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## Give a Fish or Teach Fishing? Partisan Affiliation of U.S. Governors and the Poverty Status of Immigrants

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## Abstract

This paper investigates how governors' partisan affiliation affects the poverty status of immigrants to the U.S. To this end, we compare the poverty outcomes of immigrants in states ruled by Democratic governors relative to the outcomes for those in states ruled by Republican governors. We employ a regression discontinuity design using the re-centered Democratic margin of victory as a running variable, to overcome the identification challenge posed by confounding factors. Consistent with the literature on partisan affiliation, we find that immigrants are more likely to get out of poverty in states with Democratic governors than states with Republican governors. Our results are submitted to a variety of robustness checks and sensitivity tests, to assess the validity of the identification strategy, and highlight conditional lame-duck effects. A formal mediation analysis reveals that the empirical results are mediated through better access to the labor market and possibly through higher wages and labor earnings for immigrants. Last but not least, we check for alternative hypotheses and potential detrimental effects for native populations.

*Keywords:* Partisan affiliation, Immigrants' poverty, Regression discontinuity design, Mediation analysis

*JEL Classification:* D31, D72, D78, H75, I3, J0

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