 2022), and financial disclosures have become a standard requirement for politicians (Chauchard, and Harish, 2019; Szakonyi, 2021). Legislators throughout Latin America have advanced initiatives that aim to raise sanctions for public sector corruption, such as fines, permanent disqualifications from holding office, and prison sentences.[1]

Why and *when* do politicians advance anticorruption reform? While scholars have underscored the lack of political will to fight corruption as the main challenge toward effective implementation (Johnston and Fritzen, 2021; Rotberg, 2020), few studies have directly ex-

[1]See examples from Argentina, Chile, and Mexico, and Peru.

plored politicians' incentives to engage in anticorruption efforts (Guajardo, 2024; Schwindt-Bayer and Tavits, 2016; Vera, 2024). Research on anticorruption has primarily focused on evaluating the effectiveness of anticorruption measures (Butt, 2012; Doig and Riley, 1998; Szakonyi, 2021) and their consequences (Cheeseman, 2021; Mungiu-Pippidi and Dadasov, 2017; Klasnja and Pop-Echeles, 2023), or exploring whether and when voters punish corrupt incumbents (Elia, 2024; Anduiza and Muñoz, 2013; Boas and Melo, 2019; Eggers, 2014; De Vries and Solaz, 2017; Klašnja and Tucker, 2021).

This study examines the conditions under which politicians sponsor anticorruption policies. I argue that politicians weigh the benefits and drawbacks of anticorruption reform, sponsoring policies to get votes without jeopardizing their careers and rents, and explore three ways in which the benefits can outweigh the costs—external changes to the status quo, the strategic positioning of legislators, and type of anticorruption policy. I expect legislators to sponsor anticorruption initiatives after external events increase the salience of corruption, compelling responsiveness to voter demands. Additionally, legislators should be more likely to do so when strategically positioned to reap the electoral rewards of position-taking anticorruption, such as when they belong to the opposition and can act as checks on the establishment party or when electoral rules incentivize responsiveness to constituents. Furthermore, I argue that politicians in contexts of high corruption and impunity seek an anticorruption platform's electoral and reputational benefits by proposing policies with harsh penalties for corruption (*punitive* anticorruption policies)—such as fines, destitutions, and prison time—to signal a credible commitment to voters. Counter-intuitively, punitive policies imply fewer risks since they are less likely to become law and receive effective implementation. I expect punitive anticorruption policies to be more likely to be sponsored and less likely to move beyond the first committee and become law, compared to non-punitive policies.

I explore the strategic calculus of anticorruption reform by leveraging the first systematic data collection of anticorruption initiatives introduced to the Mexican Chamber

of Deputies.[2] The data includes fine-grained information on the content of 460 anticorruption initiatives and the profiles of over 2000 deputies in the four legislatures between 2009-2021. I show that 1) legislators are more likely to sponsor anticorruption initiatives after a high-profile corruption scandal, 2) legislators in the opposition and those with reelection incentives are more likely to sponsor anticorruption initiatives, and 3) politicians are more likely to sponsor punitive anticorruption policies and these are less likely to advance beyond the first committee and become law, compared to non-punitive anticorruption policies. I complement my findings with insights from 30 semi-structured interviews conducted with legislators, personnel of Mexico's National Anticorruption System, and anticorruption activists, which underscore the costs and benefits of anticorruption reform, the appeal of punitive anticorruption policies, and politicians' perceptions of their innocuousness.

This study presents three significant contributions. First, this work proposes the legislature as a promising new avenue for studying the political incentives for anticorruption reform. Exploring the policy-making process of anticorruption initiatives could help overcome the limitations in cross-national studies, such as limited observations and lack of comparability across contexts. Second, this study presents the first systematic data collection of anticorruption initiatives, with detailed information on each bill's content, progress, and sponsors. Finally, this study has policy implications. Experts have long considered corruption a monumental challenge for democratic governance, leading to inefficient governance, lower trust in institutions, loss of life, conflict, and limited economic growth (Rotberg, 2020). For that reason, the last two decades have seen millions of dollars invested in promoting measures to fight corruption (Sampson, 2010). However, the effectiveness of these policies in reducing corruption has been mixed, with scholars suggesting that the main reason for the underper-

[2]Future iterations of this dataset will include data from Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala and Peru. Data collection/processing for these countries is currently ongoing. Find details on the progress of data collection and coverage in the appendix A.1.

formance of anticorruption policies is the lack of political will to fight corruption (Johnston and Fritzen, 2021; Rothstein, 2011). This study provides the first systematic effort to explore the drivers of said political will. Insights from this study can inform research on *why* anticorruption policies are promoted, *who* is more likely to promote them, and *when* these policies are more likely to become law. These findings have broad implications for democratic governance and could inform the design and advocation strategies of anticorruption policies.

The political calculus of anticorruption reform

Policies that impose costs or risks to politicians have long fascinated scholars. Against their perceived best interest, politicians have expanded the access of marginalized groups to political power (Htun, 2016; Teele, 2018), given up power to transition to democracy (Smith, 2012), created oversight and accountability institutions (Grzymala-Busse, 2006), reduced their hold over candidate selection processes (Kemahlioglu and Hirano, 2009), adopted electoral systems that dilute the concentration of power (Boix, 1999), and advanced policies that increase transparency or civil society participation (Berliner and Erlich, 2020). In all of these processes, previous studies have underscored the role of political competition (Garay, 2016; Teele, 2018), international pressures (Simmons and Kelley, 2015), and trades between long-term institutional change and immediate electoral advantage (Grindle, 2000).

Even among costly policies, anticorruption reform stands out in two ways. First, unlike most policies, anticorruption efforts are universally popular with voters and could be advanced by politicians regardless of their ideological affinities. As a valence issue, there is a general understanding that corruption is undesirable and political actors are not explicitly "pro" corruption. Second, while all policies imply opportunity costs or potential disadvantages, few policies include measures that could personally inconvenience politicians in their

design. Policy choices such as electoral reform can dilute the concentration of power. Others could have implementation failures that end political careers. However, these policy choices do not include punishment or oversight mechanisms that personally target politicians, potentially leading to loss of revenue and corruption rents, disqualifications from holding office, or prison time.

The high rewards and potential costs of promoting anticorruption policies thus lead to conflicting expectations. On the one hand, anticorruption reform holds significant benefits. Parties actively seek to associate themselves with winning issues to expand their electoral support (Hobolt and de Vries, 2015), and advancing an anticorruption agenda can lead to electoral benefits for politicians in countries with endemic corruption. In these contexts, voters are frustrated with corruption and seek profiles that signal change and offer to stand against the corrupt political establishment. Around the world, most survey respondents believe that public officials in their country are corrupt (Inglehart and Punaren, 2022), and 21 percent identified corruption as the most important current problem.[3] Most Latin American respondents from the Global Corruption Barometer (53.17 percent) disapproved of their government's handling of corruption. In a recent survey by Mexico's National Statistics and Geography Institute (INEGI), 85.4 percent of respondents considered corrupt practices very common within political parties.[4]

Previous research has underscored the political benefits of an anticorruption platform. Anticorruption platforms have led parties to achieve electoral success in Europe (Bagenholm, 2013; Bagenholm and Charron, 2013), and surveys have shown that voters value anticorruption measures such as financial disclosures, lobbying registries, and sanctions for corruption (Pereira M and P, 2022). In Paraguay, anticorruption platforms increased the likelihood of

[3]For Latin America, this number was 19 percent. See Gallup International (2014).
[4]Additionally, 22 percent of Mexicans considered corruption to be one of their top three concerns. See El Economista (2023).

voting for a hypothetical candidate, with citizens preferring concrete policies over rhetoric (Vera, 2024). Even in autocracies, research has found that citizens' evaluations of politicians improve after anticorruption action (Tsai, 2021).

Therefore, politicians have strong incentives to advance widely popular policies that do not constrain them ideologically. Advancing anticorruption policies could provide reputational benefits for politicians and clean their profiles in the eyes of voters. A legislative staffer from the Mexican Chamber of Deputies echoed this rationale in an interview:

> It is attractive to have a discourse against corruption because, even if it is a complex topic, people are mad, and we see that across Latin America and the world. In Mexico, a discourse against corruption can get you votes. You can also signal that you are different from the previous administrations.[5]

On the other hand, the effective implementation of anticorruption policies could jeopardize the careers of politicians in a country with endemic corruption. While all policies imply opportunity costs, few include measures with consequences as severe and personal as anticorruption policies: specialized agencies for investigating and prosecuting public officials, demanding transparency requirements, disclosures of personal finances and conflicts of interest, fines, temporary or perpetual disqualifications from holding office, loss of procedural immunity, or even prison sentences. The abovementioned policies could all lead to increased scrutiny, loss of rents, and imprisonment. Anticorruption reform could also be considered contentious, and non-corrupt politicians could risk going against established networks of corruption and compromise their career advancement. As bluntly stated by deputies from *Partido Acción Nacional* (PAN): "The benefit of anticorruption policies is that citizens like them a lot. The cost is that the establishment itself perceives them as an attack."[6] Some

[5]Interview #3.
[6]Interview #18.

deputies even referenced the potential of violence: "As for costs, politician who are involved in corruption issues could get a *plomazo*."[7]

Why do legislators sponsor anticorruption policies? *When* are they more likely to do so? The following sections examine the political calculus of anticorruption reform, exploring three ways in which the benefits of anticorruption reform can outweigh the costs—external changes to the status quo, legislator positioning, and the type of anticorruption policy.

When do politicians sponsor anticorruption policies?

I argue that politicians should be more responsive to voter demands after external shocks to the status quo—such as corruption scandals—create pressures for anticorruption reform. Previous studies have found that legislators pay attention and prioritize important issues to the public (Barberá, 2019; Stimson and Erikson, 1995). This should be particularly true after crises and scandals raise the salience of corruption as a problem, mobilizing interest groups and civil society. Media pressure was underscored in an interview with a technical advisor for senators and deputies: "Media coverage helps a lot. If it's on the news, legislators all want to jump aboard."[8] Under these circumstances, politicians would feel compelled to be responsive to de-escalate protests and demands. As stated in an interview with a member of the National Anticorruption System: "The recurrence of scandals makes the issue urgent. Legislators feel obligated to create public policy that tries to renew existing mechanisms."[9] Throughout Latin America, major reforms have resulted from high-profile scandals (Balan, 2022; Pozsgai-Alvarez, 2022; Vera and Pozsgai-Alvarez, 2022).

> **Corruption salience (H1)**: *Legislators will be more likely to sponsor/cosponsor anticorruption policies after a high-profile corruption scandal.*

[7]Slang for bullet wound. Interview #23.
[8]Interview #2.
[9]Interview #11.

Who sponsors anticorruption policies?

While anticorruption reform could provide politicians with electoral rewards, the benefits of doing so should not be identical for all politicians. I expect legislators strategically positioned to reap the electoral rewards of anticorruption reform to be more likely to sponsor anticorruption initiatives. Legislators in the opposition, for example, should be more likely to sponsor anticorruption initiatives since their role is to act as a check on the establishment party. Proposing anticorruption initiatives could work as a strategy to raise awareness or call attention to the incumbent government's corruption. Legislators in the opposition should also be less constrained by the executive compared to those in the president's coalition (Barcena and Kerevel, 2022), and therefore have more freedom to advance contentious policies. Since voters in highly corrupt countries tend to assume incumbent politicians are more corrupt than newcomers (Weaver, 2020), opposition legislators are particularly well-positioned to advance anticorruption reform.

Similarly, not all politicians have equal incentives to be responsive to voters and credit-claim policy. Legislators elected through rules incentivizing the cultivation of a personal vote, for example, rely on voters to continue their political careers (Crisp and Taylor-Robinson, 2004). Term-limited legislators rely on party leaders for career advancement. In contrast, those up for reelection have incentives to be responsive to voter demands because their continuation in politics relies on satisfying voter demands. Reelection-eligible legislators failing to support popular policies, such as anticorruption reform, could lead to voters holding them accountable in the polls (Guajardo, 2024).

> **Legislator positioning (H2)**: *Legislators strategically positioned to reap the electoral rewards of sponsorship (those in the opposition and with reelection incentives) will be more likely to sponsor/cosponsor anticorruption policies.*

Which types of anticorruption policies?

When corruption is an enduring feature of a political system, voters become frustrated and seek change and retribution (Pop-Echeles, 2010). Voter resentment provides an opportunity for vote-seeking politicians. Taking up an anticorruption agenda could not only signal that you are willing to advance policies that are highly popular with the electorate, but that you are different from the tainted political establishment. Recent examples in Latin America provide examples of politicians successfully capturing voter frustrations over corruption. In Guatemala, the anticorruption candidate Bernardo Arevalo defeated the establishment party in a landslide election.[10] In Mexico, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador emerged victorious in his third bid for the presidency, effectively capturing voter frustration with establishment parties and promising to end corruption in government.[11]

However, if implemented, anticorruption policies could be risky and costly to politicians where corruption is the "*rules of the game*." In these contexts, corruption has become sustained by informal institutions, with corruption networks relying on relationships bound by trust, reciprocity, and complicity (Marquette and Peiffer, 2017; Mungiu-Pippidi, 2006; Rothstein, 2011). Loyalty and compliance are rewarded with career advancement and corruption rents, and disloyalty with displacement (Meza and Pérez-Chiques, 2020; Perez-Chiques and Meza, 2020). The perceived ubiquity of corruption leads to a context where a large share of politicians are "*in the same boat*" by either having engaged in corruption themselves or looked the other way, and where there are few actors in power willing to implement anticorruption reform effectively (Persson, 2013).

