Strategic Candidacy *via* Endogenous Commitment[*]

Akifumi Ishihara[†]

April 21, 2012

Abstract

This paper studies repeated political competition with policy-motivated citizen candidates and demonstrates strategic candidacy in two-candidate competition, namely two candidates stand for election and one of them has no chance to win. The dynamic relationship can guarantee an ability to implement a policy that is different from the ideal policy and the candidate can choose her implementing policy contingent on who are the rivals in the election. Given that a winning candidate takes such a strategy, the rival candidate actually has an incentive to stand even with no chance to win since it can induce policy compromises from the winning candidate. We furthermore argue that such strategic candidacy is often necessary to induce political compromises.