

# MORAL COST IN WEIGHTED COMMITTEE DECISIONS

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September 16, 2019

– Preliminary notes –

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## ABSTRACT

We develop a theoretical model about voting behavior in committees. The model predicts that the distribution of decision-making power affects committee members' incentives to make immoral vote choices. When committee members can financially benefit from an immoral choice, less influential agents free-ride more often. We then present results of a laboratory experiment that tests these predictions. The experiment studies committee members' voting behavior and their collective choices under different distributions of decision-making power. As predicted, we find that the frequency of immoral decisions is positively related to agents' voting power.

**Keywords:** committees, decision rules, deception, laboratory experiments

**JEL codes:** D70; C92; D02; D03

We thank Dan Houser, Dmitry Feichtner-Kozlov, César Martinelli and Arthur Schram for helpful discussions. Seminar participants at Humboldt University Berlin and George Mason University also provided many useful comments.