One way of reaping the electoral rewards of anticorruption action is advancing policies that are 1) popular and 2) unlikely to become law. Since anticorruption policies can

[10] See New York Times (2023).
[11] The Guardian (2018).

vary widely in subject matter, scope, and consequences for public officials, we should not expect legislators to be indifferent between the *types* of anticorruption policies they choose to sponsor. I argue that a context of high corruption and impunity allow politicians to signal a commitment to anticorruption with a low risk of facing the consequences of effective implementation. Politicians in contexts of high corruption and impunity engage in a calculated risk: they sponsor highly punitive policies to signal citizens a credible commitment to anticorruption and to reap the electoral rewards of an anticorruption agenda. To citizens, punitive policies that raise the penalties for corruption target their feelings of frustration and resentment towards establishment politicians. Additionally, they *seem* to signal credible commitment to an anticorruption agenda. Since punitive policies propose costly measures—such as fines, destitutions, and prison time—voters could believe that only honest politicians would have nothing to fear from said measures. Moreover, voters could perceive a politician advancing punitive policies as bravely standing up to the corrupt establishment. However, since punitive anticorruption policies would greatly inconvenience politicians in a highly corrupt system, these initiatives should be unlikely to advance in the legislative process. What appears to voters to be credible commitment is perceived by legislators and activists to be *cheap talk*. Interviews with anticorruption activists underscored the appeal of punitive policies and their perceived innocuousness:

> Unfortunately, punitive policies have wide appeal in Mexico because everyone wants to see corrupt politicians in jail. Asset recovery, how to recover resources that were lost to corruption, victims of corruption... People don't really care about that because we can't see that far. We want to see Peña Nieto [former president] and his buddies in jail. These policies are popular because politicians know they won't get far. They will all get up and say: "Yes, we are against corruption, we want 100 years of prison time for corrupt politicians," but in the end they don't get implemented. Punitive policies in this country are valued and abused.[12]

[12]Interview #16.

Anticorruption policy type (H3a): *Legislators will be more likely to sponsor/cosponsor puntive anticorruption policies, compared to non-punitive anticorruption policies.*

Anticorruption policy type (H3b): *Puntive anticorruption policies will be less likely to advance in the legislative process and become law, compared to non-punitive anticorruption policies.*

Data and methods

I leverage an original dataset of anticorruption initiatives, high-profile corruption scandals, and the profiles of legislators in the Mexican Chamber of Deputies between 2009 and 2021.[13] Mexico provides an ideal setting for exploring the political incentives for anticorruption reform. First, Mexico is a country where citizens are frustrated with political corruption, and a large sector of civil society advocates for reform. Second, Mexico exhibits important variation on electoral rules and several high-profile scandals, such as the "Master Scam" (*La Estafa Maestra*) and *the Panama Papers* took place during the time period considered. Mexico has a hybrid electoral system, where deputies in the Chamber of Deputies are elected for three-year terms either through plurality single-member districts (SMD) or proportional representation (PR). For the period under study, an 80 year–old ban on reelection was lifted and federal deputies are now allowed to run for reelection for up to four terms (up to 12 years in the same office) (Motolinia 2021).

The theory expects countries with high corruption and low impunity to grant incentives for politicians to sponsor punitive policies. With its high corruption and impunity rates, Mexico fulfills this scope condition. According to the Global Impunity Index, Mexico ranks among the top ten countries with the highest levels of impunity. Between 2016 and 2021, for

[13]The legislatures included in this study are: LXI (2009-2012), LXII (2012-2015), LXIII (2015-2018), and LXIV (2018-2021).

example, the national impunity rate for crimes and homicides was 93 percent,[14] with citizens matching these perceptions in surveys.[15] Most significantly, impunity rates for public officials are particularly high. Between 2019 and 2020, only 0.19 percent of reports to agencies in charge of prosecuting corruption led to convictions. Out of all of the state-level prosecuting agencies, 78 percent (25 out of 32) have not had a single conviction.[16]

Anticorruption initiatives

To construct a dataset of anticorruption initiatives (ACIs), I consulted publicly available information in the Mexican Chamber of Deputies' online portal.[17] I read through random samples of initiatives,[18] used an anticorruption dictionary and text-analysis to collect a preliminary sample of anticorruption initiatives, and then hand-coded these cases.[19] Anticorruption initiatives were identified utilizing the definition and coding procedure from (Guajardo, 2024): "*legislation that attempts to preclude corrupt activities through concrete actions.*" It is not enough for an initiative to mention the word "corruption." Anticorruption initiatives must include concrete actions, recommendations, or steps to reduce corruption or opportunities for corruption. Additionally, anticorruption initiatives must explicitly acknowledge the connection between the proposed action(s) and an expected reduction in corruption or opportunities for corruption. For this study, acts such as embezzling, diversion of funds, illicit enrichment, public procurement fraud, nepotism, bribery, financial crimes, clientelism, vote-buying, electoral malfeasance, and money laundering are considered "corruption." To

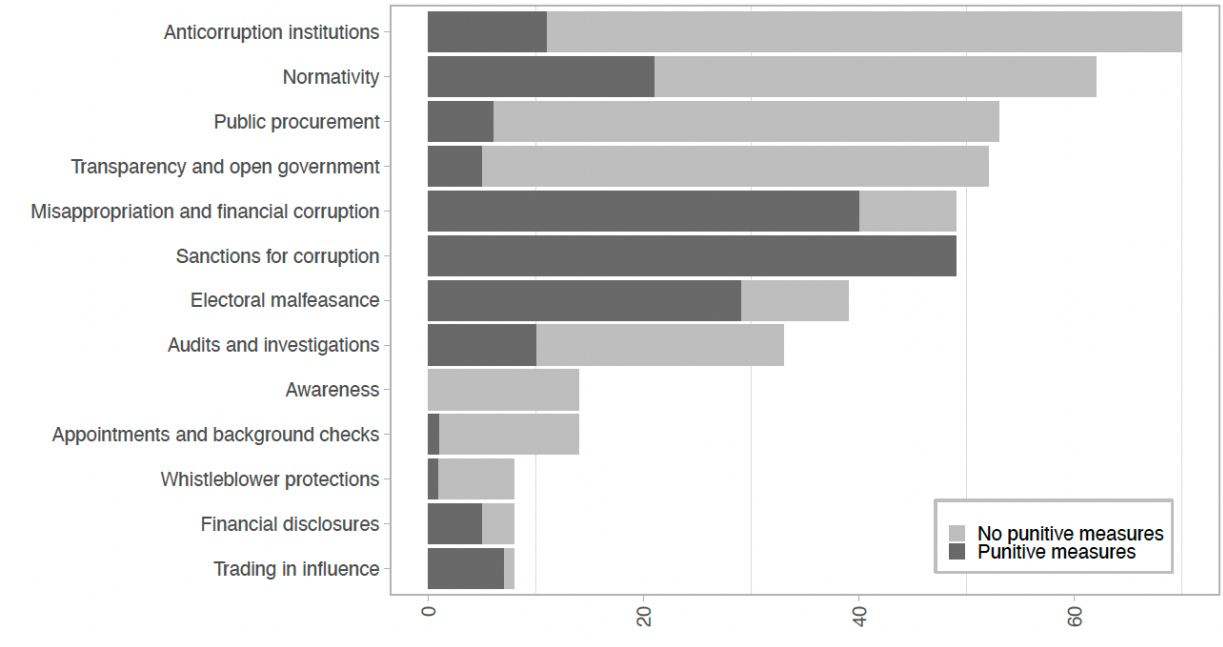
[14] Based on an impunity index developed by *Impunidad Cero*. See Animal Politico (2023)
[15] A recent survey found that 60 percent of Mexicans believe that those guilty of a crime are never or almost never brough before a judge (Impunidad Cero, 2023) and 62.3 percent of Mexicans felt that reporting a crime of corruption was pointless (MCCI, 2022).
[16] For more information, see (MCCI, 2022)
[17] See Mexico's Legislative Information System (SIL).
[18] See an example of an anticorruption initiative in the appendix section A.2
[19] Find the anticorruption dictionary in the appendix section A.3.

provide inter-coder reliability, classification was revised by two independent coders and then audited by me.

The result was a dataset of 460 anticorruption initiatives sponsored by legislators in the Chamber of Deputies. The dataset includes measures of legislative progress, sponsor/cosponsor characteristics, bill characteristics, and features of the anticorruption measures included in the initiative (such as subject matter and types of sanctions). As shown in Figure 1, anticorruption bills display wide variation in subject matter and the extent to which they contain punitive measures. The most popular categories include policies that create or empower anticorruption insitutions and agencies (*Anticorruption institutions*), policies that update or expand existing normativity and regulations in anticorruption legal codes (*Normativity*), initiatives that aim to prevent corruption in public procurement processes (*Public procurement*), and efforts aimed at improving transparency in government such as improving access to information, establishing transparency requirements for government agencies, or increasing oversight into finances or administrative procedures (*Transparency and open government*). Another popular category was *Sanctions for corruption*, which only includes initiatives that raise punishment for generic acts of corruption.[20] Across subject matters, a large number of anticorruption policies include some type of punitive measure. Out of all anticorruption initiatives sponsored by deputies, 40 percent included at least one punitive measure. Out of all anticorruption initiatives, 18.9 percent included fines, 16.7 percent destitutions or inhabilitations, and 12.6 percent prison time.

[20]This means that specific criminal acts are not explicitly stated, the initiative simply "raises sanctions for corruption crimes."

Figure 1: Subject matter of anticorruption initiatives introduced to the Mexican Chamber of Deputies (2009-2021)



Anticorruption policies can be *punitive* or *non-punitive*. I define punitive anticorruption policies as those containing two features: 1) Punitive anticorruption policies must include costly punitive actions such as fines, destitutions or inhabilitations, loss of procedural immunity, confiscation of assets, domain extinction, or prison time. 2) Punitive measures should be the main (or one of the main) actions advanced by the initiative. Anticorruption initiatives can include several measures, and many (40 percent) include some type of sanction.[21] For that reason, it is important to distinguish policies that aim to appeal to the electorate and signal credible anticorruption action by imposing harsh punitive measures as a central part of a piece of legislation. Overall, 27 percent of the sample was classified as *punitive*.

[21] For example, a measure that aims to combat corruption by requiring public officials to implement open government procedures and transparency standards may include administrative sanctions for officials who fail to comply with the new requirements. While sanctions are included, they are not the main purpose of the bill.

Non-punitive policies are initiatives that do not meet these criteria. While punitive actions could be included in the initiative, these are not among the main actions and objectives.

Corruption scandals

I identified major corruption scandals for the time period of interest and developed a selection criteria to overcome several challenges: First, corruption scandals are relatively common in Mexican politics. Second, the effect of scandals can last in time. If two corruption scandals are close to one another, this could bias results since the pre-scandal period of the second scandal would overlap with the post-scandal period of the first scandal. Third, ACI sponsorship is relatively uncommon, and crafting a legislative initiative takes time and resources.

To address these concerns, I chose corruption scandals that met the following criteria:[22]

1. The corruption scandal is "major." The event was high-profile and covered by national and international media.
2. The scandal sparked strong interest and online engagement.
3. The scandal is relatively isolated—there has not been another high-profile scandal in the last 12 months.
4. The scandal implicated high-level Mexican politicians (presidents, governors, national party leaders, cabinet members, or federal deputies).

These criteria were applied to a list of the most influential high-profile corruption scandals in Mexican politics. The list was created using compendiums of scandals created by journalists (more information in the appendix section A.4). The following high-profile scandals were chosen:

[22]The appendix section A.4 provides more information about the selection criteria, along with contextual information about each corruption scandal and the timeline for all corruption scandals.

- **The Oceanografia scandal**. In February 2014, the Attorney General's Office uncovered a fraud by Oceanografia, a contracting firm of Mexico's publicly owned petroleum company (Pemex). Investigations revealed fraud against Citigroup for over 400 million dollars. The fraud implicated public officials from Pemex and high-profile politicians such as former presidents Vicente Fox and Felipe Calderon, since the Oceanografia contracts were favored during their terms and considerably enriched family members.[23]

- **The Panama Papers**. In April 3 2016, the *International Consortium of Investigative Journalism* leaked 11.5 million documents containing personal financial information of individuals with off-shore entities.[24] The list included high-profile Mexican politicians and businessmen.[25]

- **La Estafa Maestra** (*The Master Scam*). In September 2017, investigations by *Animal Politico* uncovered a network of 128 shell companies through which the government diverted over 400 million dollars. The network included 11 government agencies, 8 public universities, private companies, and implicated over 50 public officials, including high-profile cases such as Javier Duarte (former governor of Veracruz).[26]

- **The arrest of Rosario Robles**. As a sequel to the *La Estafa Maestra* scandal, in August 2019 the former minister of social development during the Peña Nieto administration, Rosario Robles, was arrested by Mexican authorities for having diverted over 250 million dollars from public funds.[27]

[23] See Reuters (2014).
[24] Data available at the ICIJ's website.
[25] See El Economista (2016).
[26] See Animal Politico.
[27] See OCCRP (2019)

Legislator profiles

I compiled data on over 2000 legislator profiles for deputies elected to the LXI (2009-2012), LXII (2012-2015), LXIII (2015-2018), and LXIV (2018-2021) legislatures.[28] The data includes information on party affiliation, district type (SMD or PR), previous political experience, opposition status, leadership status, educational attainment, age, and gender.

Empirical strategy

I exploit variation derived from high-profile corruption scandals, legislator profiles, and anti-corruption bill content. To test the *corruption salience* (H1) hypotheses, I leverage the *as-if random* timing of high-profile corruption scandals in Mexico and compare the likelihood of deputies sponsoring/cosponsoring ACIs before and after a high-profile corruption scandal became public. I create a unique dataset for each one of the four high-profile corruption scandals chosen with the criteria from the previous section (see appendix section A.4 for details). For each dataset, the unit of analysis is a deputy (d), and for each high-profile corruption scandal I define a pre and post treatment time window of two months. I compare the anticorruption bill sponsorship/cosponsorship (Sponsorship_{dp}) of individual deputies (d) before and after each scandal became public (p) with the binary measure *Post-scandal*. I use unit fixed effects (D_d) to leverage variation within each individual deputy, and estimate OLS regressions with clustered standard errors on deputy.

$$\text{Sponsorship}_{dp} = \beta_0 + \delta \text{Post-scandal}_{dp} + D_d + \epsilon_{dp} \tag{1}$$

[28] The total number of deputies in a legislature is 500, with 300 elected through plurality single member districts and 200 through closed list proportional representation. The total number of deputies in the dataset is higher than 2000 since some deputies leave before their term is done to run for a different office and their substitute takes over.

