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**"From Tiananmen to Outsourcing:
How Rising Import Competition has Changed Congressional Voting Towards China"**

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Abstract

Following China's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in late 2001, exports from China to the United States increased dramatically. Mounting import competition from China produced rising unemployment and falling wages in local labor markets around the United States (Autor, Dorn, and Hanson 2013). This paper investigates the political effects of the China trade shock. Our research contributes to the literature on economic voting in Congress by establishing the link between labor market dislocations caused of import competition and House of Representative roll call votes on China. An anti-China vote can be motivated by economics, ideology or party. To disaggregate these drivers we use a unique dataset of the district-level economic impact of Chinese imports to the United States. Import competition from China rose dramatically after China's WTO accession. At the same time political tensions dropped as U.S. attention turned from human rights and security to the War on Terror, where bilateral cooperation was much greater. Nevertheless we see a puzzling rise in the proportion of anti-China votes in the 2000s. We believe this can be explained by economic voting. We subdivide voting data into pre and post-WTO accession, and we find that the district level economic impacts do not affect Congressional voting in the 1990s, but after 2003 negative impacts from Chinese imports are associated with a legislator's being more likely to vote for negative legislation pertaining to China.