To test legislator positioning hypothesis (H2), I explore whether legislators strategically positioned to reap the electoral rewards of anticorruption sponsorship (those in the opposition or up for reelection) are more likely to sponsor anticorruption initiatives. For these models, the unit of analysis is a deputy in a legislative term and the outcome variable is the number of anticorruption initiatives sponsored/cosponsored by each deputy. For the main explanatory variables, I code as "1" if a deputy belonged to a party that was not in the president's winning coalition and zero otherwise, and include binary indicators for whether a deputy can run for reelection (1) or is term-limited (0). I include a vector of legislator characteristics related to sponsorship, such as political experience, leadership status, district type (SMD vs PR), age, gender, education and whether the legislator was a substitute.[29]

To test the *anticorruption policy type* (H3a and H3b) hypotheses, I assess whether deputies are more likely to sponsor punitive ACIs, and whether punitive ACIs are less likely to advance in the legislative process, compared to non-punitive policies. Equation 2 tests the former. The unit of analysis is a legislator-ACI dyad (deputy = d, and bill = i) and the outcome is binary for whether the legislator sponsored/cosponsored the ACI in the dyad (Sponsorship_{di}). For the latter (equation 3), the unit of analysis (i) is an ACI. The outcomes of interest ($\text{Legislative progress}_i$) are two binary measures of legislative progress—whether the initiative moved beyond the first committee (1) or not (0), and whether it become law (1) or not (0).

$$\text{Sponsorship}_{di} = \beta_0 + \delta\text{Punitive}_i + Z_d\Omega + T_t + \epsilon_{di} \tag{2}$$

$$\text{Legislative progress}_i = \beta_0 + \delta\text{Punitive}_i + X_i\theta + T_t + \epsilon_i \tag{3}$$

[29]Prior elective offices considered are governors, mayors, and legislators (both federal and local, deputies or senators). The party leader variable codes as "1" deputies that were presidents of the Chamber of Deputies or parliamentary coordinators for their respective parties.

For both, the explanatory variable "Punitive" is a measure that indicates whether the content of an anticorruption initiative is centered on punitive action (1) or not (0).[30] The vector of sponsor characteristics Z_d includes a battery of deputy features included in the models for H2. For the bill-level models I condition for bill and sponsor characteristics that could affect both the willingness to sponsor an anticorruption policy and the likelihood that a bill advances in the legislative process. This vector of bill-level covariates (X_i) includes the number of sponsors, the level of coordination required to become law,[31] whether the bill was sponsored by all party members (1) or not (0), and the sponsoring deputy's political experience and leadership status. To hold time-invariant confounders at the legislative term (t) constant, I include legislative term fixed effects (T_t). I estimate ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions with clustered standard errors on bill for the legislator-ACI dyad models and on legislative term for the bill-level models. Summary statistics are available in the appendix section A.5.

Findings

Overall, the empirical analysis unveils three major patterns. First, legislators are more likely to sponsor/cosponsor anticorruption initiatives after a high-profile corruption scandal. Second, legislators strategically positioned to reap the electoral rewards of anticorruption action—legislators in the opposition or up for reelection—are more likely to sponsor/cosponsor punitive anticorruption bills. Third, while legislators are more likely to sponsor/cosponsor punitive anticorruption policies, these are less likely to advance beyond the

[30] See definition of *punitive* on page 15.

[31] I follow Barcena and Kerevel (2022) and code 1 = Congressional rules, 2 = Secondary law, 3 = Constitutional reform.

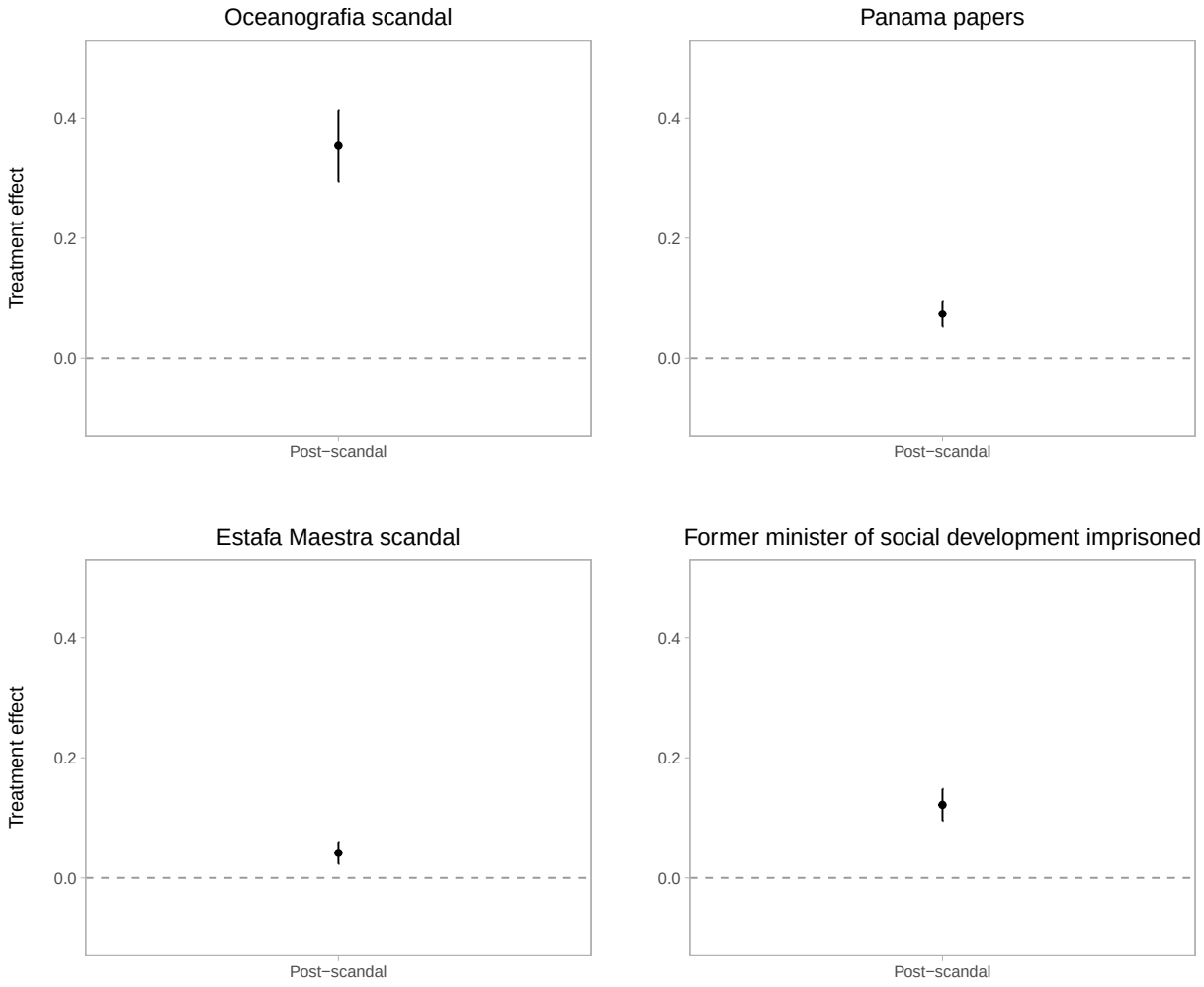
first committee and become law. Findings are robust to alternative modeling strategies, the inclusion of covariates, and different fixed effects specifications.

The effect of corruption scandals

The first hypothesis expects legislators to be more likely to sponsor anticorruption policies after high-profile corruption scandals. Figure 2 plots the estimates of the effect of each high-profile corruption scandal—the Oceanografia scandal, the Panama papers, the *Estafa Maestra* (The Master scam), and the imprisonment of former minister Rosario Robles—on the sponsorship/cosponsorship of anticorruption policies (full model results in the appendix section A.6).

Overall, a recent high-profile scandal has a strong and significant effect on the likelihood of anticorruption sponsorship. Compared to the pre-scandal period, deputies two months after the scandal become public were more likely to sponsor/cosponsor anticorruption initiatives. For example, depuries after the Oceanografia scandal were sponsoring 0.35 more ACIs compared to the pre-scandal period. Additional analysis in the appendix replicate the analysis using a wider time window of 3 months (section A.7), finding consistent results. To provide more generalizability, models in the appendix section A.8 consider all of the major corruption scandals considered, regardless of whether they passed the scandal selection criteria. Results show that scandals had a positive effect on ACI sponsorship for all but two cases—one scandal that did not directly involve high-level politicians, and another scandal whose pre-treatment period overlaps with the post-treatment period of another scandal. Models in the appendix section A.6 include models with a binary dependent variable, finding consistent results. After each scandal (starting top left and finishing bottom right) deputies were 16, 7, 4, and 12 percent more likely to sponsor at least one ACI compared to the pre-scandal period.

Figure 2: Anticorruption sponsorship increases after high-profile corruption scandals



Note: Treatment effect estimates for OLS regressions predicting ACI sponsorship/cosponsorship (95% confidence intervals). Standard errors clustered on deputy. All specifications include unit (deputy) fixed effects.

While a recent scandal has a strong effect on ACI sponsorship, the data shows that ACI sponsorship is generally rare among deputies. The majority of deputies did not sponsor a single anticorruption initiative in the months following a major corruption scandal. The largest share of deputies sponsoring at least one ACI was after the Oceanografia scandal (23.3 percent), followed by the arrest of Rosario Robles (19.5 percent), the Panama Papers

(11.9 percent), and The Master Scam (4.9 percent). Moreover, the likelihood of ACIs becoming law after a scandal varies considerably by scandal. In the two months after the Panama Papers and Master Scam, 41.6 and 13.3 percent of initiatives became law, respectively. However, not a single initiative introduced in the two months after the Oceanografia scandal and the arrest of Rosario Robles became law.

Legislator profiles and anticorruption sponsorship

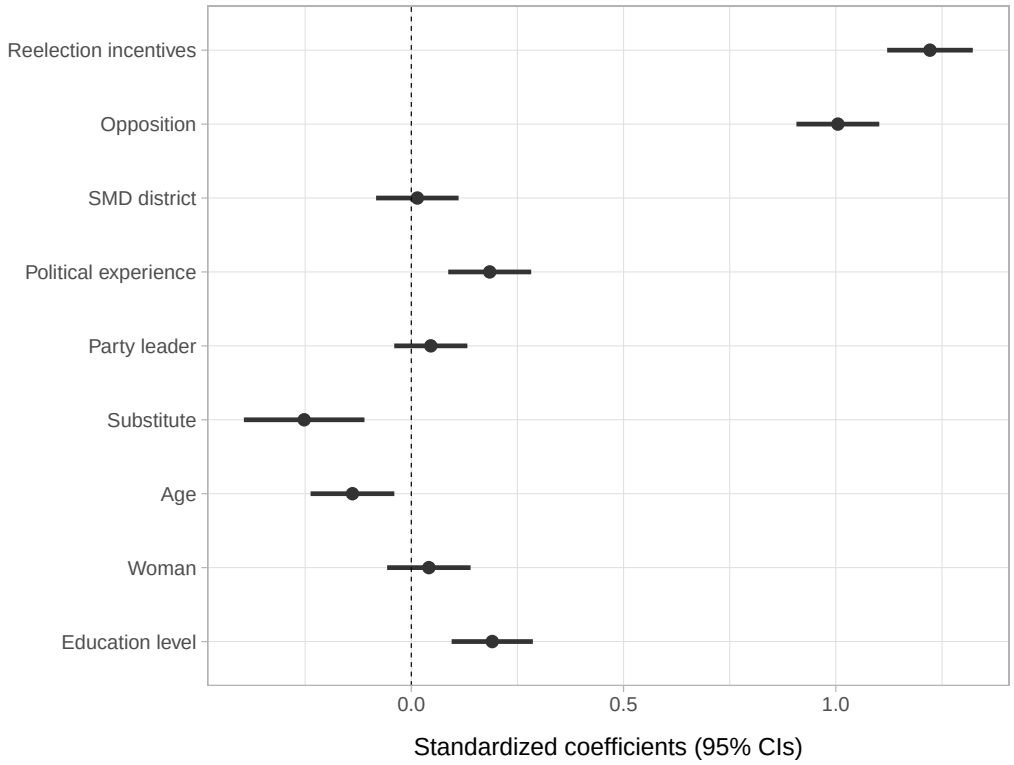
The second hypothesis expects deputies strategically positioned to reap the electoral rewards of anticorruption sponsorship—those in the opposition and with reelection incentives—to be more likely to sponsor anticorruption initiatives (H2). Figure 3 plots the standardized estimates for the models predicting ACI sponsorship/cosponsorship.[32] Estimates show that, in line with expectations, deputies with reelection incentives and those belonging to the opposition are more likely to sponsor anticorruption initiatives. Both constitute the largest effect sizes and have a larger relative importance compared to the rest of predictors. Compared to term-limited deputies, those with reelection incentives are sponsoring 2.5 more ACIs. Compared to deputies in the president's coalition, those in the opposition are sponsoring 1.3 more ACIs. In term of the standard deviation of ACI sponsorship, A +1 SD increase for *Reelection* and *Opposition* is associated to a 1.22 and 1.004 increase in sponsored anticorruption initiatives, respectively.

While correlational, this analysis can lead to insights on *which* types of deputies are likely to sponsor anticorruption initiatives. Findings show that SMD deputies are not more likely to sponsor ACIs, compared to PR deputies. Findings also show that younger deputies,

[32]Variables are transformed to have a mean of 0 and standard deviation of 1.

those with previous experience in a political office, those with higher education, and those who are not substitutes are more likely to sponsor ACIs. Models in the appendix section A.10 include negative binomial specifications, finding consistent results. Models in this section also show the results for interacting reelection incentives with opposition status, finding a strong and positive relationship.

Figure 3: Estimates for anticorruption sponsorship



Note: Standardized estimates of OLS regressions predicting ACI sponsorship (95% CI). Standard errors clustered on legislative term.

The sponsorship and legislative progress of punitive anticorruption initiatives

Next, I investigate how legislators strategically sponsor punitive anticorruption policies to reap the electoral rewards of anticorruption action without facing the consequences of the bill becoming law. Table 1 reports the results of models with legislator-ACI dyads, which predict the sponsorship of anticorruption initiatives. Column 1 predicts sponsorship with the indicator for punitive ACIs (Punitive), column 2 adds covariates, column 3 party-year fixed effects, and column 5 deputy fixed effects (full table available in appendix section A.11). In line with expectations, results show that deputies are more likely to sponsor/cosponsor punitive anticorruption policies. The relationship remains positive and significant holding legislator, party, and temporal features constant. Findings are consistent using logistic regressions and clustered standard errors on deputy (section A.10).

Table 1: Estimates for punitive anticorruption sponsorship

	Dependent variable:			
	Sponsorship			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Punitive	0.003***	0.002***	0.002**	0.003***
	(0.004)	(0.012)	(0.043)	(0.000)
Observations	237,119	180,620	180,620	237,119
Legislature FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Party-year FE	No	No	✓	No
Deputy FE	No	No	No	✓
Controls	No	✓	✓	No
R^2	0.004	0.012	0.012	0.030

Note: Estimates from linear probability models predicting the sponsorship/cosponsorship of anticorruption initiatives. Unit of analysis is a deputy-ACI dyad. Standard errors clustered on ACI reported in parenthesis. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Findings from Table 1 suggest that deputies are overall more willing to sponsor/cosponsor punitive anticorruption policies, compared to non-punitive anticorruption policies. Following the theoretical argument, this happens because punitive anticorruption policies are less likely to advance in the legislative process and become law. For that reason, they constitute an electorally profitable and low-cost strategy to signal commitment to anticorruption. The observable implications of this argument are tested with bill-level data in Table 2 and subsequent analysis. Table 2 reports the results of several models predicting the legislative progress of anticorruption initiatives. Models in columns 1-5 predict whether the initiative advances beyond the first committee and columns 6-10 whether it becomes law. Specifications vary in the extent to which they include covariates and different fixed effects specifications. Models 1-3 and 6-8 include legislative term fixed effects. Models 3 and 8 include party fixed effects to compare anticorruption initiatives within parties. Models 4 and 9 include year fixed effects to compare anticorruption initiatives within the same year. Models 5 and 10 include party-year fixed effects to compare anticorruption initiatives within party-years.

Table 2: The legislative progress of punitive anticorruption initiatives

	Dependent variable:									
	Beyond 1st committee					Becomes law				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Punitive	-0.09**	-0.09**	-0.10***	-0.07*	-0.09**	-0.06**	-0.06***	-0.07***	-0.06**	-0.06**
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)
Number of sponsors		0.00	0.00	0.00*	0.00*		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00*
		(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)		(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
All party		-0.17	-0.09	-0.18	-0.14		-0.09	-0.05	-0.10	-0.11
		(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.12)	(0.14)		(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.09)
Level		-0.06*	-0.07*	-0.05	-0.05		-0.00	-0.01	0.01	-0.02
		(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)		(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)
Political experience		0.03	0.06	0.04	0.05		0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
		(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.04)		(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)
Party leader		-0.02	-0.01	-0.01	-0.03		0.03	0.04	0.03	0.03
		(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)		(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)
Observations	460	460	460	460	460	460	460	460	460	460
Legislative term FE	✓	✓	✓	No	No	✓	✓	✓	No	No
Party FE	No	No	✓	No	No	No	No	✓	No	No
Year FE	No	No	No	✓	No	No	No	No	✓	No
Party-year FE	No	No	No	No	✓	No	No	No	No	✓
R^2	0.02	0.03	0.07	0.09	0.29	0.03	0.04	0.07	0.10	0.29

Note: Estimates from linear probability models predicting the progress of anticorruption initiatives. Unit of analysis is an individual ACI. Columns (1) to (5) predict making it beyond the first committee and columns (6) to (10) becoming law. Standard errors clustered on legislature reported in parenthesis. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Results are consistent across specifications. Overall, I find that punitive anticorruption policies are less likely to advance in the legislative process. Compared to non-punitive anticorruption policies, punitive policies are 9 percent less likely to make it beyond the first committee and 7 percent less likely to become law. Those effects sizes are meaningful in a context where the likelihood of an average initiative becoming law is low.[33]

[33]Out of the 20,285 bills introduced to the Chamber for the period of analysis, only 7.2 percent (1,465) became law.

I conduct a series of additional analyses that test extensions of H3b and underscore the robustness of the findings. First, I re-run the main models with logistic regressions, finding consistent results (appendix section A.12). Second, I explore whether punitive anticorruption policies require less effort than non-punitive policies. I argue that politicians sponsor punitive anticorruption policies because they signal strong commitment to voters, while actually being less risky and costly than one would expect. An additional implication would be testing whether the design of punitive anticorruption policies requires less legislative effort. Tables in the appendix section A.13 compare punitive and non-punitive anticorruption policies with respect to bill characteristics. Results show that, as documents, punitive anticorruption initiatives are less technical, with less effort devoted to their creation—they are shorter (lower page count), change fewer articles, and include fewer oversight and institutional measures. Third, I explore whether deputies change their strategic behavior after a scandal, when pressures for anticorruption action are stronger. Analysis in the appendix (section A.9) shows that, for most scandals, the sponsorship of non-punitive ACIs exceeds that of punitive ACIs. Even for high-profile cases that had long-lasting effects on Mexican politics, such as the *Estafa Maestra* and the arrest of Rosario Robles, deputies were not more likely to sponsor punitive anticorruption initiatives compared to the pre-scandal period. For the Oceanografia scandal, the sponsorship of non-punitive policies was higher, with deputies being twice as likely to sponsor non-punitive policies. The Panama Papers scandal is the exception, and punitive ACI sponsorship exceeds non-punitive sponsorship in the post-scandal period. These findings suggest that, while deputies are generally more willing to sponsor punitive anticorruption policies, the increased scrutiny and pressure for action that follows scandals leads them to now prefer policies with milder consequences for corruption.

Additional analyses test the extent to which the severity of sanctions and the identity of actors targeted by the policy affect the bill's legislative progress. Concerning the former, if deputies are behaving strategically with respect to the punitive content of anticorruption

initiatives, they should pay attention to the degree of severity—anticorruption policies with milder sanctions should be more likely to advance in the legislative process compared to those with severe sanctions. Appendix section A.14 details the creation of a punitive index that quantifies the degree of severity in fines, destitutions, and prison time included in anticorruption initiatives. Consistent with expectations, the likelihood of a bill advancing in the legislative process decreases considerably as punitive measures increase in severity. Across the entire range of the punitive index (0-12), the probability of a bill moving beyond the first committee decreases from 15.7 percent (0 = no punitive measures) and 12.7 (1 = lowest severity), to 0.96 percent (12 = highest severity). Models in the appendix show that the punitive framing of the initiative also matters. Since the main exploratory variable (*Punitive*) focuses on framing—whether punishing corruption was among the main objectives of the bill—interacting this measure with the punitive index allows us to explore whether the framing of the initiative impacts the bill's legislative progress at similar levels of severity. Results in the appendix section A.14 show that the likelihood of an anticorruption initiative leaving the first committee is not different between punitive and non-punitive policies when severity is low. However, framing matters as severity increases, and non-punitive initiatives with the same level of severity have a higher likelihood of leaving the first committee.

Another possibility is that the identity of the actors targeted by the anticorruption initiative matter. We would expect deputies to be less likely to support punitive policies that explicitly target public officials, compared to policies that target other actors (such as the private sector or organized crime) or those that are ambiguous over who will be subject to the bill's consequences. In line with expectations, models in the appendix section A.15 find that punitive content is associated with a lower probability of moving beyond the first committee, but only for cases when the initiative explicitly targets public officials. When the initiative includes no mention of public officials, punitive content does not change the probability of moving beyond the first committee.

Finally, it has been implicitly assumed that anticorruption initiatives are more inconvenient than other policies. However, models so far have only considered anticorruption initiatives. To test whether anticorruption initiatives are less likely to advance in the legislative process, section A.16 in the appendix considers the universe of over 20 thousand bills introduced to the Chamber between 2009-2021, comparing the progress of ACIs to that of non-ACIs. I find that, compared non-ACIs, anticorruption initiatives are less likely to advance in the legislative process, with punitive policies being even less likely to do so.

Conclusion

Anticorruption policies face challenges because the same group they mean to monitor and punish is in charge of their advancement and implementation. While scholars have underscored the lack of political incentives as the major obstacle, politicians do propose and advocate for anticorruption reform. Thus, an important and understudied question is the conditions under which they are willing to do so. I argue that politicians weigh the benefits and drawbacks of anticorruption reform, sponsoring policies that will win them votes without threatening their political careers and rents, and explore three ways in which the benefits can outweigh the costs—external changes to the status quo, legislator positioning, and type of anticorruption policy.

I leverage the first systematic data collection of anticorruption initiatives introduced to the Mexican Chamber of Deputies, the *as-if-random* timing of high-profile corruption scandals, and data on legislator profiles to examine the strategic calculus of anticorruption reform. I show that politicians are willing to sponsor anticorruption policies under the right conditions: after high-profile corruption scandals make the issue salient and when they are strategically positioned to reap electoral rewards of anticorruption action, i.e., when they belong to the opposition or have reelection incentives. Moreover, while legislators are more

likely to sponsor punitive anticorruption policies, these are less likely to advance in the legislative process compared to non-punitive policies that focus on prevention and oversight. These findings, taken together with interviews with legislators, activists, and members of the National Anticorruption System suggest that legislators in countries with high corruption and impunity sponsor highly punitive anticorruption policies to signal a credible commitment to anticorruption without fearing the consequences of implementation.

Insights from this study have major implications for anticorruption scholarship and could inform the design and advocation strategies for anticorruption policies. Results underscore that politicians seek to sponsor anticorruption policies under the right circumstances. For example, findings underscore that politicians are responsive when corruption is salient. Activists and civil society could leverage the timing of corruption scandals to advocate for anticorruption policies. Findings also underscore the strategic calculus behind the *types* of anticorruption policies advanced by legislators. While prized by voters, punitive policies are less likely to be implemented because they would highly inconvenience politicians in a country with endemic corruption. Results from the empirical analyses suggest that politicians pay attention to the severity of the penalties and whether the penalties explicitly target public officials. Anticorruption advocacy groups could work towards explaining the value of non-punitive anticorruption policies that focus on prevention, oversight, and transparency. Additionally, analyses suggest that politicians are attentive to *how* an initiative is framed. While two bills could include sanctions of similar severity, their chances of advancing in the legislative process differ if punishment is emphasized among the bill's main objectives. Punitive measures can (and should) be included. However, the chances of the bill becoming law will improve if they are not highlighted among the main objectives of the bill. Finally, awareness of the strategic use of anticorruption appeals by politicians could raise the standards of voter evaluations of these platforms and shift the conversation away from law creation and toward tackling impunity in implementation.

Future research should explore how incentives to advance anticorruption reform vary by context. For example, future research could explore the extent to which a country's levels of corruption condition the types of policies that are proposed, how electoral incentives to advance anticorruption appeals vary, and whether anticorruption sponsorship constitutes a successful electoral strategy. Research could also examine how legislators' personalized incentives or individual attributes affect their willingness to engage in anticorruption appeals. While this study provides correlational evidence of electoral incentives, researchers could leverage exogenous sources of variation in electoral rules or levels of electoral competition. Additionally, studies could explore how voters reward the sponsorship of anticorruption policies and whether they price specific anticorruption policies over others. Finally, studies could also examine whether voters are willing to hold politicians who engage in vague or misleading anticorruption appeals accountable.

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A Appendix

Contents

A.1 Data coverage for Latin America

Table 3 shows the current coverage of the ongoing data collection project of anticorruption initiatives introduced to several Latin American legislatures. Anticorruption initiatives have been collected for the countries, legislatures, and years shown in Table 3. Countries other than Mexico are undergoing data cleaning and processing.

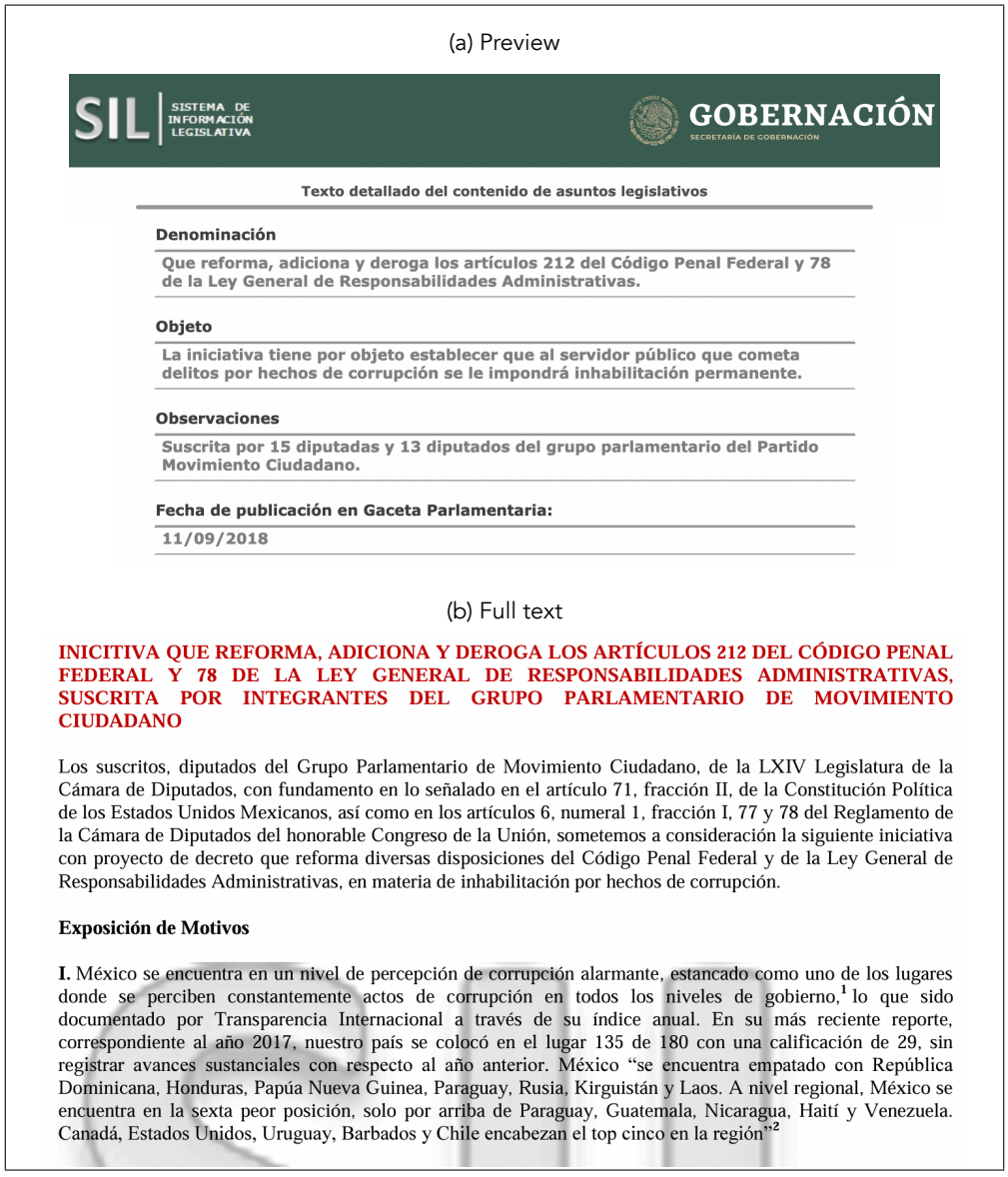
Table 3: Data collection of anticorruption initiatives in Latin America

Country	Chamber	Years	Anticorruption initiatives
Argentina	Lower	2011-2019	195
Chile	Upper and Lower	2014-2022	72
Colombia	Upper and Lower	2010-2023	45
Ecuador	Unicameral	2016-2022	34
Guatemala	Unicameral	2008-2020	22
Mexico	Lower House	2009-2021	460
Peru	Unicameral	2016-2021	166
			995

A.2 Anticorruption initiative example

As an example, panel (a) of Figure 4 shows the preview text with a summary of the objective of the initiative and panel (b) the first page of the full text. The initiative shown (No. 6815, LXIV legislature) permanently bars public officials that commit crimes related to corruption from holding any public office.

Figure 4: Source document example



(a) Preview

SIL | SISTEMA DE INFORMACIÓN LEGISLATIVA — GOBERNACIÓN, SECRETARÍA DE GOBERNACIÓN

Texto detallado del contenido de asuntos legislativos

Denominación

Que reforma, adiciona y deroga los artículos 212 del Código Penal Federal y 78 de la Ley General de Responsabilidades Administrativas.

Objeto

La iniciativa tiene por objeto establecer que al servidor público que cometa delitos por hechos de corrupción se le impondrá inhabilitación permanente.

Observaciones

Suscrita por 15 diputadas y 13 diputados del grupo parlamentario del Partido Movimiento Ciudadano.

Fecha de publicación en Gaceta Parlamentaria:

11/09/2018

(b) Full text

INICITIVA QUE REFORMA, ADICIONA Y DEROGA LOS ARTÍCULOS 212 DEL CÓDIGO PENAL FEDERAL Y 78 DE LA LEY GENERAL DE RESPONSABILIDADES ADMINISTRATIVAS, SUSCRITA POR INTEGRANTES DEL GRUPO PARLAMENTARIO DE MOVIMIENTO CIUDADANO

Los suscritos, diputados del Grupo Parlamentario de Movimiento Ciudadano, de la LXIV Legislatura de la Cámara de Diputados, con fundamento en lo señalado en el artículo 71, fracción II, de la Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos, así como en los artículos 6, numeral 1, fracción I, 77 y 78 del Reglamento de la Cámara de Diputados del honorable Congreso de la Unión, sometemos a consideración la siguiente iniciativa con proyecto de decreto que reforma diversas disposiciones del Código Penal Federal y de la Ley General de Responsabilidades Administrativas, en materia de inhabilitación por hechos de corrupción.

Exposición de Motivos

I. México se encuentra en un nivel de percepción de corrupción alarmante, estancado como uno de los lugares donde se perciben constantemente actos de corrupción en todos los niveles de gobierno,[1] lo que sido documentado por Transparencia Internacional a través de su índice anual. En su más reciente reporte, correspondiente al año 2017, nuestro país se colocó en el lugar 135 de 180 con una calificación de 29, sin registrar avances sustanciales con respecto al año anterior. México "se encuentra empatado con República Dominicana, Honduras, Papúa Nueva Guinea, Paraguay, Rusia, Kirguistán y Laos. A nivel regional, México se encuentra en la sexta peor posición, solo por arriba de Paraguay, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Haití y Venezuela. Canadá, Estados Unidos, Uruguay, Barbados y Chile encabezan el top cinco en la región"[2]

A.3 Anticorruption dictionary

Table 4 shows the key words used to identify preliminary samples of anticorruption intiatives across Latin American countries. The dictionary was devised by (Guajardo, 2024).

Table 4: Anticorruption dictionary

English	Spanish (original text)
Corruption	Corrupcion|corrupcion|Corrupción|corrupción|Corrupt*|corrupt*
Anticorruption	Anti-corrupcion|anti-corrupcion|Anti-corrupción|anti-corrupción|Anticorrupción|anticorrupción
Transparency	Transparencia|transparencia
Impunity	Impunidad|impunidad
Opacity	Opacidad|opacidad
Bribery	Soborno*|soborno*|Soborna*|soborna*|Mordida|mordida
Audit	Auditor*|auditor*
Irregularity	Irregularidad*|irregularidad*
Influence peddling	Tráfico de influencia*|tráfico de influencia*
Nepotism	Nepotismo|nepotismo
Clientelism	Clientelismo|clientelismo
Vote buying	Compra de voto*|compra de voto
Fraud	Fraude|fraude
Illegitimate	Ilegítimo|ilegítimo
Blackmail	Chantaje|chantaje
Embezzling	Malversación|malversación|desvio|desvío|desvio de recursos|peculado
Cronyism	Compadrazgo|compadrazgo
Co-opt	Cooptación|cooptación|Cooptar|cooptar
Money laundering	Lavado de dinero|lavado de dinero
Offshore	Offshore|offshore
Shell companies	Empresas fantasma|empresas fantasma|empresa fantasma|Empresa fantasma
Sanctions	Sanciones|sanciones|Sanción|sanción|Sancionar|sancionar
Gifts	Regal*

A.4 Scandal criteria

Table 5 shows the results of the selection criteria used to choose the high-profile corruption scandals used in the analyses for H1. Annual compendiums of corruption scandals developed by investigative journalists were consulted to identify the most important corruption scandals in recent Mexican history.[34] Only high-impact scandals with a google trends interest measure over 25 in the month of release were included.[35] Four scandals met all of the criteria: 4, 7, 8, and 10. Overall, all of the scandals considered received wide coverage from national and international media and high levels of internet interest the month the scandal broke out.[36] Most scandals involved high-profile politicians, with the exception of the Walmart bribery scandal. The key defining factor was the time window of previous high-profile corruption scandals. Only five cases did not present a high-profile scandal in the previous year.

Table 5: High-profile corruption scandal selection criteria

Scandal	Date	National media	International media	Google trends (scandal month)	Year gap	High-level politicians
1) Walmart bribery	Apr-2012	✓	✓	100	✓	No
2) Tomas Yarrington scandal	May-2012	✓	✓	59	No	✓
3) Elba Esther Gordillo arrested	Feb-2013	✓	✓	100	No	✓
4) Oceanografia scandal	Feb-2014	✓	✓	100	✓	✓
5) Ayotzinapa (43 students)	Sep-2014	✓	✓	53	No	✓
6) Peña Nieto's White House	Nov-2014	✓	✓	100	No	✓
7) Panama Papers	Apr-2016	✓	✓	100	✓	✓
8) Estafa Maestra	Sep-2017	✓	✓	48	✓	✓
9) Ricardo Anaya illicit enrichment	Feb-2018	✓	✓	100	No	✓
10) Rosario Robles' arrest	Aug-2019	✓	✓	100	✓	✓
11) Emilio Lozoya's arrest	Feb-2020	✓	✓	61	No	✓
12) Cesar Duarte detained in Miami	Jul-2020	✓	✓	100	No	✓

[34] See MCCI.

[35] This leads to the exclusion of some prominent cases such as the Odebrecht case, with a score of 13. In December 2016 the United States government first linked Mexico to the transnational bribery scandal. However, the case did not gain meaningful attention until Emilio Lozoya was tied to the scandal.

[36] Google trends' interest measure reflects how popular a search interest is, relative to other points in time. A value 100 indicates reaching the maximum popularity for a specific time period.

Corruption scandals:

1. In April 21st 2012, the New York Times published an article that revealed that Walmart paid up to 24 million USD in bribes to ensure dominance in the Mexican market. These schemes targetted mostly low level politicians (mayors and city council members) and bureaucrats (NYT 2012).

2. US prosecutors reveal that Tomas Yarrington (former governor of Tamaulipas) accepted bribes from organized crime (CBS News 2012).

3. Sindicate leader Elba Esther Gordillo is charged with organized crime and embezzling 200 million dollars (NYT 2013).

4. The Attorney General's Office uncovered a fraud by Oceanografia, a contracting firm of Mexico's publicly owned petroleum company. Investigations revealed a fraud against Citigroup for over 400 million dollars (Forbes 2014).

5. On September 26 2014, 43 students that travelled to Iguala (Guerrero) to allegedly protest a political event related to the current governor's wife and her plans to run for office. The students were never seen again. This case was widely publicized and received considerable international attention since the disappearances exposed collusion between high-profile politicians in state government, police forces, and organized crime (NYT 2022).

6. An investigation reveals that a million dollar mansion used by president Enrique Peña Nieto's family is owned by a government contractor (The Guardian 2014).

7. Panama Papers implicate several high-profile Mexican politicians and businessmen (Expansion 2016).

8. Investigations by *Animal Politico* uncovered a network of 128 shell companies through which the government diverted over 400 million dollars (Animal Politico).

9. Presidential candidate from PAN, Ricardo Anaya, is accused of illicit enrichment (Reuters 2018).

10. Former minister of social development Rosario Robles is arrested for diverting over 250 million USD from public funds (OCCRP 2018).

11. Emilio Lozoya, former head of Mexico's publicly owned oils company (Pemex), is detained in Malaga, Spain. Lozoya had so far been on the run, after being charged with receiving bribes from Odebrecht (The Wall Street Journal 2020).

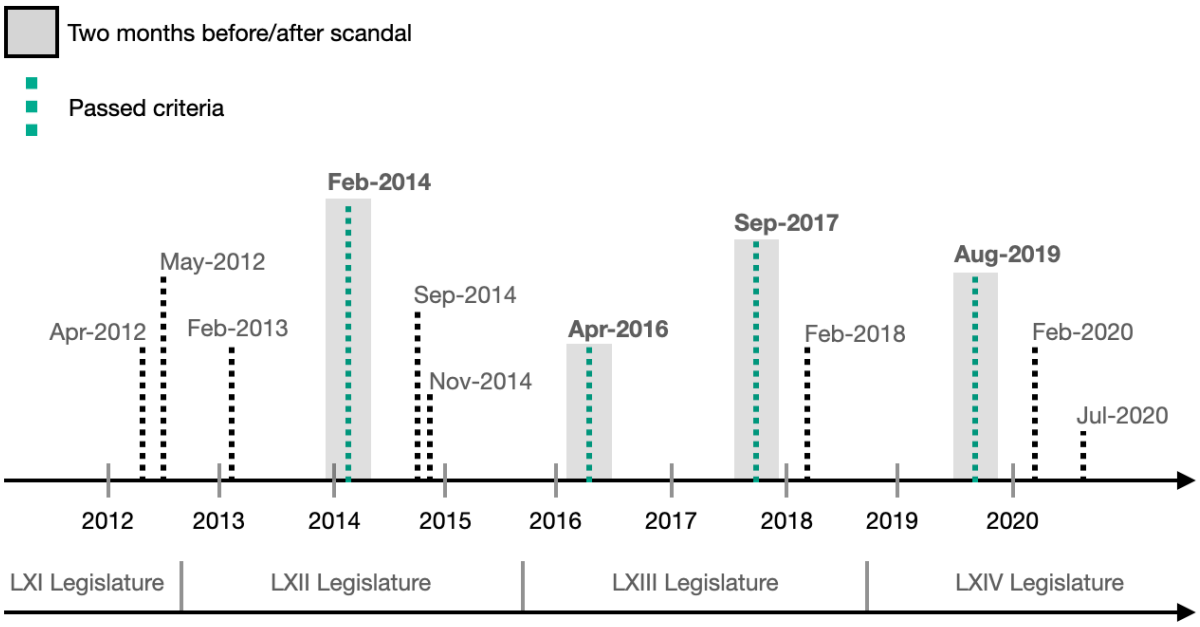
12. Cesar Duarte, fugitive former governor of Coahuila accussed of embezling public funds, is detained in Miami (BBC 2020).

Table 6 shows the period of time considered in the two months before and after each of the four high-profile corruption scandals. For each scandal, I create a unique dataset where the unit of analysis is a legislator before and after the scandal. Figure 5 shows a timeline for all of the corruption scandals. Those that passed the criteria are shown in light blue and the two month time window before and after the day the scandal broke out are shaded in light gray.

Table 6: Time windows before/after scandals

Scandal	Pre-scandal	Post-scandal
Oceanografia	12/11/2013 - 02/10/2014	02/11/2014 - 04/11/2014
Panama Papers	02/03/2016 - 04/02/2016	04/03/2016 - 06/03/2016
Master Scam	07/05/2017 - 09/04/2017	09/05/2017 - 11/05/2017
Arrest of Rosario Robles	06/13/2019 - 08/12/2019	08/13/2019 - 10/13/2019

Figure 5: High-profile corruption scandal timeline



A.5 Summary statistics

Table 7 shows the summary statistics for the models in Figure 2. I created a dataset for each scandal, where the unit of analysis is a deputy in the two months before and after the scandal (*Post-scandal*). The outcome variables are the count variables for anticorruption initiatives sponsored/cosponsored (ACI), with indicators for the punitive and non-punitve ACIs.

Table 7: Summary statistics for corruption scandal analysis (H1)

		Oceanografia scandal			
Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
ACI	1,060	0.261	0.739	0	3
Punitive ACI	1,060	0.103	0.307	0	2
Non-punitive ACI	1,060	0.158	0.457	0	2
Post-scandal	1,060	0.500	0.500	0	1
		Panama papers			
Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
ACI	1,052	0.069	0.262	0	2
Punitive ACI	1,052	0.041	0.198	0	1
Non-punitive ACI	1,052	0.029	0.178	0	2
Post-scandal	1,052	0.500	0.500	0	1
		Estafa Maestra scandal			
Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
ACI	1,052	0.033	0.222	0	3
Punitive ACI	1,052	0.007	0.102	0	2
Non-punitive ACI	1,052	0.027	0.198	0	3
Post-scandal	1,052	0.500	0.500	0	1
		Arrest of Rosario Robles			
Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
ACI	1,024	0.117	0.337	0	2
Punitive ACI	1,024	0.015	0.128	0	2
Non-punitive ACI	1,024	0.103	0.316	0	2
Post-scandal	1,024	0.500	0.500	0	1

Table 8 shows the summary statistics for the models in Figure 3. For these models, the unit of analysis is a deputy, the outcome variables are the counts of anticorruption initiatives sponsored/cosponsored (ACI), and the main explanatory variables are binary measures for reelection incentives (*Reelection incentives*) and opposition membership (*Opposition*). Other variables in the dataset are the district type (SMD vs PR), political experience (whether the deputy held a prior elective office such as governor, mayor, or legislator), whether the deputy is a party leader (president of the Chamber or parliamentary coordinator), whether the deputy is a substitute, gender of the deputy, educational attainment,[37] and age.

Table 8: Summary statistics for legislator-level analysis (H2)

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
ACI	2,071	1.314	2.372	0	16
Punitive ACI	2,071	0.447	0.915	0	5
Reelection incentives	2,071	0.247	0.432	0	1
Opposition member	2,071	0.535	0.499	0	1
SMD district	2,071	0.598	0.490	0	1
Political experience	2,071	0.431	0.495	0	1
Party leader	2,071	0.026	0.159	0	1
Substitute	2,071	0.133	0.339	0	1
Woman	2,071	0.408	0.492	0	1
Education level	1,906	5.973	1.038	1	7
Age	1,736	46.559	10.439	21	85

[37] Range of 1-7, where 1 = Elementary, 2 = Secondary, 3 = High school, 4 = Technical/vocational school, 5 = Incomplete undegraduate, 6 = Undegraduate, 7 = Graduate.

Table 9 shows the summary statistics for the models in Table 1. For these models, the unit of analysis is a deputy-ACI dyad in a legislative term. Section A.8 details the number of legislators and ACIs per legislative term. The outcome variable is binary for whether the deputy sponsored/cosponsored the ACI in question (0/1).

Table 9: Summary statistics for legislator-ACI dyad analysis (H3a)

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Sponsorship	237,119	0.012	0.107	0	1
Punitive ACI	237,119	0.266	0.442	0	1
Opposition member	237,119	0.498	0.500	0	1
SMD district	237,119	0.598	0.490	0	1
Political experience	237,119	0.416	0.493	0	1
Party leader	237,119	0.027	0.162	0	1
Substitute	237,119	0.128	0.334	0	1
Age	189,408	3.130	1.086	1	6
Woman	237,119	0.427	0.495	0	1
Education level	219,192	5.979	1.055	1	7

Table 10 shows the summary statistics for the models in Table 2. For these models, the unit of analysis is ACI-level (bill-level). Variables in this dataset are bill and sponsor characteristics: whether the bill eventually became law (0/1) or moved beyond the first committee (0/1), number of sponsors for the bill, cases where all of the party sponsored the initiative (0/1), coordination level (1 = Congressional rules, 2 = Secondary law, 3 = Constitutional reform), whether the bill includes oversight or institutional measures (see definitions in section A.10), whether the bill includes fines (0/1), prison (0/1), destitutions (0/1), or unspecified sanctions (0/1), whether the initiative's consequences do not target a public official (0/1), and a punitive index and measures for the severity of sanctions (see details in section A.11).

Table 10: Summary statistics for bill-level analysis (H3b)

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Becomes law	460	0.054	0.227	0	1
Beyond 1st committee	460	0.139	0.346	0	1
Punitive ACI	460	0.270	0.444	0	1
Number of sponsors	460	6.074	22.287	1	252
All party	460	0.052	0.223	0	1
Political experience	460	0.559	0.497	0	1
Party leader	460	0.096	0.294	0	1
Coordination level	460	2.193	0.457	1	3
Oversight measures	460	0.422	0.494	0	1
Institutional measures	460	0.609	0.489	0	1
Fines	460	0.189	0.392	0	1
Prison	460	0.126	0.332	0	1
Destitutions	460	0.167	0.374	0	1
Unspecified sanctions	460	0.124	0.330	0	1
Public officials not targeted	460	0.504	0.501	0	1
Punitive index	460	1.213	2.587	0	12
Fine severity	460	0.489	1.271	0	6
Destitution severity	460	0.376	1.087	0	6
Prison severity	460	0.348	1.025	0	6

A.6 Scandal models (full table)

Table 11 reports the full results of models in Figure 2 of the main paper and Table 12 replicates them using a binary version of the dependent variable (0 = No ACIs sponsored/cosponsored, and 1 = at least one). Overall, results show that deputies after scandals are more likely to sponsor ACIs compared to the pre-scandal period.

Table 11: High-profile scandals and anticorruption sponsorship

	Dependent variable:			
	Oceanografia scandal	Panama papers	Estafa Maestra	Rosario Robles
	ACI	ACI	ACI	ACI
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Post-scandal	0.35***	0.07***	0.04***	0.12***
	(0.03)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Observations	1,060	1,052	1,052	1,024
Deputy FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.55	0.53	0.53	0.58

Note: Estimates from OLS regressions predicting anticorruption bill sponsorship. Standard errors clustered on deputy reported in parenthesis. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 12: High-profile scandals and anticorruption sponsorship (binary outcome)

	Dependent variable:			
	Oceanografia scandal	Panama papers	Estafa Maestra	Rosario Robles
	ACI	ACI	ACI	ACI
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Post-scandal	0.16***	0.07***	0.03***	0.12***
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Observations	1,060	1,052	1,052	1,024
Deputy FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.55	0.53	0.53	0.58

Note: Estimates from OLS regressions predicting a binary measure for at least 1 anticorruption bill sponsored. Standard errors clustered on deputy reported in parenthesis. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

A.7 Scandal models (3 month time windows)

Table 13 reports the estimates of models replicating the analysis in Figure 2 of the main paper with 3 month time windows, finding consistent results. Table 14 distinguishes between puntitive and non-punitive ACIs, finding that deputies after scandals are more likely to focus on non-punitive sponsorship.

Table 13: High-profile scandals and anticorruption sponsorship

	Dependent variable:			
	Oceanografia scandal	Panama papers	Estafa Maestra	Rosario Robles
	ACI	ACI	ACI	ACI
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Post-scandal	0.36***	0.05***	0.05***	0.12***
	(0.03)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Observations	1,060	1,052	1,052	1,024
Deputy FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.55	0.54	0.53	0.58

Note: Estimates from OLS regressions predicting anticorruption bill sponsorship. Standard errors clustered on deputy reported in parenthesis. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 14: High-profile scandals and anticorruption sponsorship

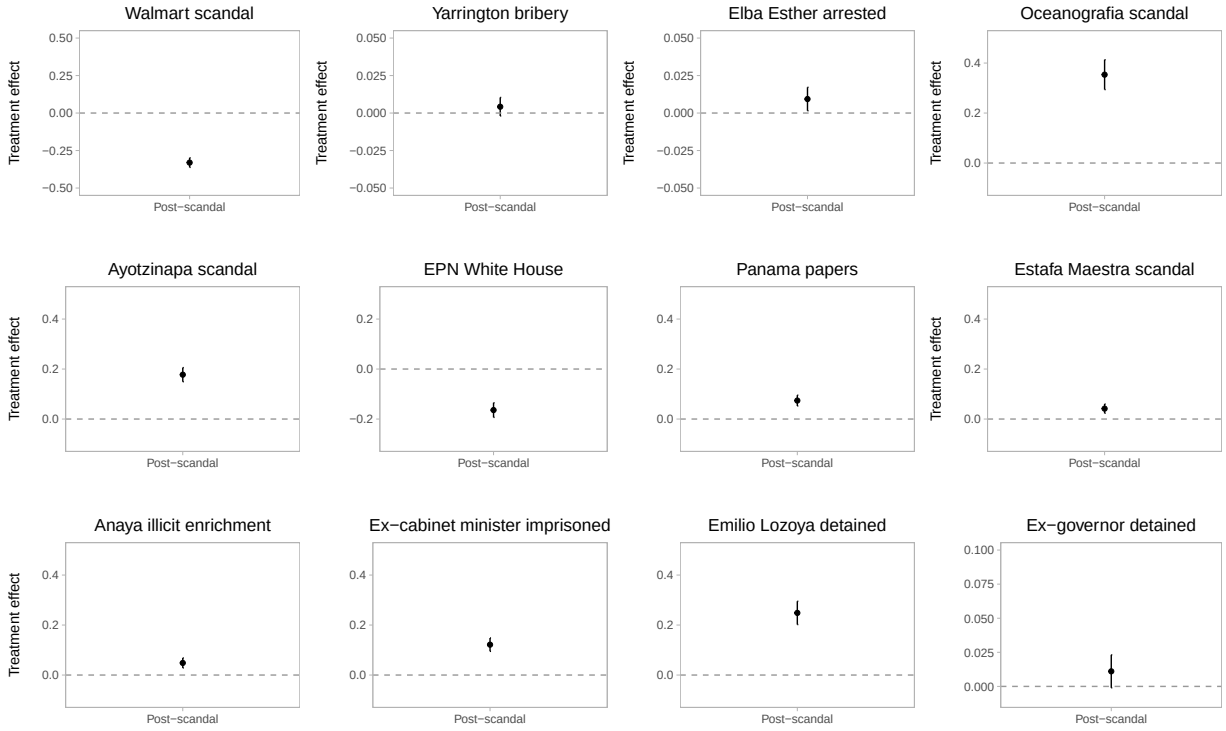
	Dependent variable:							
	Oceanografia scandal		Panama papers		Estafa Maestra		Rosario Robles	
	Punitive	Non-punitive	Punitive	Non-punitive	Punitive	Non-punitive	Punitive	Non-punitive
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Post-scandal	0.14***	0.21***	0.06***	-0.01	0.01*	0.04***	-0.01	0.13***
	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Observations	1,060	1,060	1,052	1,052	1,052	1,052	1,024	1,024
Deputy FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.56	0.55	0.52	0.59	0.50	0.53	0.55	0.59

Note: Estimates from linear probability models predicting punitive and non-punitive anticorruption bill sponsorship. Standard errors clustered on deputy reported in parenthesis. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

A.8 Scandal models (all scandals)

Figure 6 shows the treatment effects for the analysis considering all of the 12 major corruption scandals reported in Table 5. Results show that the vast majority of scandals had a higher likelihood of ACI sponsorship post scandal. Two cases were the exception: 1) the Walmart scandal, which was the only scandal to not directly involve high-level politicians, and 2) the White House of president Enrique Peña Nieto, which whose pre-treatment period overlaps with the post-treatment period of the Ayotzinapa scandal.

Figure 6: Anticorruption sponsorship in the aftermath of all high-profile corruption scandals

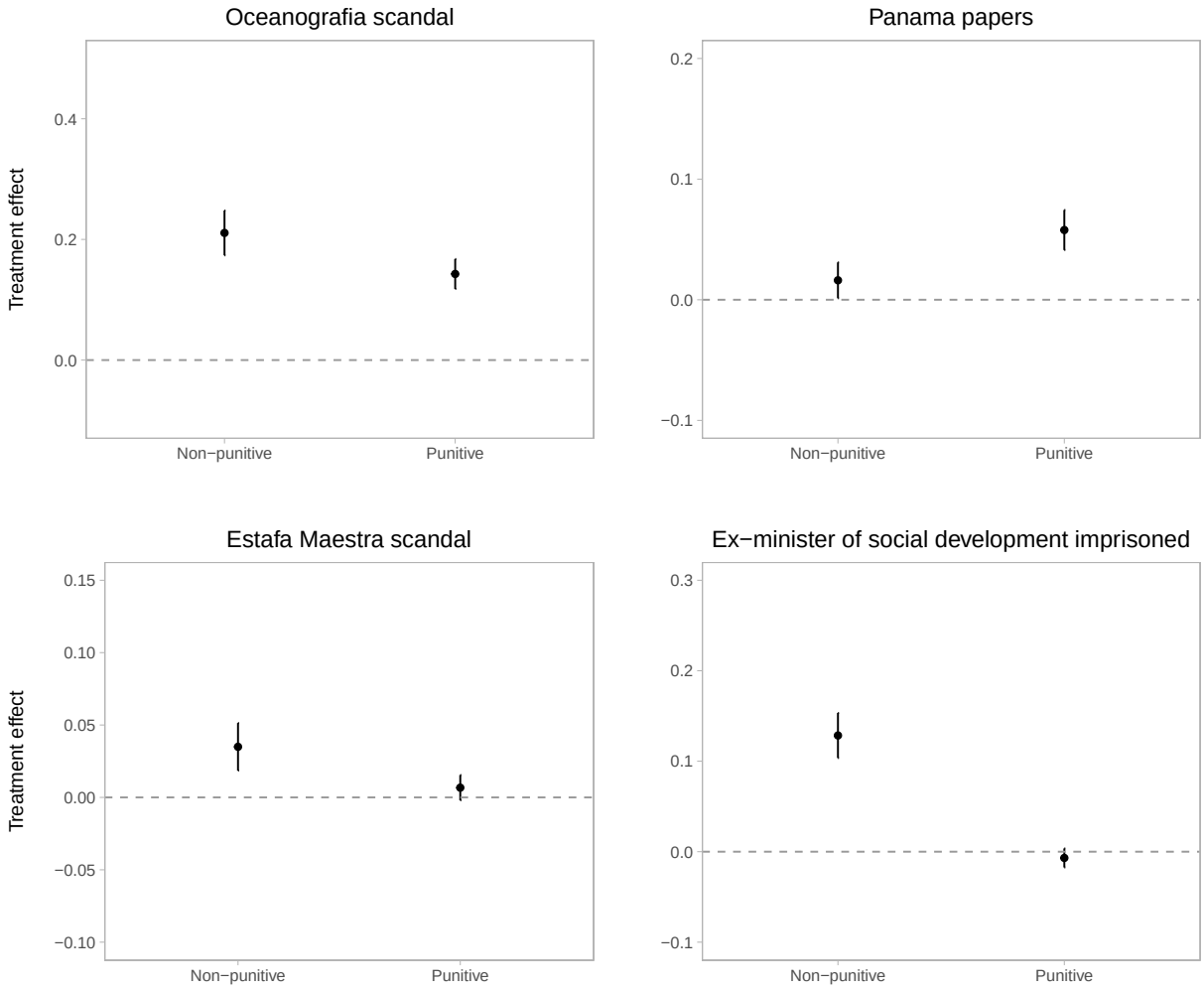


Note: Treatment effect estimates for OLS regressions predicting punitive and non-punitive ACI sponsorship (95% confidence intervals). Standard errors clustered on deputy. All specifications include unit (deputy) fixed effects.

A.9 Scandal models (non-punitive vs punitive ACIs)

Figure 5 and Table 13 report the estimates of models replicating the corruption scandal analysis from H1 with punitive and non-punitive ACIs as outcome variables. After scandals, deputies are more likely to focus on non-punitive sponsorship.

Figure 7: Anticorruption sponsorship increases after high-profile corruption scandals



Note: Treatment effect estimates for OLS regressions predicting punitive and non-punitive ACI sponsorship (95% confidence intervals). Standard errors clustered on deputy. All specifications include unit (deputy) fixed effects.

A.10 Anticorruption sponsorship (full tables)

Table 15 shows the full results for models predicting ACI sponsorship (H2). Columns 4 and 9 were used to create Figure 3 in the main text. Table 16 shows model results with negative binomial specifications, finding consistent results.

Table 15: Anticorruption sponsorship

	ACIs				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Reelection	2.53***	2.56***	2.83***	2.89***	1.31***
	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.12)	(0.04)
Opposition	1.36***	1.35***	0.73***	1.44***	1.49***
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Reelection X Opposition			2.67***		
			(0.14)		
Reelection X SMD		-0.23			
		(0.15)			
SMD	0.03	0.08	0.08	-0.02	-0.00
	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Political experience				0.34***	0.35***
				(0.10)	(0.10)
Age				-0.13***	-0.14***
				(0.05)	(0.05)
Woman				0.09	0.06
				(0.10)	(0.10)
Education level				0.19***	0.17***
				(0.05)	(0.05)
Constant	0.62***	0.61***	0.69***	-0.51	-0.78**
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.35)	(0.35)
Observations	2,071	2,071	2,071	1,648	1,648
Legislature FE	No	No	No	No	✓
R^2	0.30	0.30	0.41	0.36	0.38

Note: Estimates from OLS regressions predicting anticorruption bill sponsorship. Standard errors clustered on legislative term reported in parenthesis. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 16: Anticorruption sponsorship (negative binomial models)

	ACIs				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Reelection	1.64***	1.63***	1.68***	1.63***	2.43***
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Opposition	1.22***	1.22***	1.29***	1.24***	
	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Reelection X Opposition			-0.12		
			(0.09)		
Reelection X SMD		0.09			
		(0.08)			
SMD	0.02	-0.02	0.02	0.02	0.07*
	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)
Political experience				0.09	0.10*
				(0.06)	(0.06)
Party leaders				0.27**	0.22*
				(0.14)	(0.13)
Substitute				-0.41***	-0.36***
				(0.11)	(0.10)
Age				-0.04	-0.04
				(0.03)	(0.03)
Woman				0.02	0.00
				(0.06)	(0.06)
Education level				0.09***	0.09***
				(0.03)	(0.03)
Constant	-0.69***	-0.69***	-0.72***	-1.33***	-1.66***
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.22)	(0.22)
Observations	2,071	2,071	2,071	1,648	1,648
θ	2.19***	2.20***	2.19***	3.07***	4.11***
Akaike Inf. Crit.	5,423.95	5,424.74	5,424.22	4,339.68	4,227.78

Note: Estimates from negative binomial models predicting anticorruption bill sponsorship. Standard errors clustered on legislative term reported in parenthesis. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

A.11 Legislator-ACI dyad analysis (additional tables)

The analysis in Table 1 uses deputy-ACI dyads. For each deputy in a legislative term, I created pair with all of the ACIs introduced in said legislative term. For example for LXI, 503 deputies X 61 ACIs led to 30,683 deputy-ACI dyads. Table 18 shows the full results for Table 1 in the main paper, 19 the same models with logistic regressions, and 20 models with clustered standard errors on deputy.

Table 17: Dyadic data

Legislature	Legislators	ACIs	Dyads
LXI (2009-2012)	503	61	30,683
LXII (2012-2015)	530	81	42,930
LXIII (2015-2018)	526	159	83,634
LXIV (2018-2021)	512	156	79,872
			237,119

Table 18: Estimates for punitive anticorruption sponsorship

	Dependent variable:			
	Sponsored			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Punitive	0.003***	0.002***	0.003***	0.002**
	(0.000)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.000)
Opposition		0.019***	0.019***	
		(0.001)	(0.001)	
SMD district		0.001**	0.001**	
		(0.001)	(0.001)	
Political experience		0.003***	0.003***	
		(0.001)	(0.001)	
Party leader		0.002	0.002	
		(0.001)	(0.001)	
Substitute		-0.007***	-0.007***	
		(0.001)	(0.001)	
Age		-0.001***	-0.001***	
		(0.000)	(0.000)	
Woman		0.000	0.000	
		(0.001)	(0.001)	
Education level		0.001***	0.001***	
		(0.000)	(0.000)	
Observations	237,119	180,620	180,620	237,119
Legislature FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Party-year FE	No	No	✓	No
Legislator FE	No	No	No	✓
Controls	No	✓	✓	No
R^2	0.004	0.012	0.012	0.030

Note: Estimates from linear probability models predicting the sponsorship/cosponsorship of anticorruption initiatives. Unit of analysis is a deputy-ACI dyad. Standard errors clustered on ACI reported in parenthesis. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 19: Estimates for punitive anticorruption sponsorship (logistic models)

	Dependent variable:			
	Sponsored			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Punitive	0.275***	0.187***	0.134***	X
	(0.041)	(0.046)	(0.001)	(0.0XX)
Opposition		1.822***	3.135***	
		(0.060)	(0.002)	
SMD district		0.150***	0.017***	
		(0.044)	(0.001)	
Political experience		0.088*	0.114***	
		(0.044)	(0.001)	
Party leader		0.081	0.311***	
		(0.095)	(0.001)	
Substitute		-0.631***	-0.504***	
		(0.131)	(0.001)	
Age		-0.056**	-0.008***	
		(0.021)	(0.000)	
Woman		0.018	0.013***	
		(0.045)	(0.001)	
Education level		0.084***	0.072***	
		(0.023)	(0.000)	
Observations	237,119	180,620	180,620	237,119
Legislature FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Party-year FE	No	No	✓	No
Legislator FE	No	No	No	✓
Controls	No	✓	✓	No
Log Likelihood	-14,418.160	-11,143.000	-9,597.968	

Note: Estimates from logistic regressions predicting the sponsorship/cosponsorship of anti-corruption initiatives. Unit of analysis is a deputy-ACI dyad. Standard errors clustered on ACI reported in parenthesis. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 20: Estimates for punitive anticorruption sponsorship (CSE on deputy)

	Dependent variable:			
	Sponsored			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Punitive	0.003***	0.002***	0.002***	0.003***
	(0.000)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.000)
Opposition		0.019***	0.019***	
		(0.001)	(0.002)	
SMD district		0.001**	0.001*	
		(0.001)	(0.001)	
Political experience		0.003***	0.003***	
		(0.001)	(0.001)	
Party leader		0.002	0.002	
		(0.001)	(0.001)	
Substitute		-0.007***	-0.007***	
		(0.001)	(0.001)	
Age		-0.001***	-0.001***	
		(0.000)	(0.000)	
Woman		0.000	0.000	
		(0.001)	(0.001)	
Education level		0.001***	0.001***	
		(0.000)	(0.000)	
Observations	237,119	180,620	180,620	237,119
Legislature FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Party-year FE	No	No	✓	No
Legislator FE	No	No	No	✓
Controls	No	✓	✓	No
R^2	0.004	0.012	0.012	0.030

Note: Estimates from linear probability models predicting the sponsorship/cosponsorship of anticorruption initiatives. Unit of analysis is a deputy-ACI dyad. Standard errors clustered on deputy reported in parenthesis. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

A.12 Legislative progress of ACIs (additional tables)

Table 21 replicates results from 2 with logistic regressions, finding consistent results.

Table 21: The legislative progress of punitive anticorruption initiatives

	Dependent variable:									
	Beyond 1st committee					Becomes law				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Punitive	-0.91**	-0.93**	-1.09***	-0.70*	-1.19**	-2.20**	-2.71**	-2.71**	-2.14**	-1.91*
	(0.38)	(0.39)	(0.40)	(0.39)	(0.52)	(1.03)	(1.28)	(1.24)	(1.05)	(1.11)
Number of sponsors		0.02*	0.01	0.03**	0.03		0.03**	0.03*	0.09***	0.14***
		(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)		(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.05)
All party		-1.68	-0.70	-2.37	-1.41		-3.46	-2.80	-7.77**	-11.49**
		(1.23)	(1.24)	(1.49)	(2.04)		(2.47)	(2.57)	(3.47)	(5.16)
Political experience		0.30	0.50	0.32	0.68*		0.18	0.14	0.33	0.78
		(0.29)	(0.32)	(0.30)	(0.40)		(0.46)	(0.50)	(0.49)	(0.66)
Party leader		-0.14	-0.07	-0.07	-0.16		0.42	0.89	0.08	-0.21
		(0.50)	(0.52)	(0.51)	(0.66)		(0.64)	(0.71)	(0.73)	(1.11)
Level		-0.57*	-0.63*	-0.45	-0.48		0.01	-0.30	0.21	-0.41
		(0.32)	(0.34)	(0.34)	(0.43)		(0.48)	(0.49)	(0.53)	(0.64)
Constant	-2.24***	-1.17	-14.18	-16.39	-18.16	-19.24	-20.08	-19.08	-20.63	-20.48
	(0.47)	(0.89)	(714.98)	(1,599.30)	(10,754.01)	(1,337.39)	(1,233.01)	(5,156.81)	(6,862.31)	(29,232.46)
Observations	460	460	460	460	460	460	460	460	460	460
Legislative term FE	✓	✓	✓	No	No	✓	✓	✓	No	No
Party FE	No	No	✓	No	No	No	No	✓	No	No
Year FE	No	No	No	✓	No	No	No	No	✓	No
Party-year FE	No	No	No	No	✓	No	No	No	No	✓
Log Likelihood	-180.50	-177.10	-169.32	-164.23	-118.49	-86.51	-84.03	-76.78	-72.29	-46.38
Akaike Inf. Crit.	371.01	374.21	378.64	366.46	438.99	183.02	188.06	193.55	182.58	294.76

Note: Estimates from logistic regression models predicting the progress of anticorruption initiatives. Columns 1-5 predict making it beyond the first committee and columns 6-10 becoming law. Standard errors clustered on legislature reported in parenthesis. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

A.13 Punitive vs non-punitive bills

Table 22 uses t-tests to compare the characteristics of punitive and non-punitive anticorruption policies. I find that punitive anticorruption policies tend to imply less effort in their development (number of pages), attempt to change less of the status quo (number of articles) and are less likely to include oversight and institutional design features.

Table 22: Punitive anticorruption policies require less effort and are less programmatic

	Punitive	Non-punitive	p-value
Oversight measures*	0.056	0.554	0.000
Institutional measures**	0.137	0.781	0.000
Number of pages	7.210	10.216	0.000
Articles changed	4.435	9.180	0.001
Coordination level	2.210	2.189	0.640
N	124	336	

* Improvements in transparency or monitoring. Ex. transparency requirements for government agencies, open government, expanding the role and capacities of auditors.

** Initiative creates new institutions, aims to empower existing ones, clarifies their responsibilities, or introduces changes to rules and/or procedures to improve their effectiveness.

A.14 Severity of the punitive measures (punitive index)

I created an index that categorized the severity of the punitive measures in an anticorruption initiative (*punitive index*) using the coding scheme in Table 23. Three variables—fines, destitutions, and prison—are created using the largest penalty included in the initiative.[38] All categorical variables range from 0 (no punitive action) to 6 (maximum severity). Figure 8 shows the distributions of the categorical measures and the additive index (*punitive index*) that is created. The range of the index is 0-12, where 0 is no punitive actions, low values indicate moderate severity, and higher values indicate more severity.

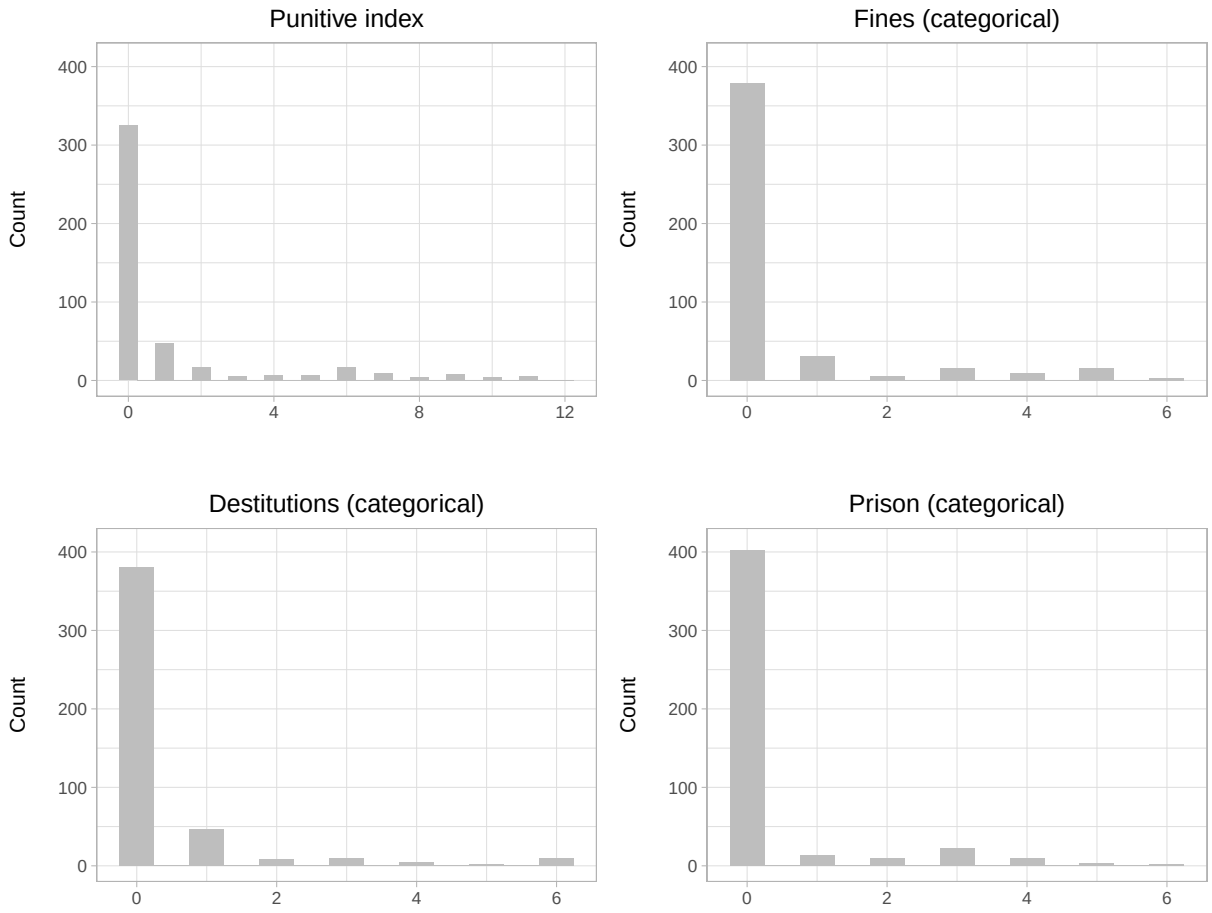
Table 23: Coding categorical punitive measures

	Fines	Destitutions	Prison
0	None	None	None
1	Unspecified*	Less than 1 year**	Less than 1 year***
2	10-100	1-5	1-5
3	101-500	6-10	6-10
4	501-1000	11-15	11-15
5	1001-10,000	16-20	16-20
6	10,0001+	21+	21+

Notes: Fines are in terms of minimum wage days, destitutions and prison in years.
* Unspecified or not quantifiable, ex. quantity depends on size of embezzled funds
** Unspecified or not quantifiable, ex. losses of immunity
*** Unspecified or not quantifiable, ex. preventative prison

[38] Initiatives often include a range of punishment depending on the type of offense and the severity of the crime. For those cases, the largest value is used. Ex. If the initiative increases prison time for public officials that embezzle public funds and the punishment varies between 5 and 10 years, "10" years are considered and *prison* is coded as "3."

Figure 8: Distribution of punitive index and categorical measures



Figures 9 and 10 and plots the predictions for moving beyond the first committee or becoming law across the range of the punitive index. I find that as the severity of punishment included in the initiative increase, the probability of the initiative advancing decreases considerably. If an anticorruption initiative does not have a punitive measure, the probability of leaving the first committee is 15.7 percent. This probability decreases as punitive measure become more severe: to 12.7 percent when *punitive index*=1, 4 percent when *punitive index*=6, and 0.9 percent when *punitive index*=12. This relationship is not so clear for the model that predict whether the initiative becomes a law, but that is due to the low likelihood that severe punitive measures leave the first committee.

Figure 9: Likelihood of leaving the 1st committee and severity of punitive measures

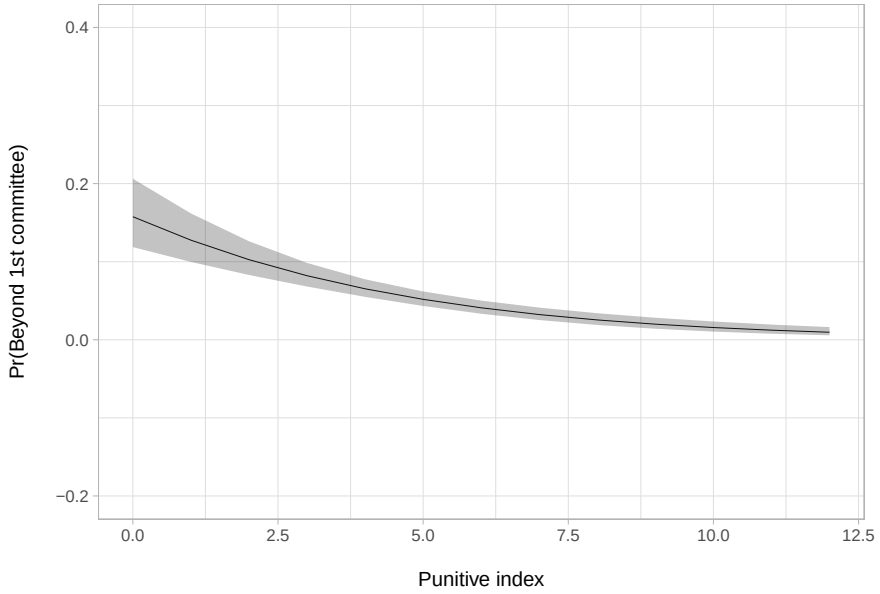
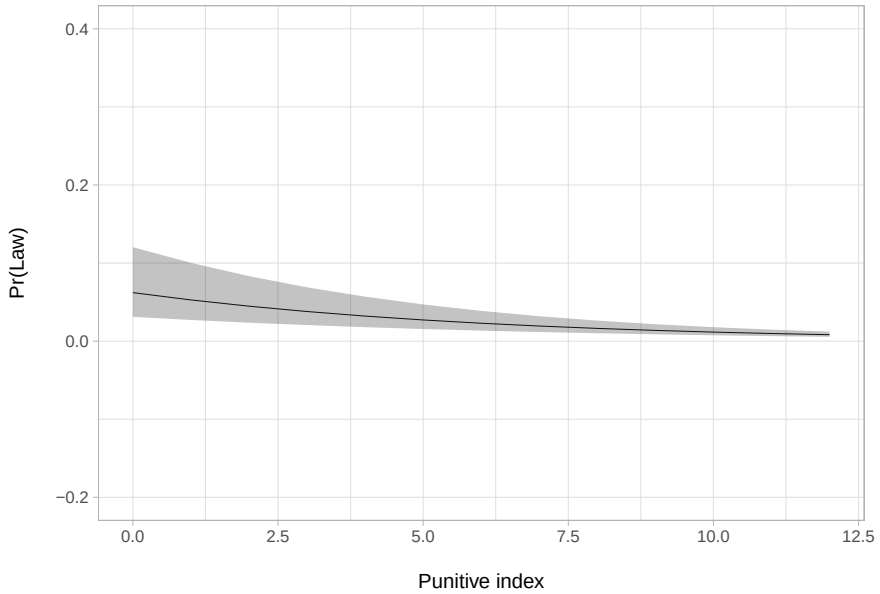


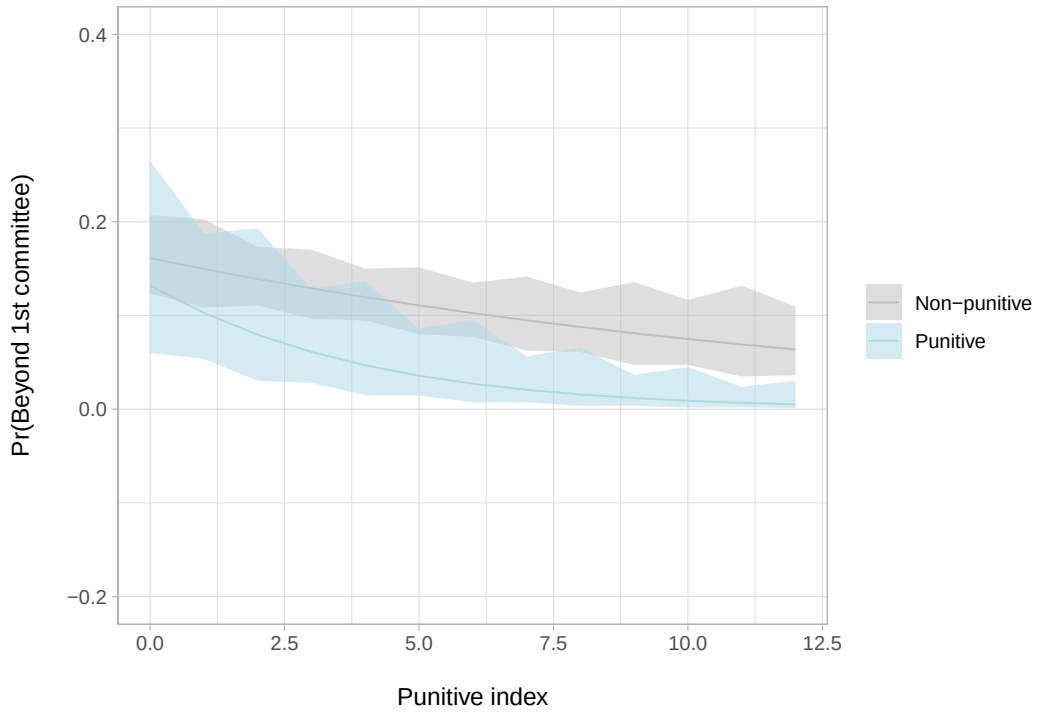
Figure 10: Likelihood of becoming law and severity of punitive measures



Note: Predictions from logistic regressions with robust standard errors clustered on legislature. All covariates at their means, 95 percent CIs.

Figure 11 interacts the punitive dummy variable used in the main specifications of Table 1 with the punitive index. Since the main exploratory variable (*punitive*) focuses on framing—whether sanctions were the main objective of the bill—interacting this measure with the punitive index allows us to explore whether the framing of the initiative has an effect at different levels of severity. Results show that, at lower levels of severity, the likelihood of an anticorruption initiative leaving the first committee is not different between punitive and non-punitive policies. However, framing matters as severity increases, and non-punitive initiatives with similar levels of severity have different probabilities of leaving the first committee.

Figure 11: Likelihood of leaving the 1st committee, severity of measures, and punitive framing

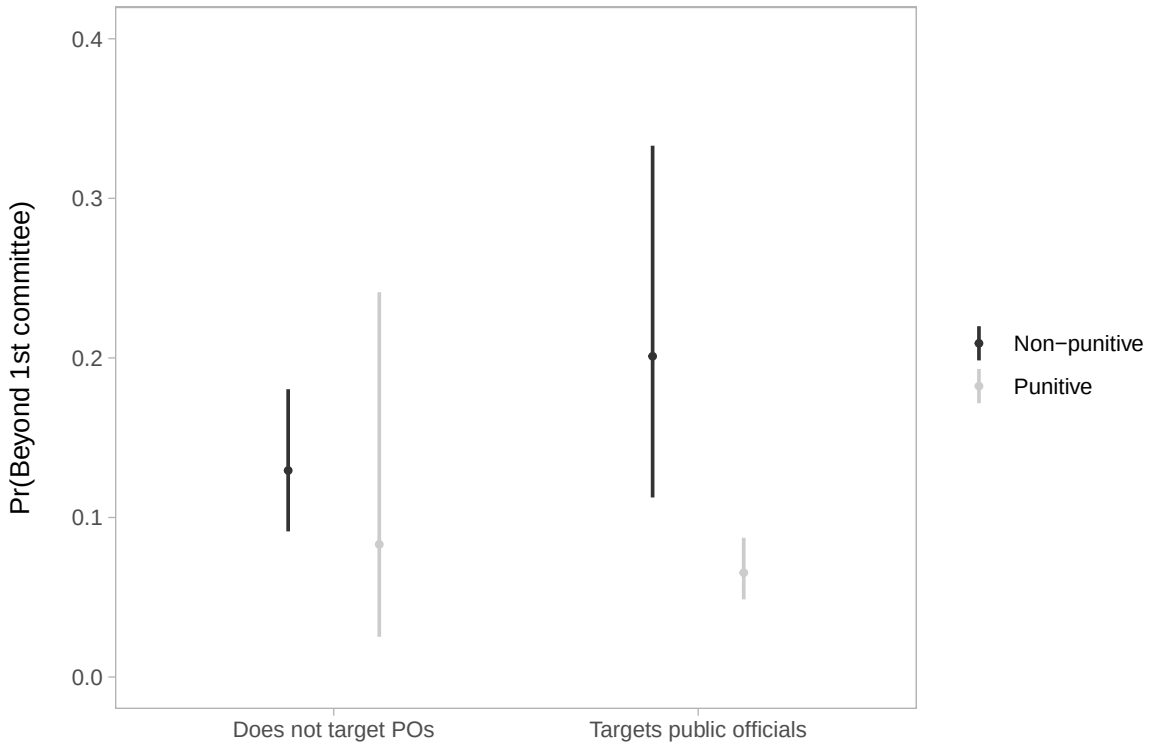


Note: Predictions from logistic regressions with robust standard errors clustered on legislature. All covariates at their means, 95 percent CIs.

A.15 Actor targeted by the initiative

Figure 12 plots the predictions of a model that predicts moving beyond the first committee with an interaction between punitive content and a binary variable that codes "1" if the anticorruption initiative made no mention of public officials and 0 otherwise. The model includes all of the covariates from in Table 1 of the main text. I find punitive content is associated with lower probability of moving beyond the first committee, but only for cases when the initiative explicitly targets public officials.

Figure 12: Likelihood of leaving the 1st committee and identity of targeted actor(s)



Note: Predictions from logistic regressions with robust standard errors clustered on legislature and legislature fixed effects, 95 percent CIs.

A.16 Legislative progress (ACIs vs non-ACIs)

Figure 13 plots the estimates of models predicting ACI and punitive ACI advancement (beyond the first committee and becoming law). The unit of analysis is a legislative initiative and the sample includes all 20,285 bills introduced to the Mexican Congress (2009-2021). The baseline category in Figure 13 is a non-ACI bill. I find that, compared to non-ACIs, ACIs are less likely to advance in the legislative process. The negative relationship is stronger for punitive policies.

Figure 13: Legislative progress of ACIs *vs* non-ACIs