

# Capital Investment and Labor Demand: Evidence from 21<sup>st</sup> Century Tax Policy

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November 2021

# Do investments in new capital help or hurt workers?

- **Foundational question:** “The Wealth of Nations,” Book I, Chapter 1

*“everybody must be sensible how much labour is facilitated and abridged by the application of proper machinery...”*

*It is unnecessary to give any example.”*

–Adam Smith (1776)

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- **Relevance in the 21st century:**

- ① Will new machinery eliminate human work?
- ② Do tax incentives for investment increase wages or productivity?

# Do investments in new capital help or hurt workers?

## Surprisingly challenging question to answer

- 1 Workers in modern firms perform many tasks (e.g., production, R&D, marketing)
- 2 Few datasets measure capital stocks or employment by task
- 3 Plants may adopt capital due to productivity/demand shocks
- 4 Capital accumulation takes time

# Our Approach

- ① **Confidential plant-level data on manufacturing activities**
  - Identify workers that interact with machinery
  - Measure capital stocks, other inputs
- ② **Tax variation in cost of equipment from bonus depreciation**
  - One of largest incentives for capital investment in U.S. history
  - Will cost \$285 billion in current decade as part of TCJA

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  - Will cost \$285 billion in current decade as part of TCJA
- ③ **Diff-in-diff event study analyses between 2001–2011**
  - Estimate effects on investment, capital, output, TFP, mean earnings, and employment by tasks and demographic groups (e.g., young, low-education, Black, Hispanic, female)
- ④ **Estimate structural model of factor demands**
  - Separates scale and substitution effects
  - Test additional predictions from model

# Our Reduced-Form Findings

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  - '01-'11: Investment ↑ 20%, Equipment K ↑ 10%, Structures K ↑ 3%

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## ⑤ Estimates not driven by shocks to manufacturing sector

- Import competition, robotization, skill intensity, and capital intensity

# Results from Structural Model of Factor Demands

- **Empirical model based on Marshall (1890)–Hicks (1932)**
  - Reduced-form effects identify scale and substitution elasticities
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- **Test of capital-labor complementarity**
  - Investment should increase more if labor costs are low
  - Prediction holds for non-unionized, RTW, concentrated labor markets

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- **Test of capital-labor complementarity**
  - Investment should increase more if labor costs are low
  - Prediction holds for non-unionized, RTW, concentrated labor markets
- **Do investments in new capital help or hurt workers?**
  - Increases employment, esp. production and disadvantaged workers
  - Rules out worst fears of tax-driven automation
  - Does not raise productivity growth or average earnings

# Remainder of the Presentation

- ① Data and Empirical Strategy
- ② Reduce-Form Effects
  - Investment and Capital Stocks
  - Employment
  - Earnings
  - Productivity and Output
- ③ Bonus in the Context of 21st Century US Manufacturing
- ④ Structural Model of Factor Demands
- ⑤ Tests of Capital-labor Complementarity



# Data and Policy Variation

# Plant Level Confidential Census Data

## **Annual Survey of Manufactures (ASM)**

- $\approx 60,000$  plants surveyed per year
- Large plants are oversampled
- Supplement with Census of Manufactures in years ending in 2/7
- Balanced sample for 1997–2011

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- Large plants are oversampled
- Supplement with Census of Manufactures in years ending in 2/7
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## Outcomes

- capital investment
- capital stocks (from Census of Manufactures)
- split capital into equipment/structures
- employment by production/non-production tasks
- average earnings
- total value of shipments
- total factor productivity

# Bonus Depreciation

## Bonus Depreciation and Empirical Strategy

- Immediate tax deduction of a “bonus” percentage of investment costs
- Decreases PV cost of investment and gives firms cash now
- 2001–2011 average bonus of 45% Timing

# Bonus Depreciation

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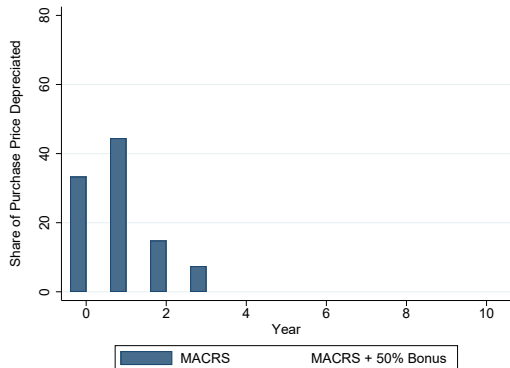
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## Empirical Strategy Overview

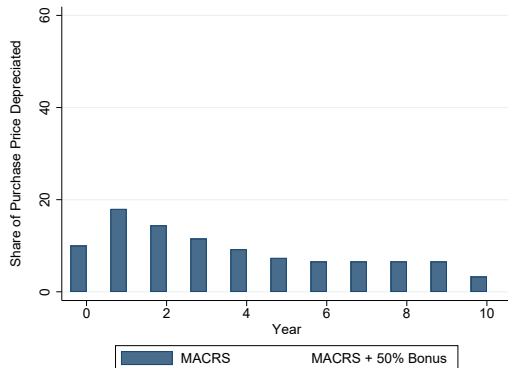
- 1 Identify 4-digit industries that benefit most from bonus depreciation (fixed in 2001)
- 2 Use variation in bonus depreciation over time (pre/post 2001)
- 3 Compare firm/worker outcomes across industries and over time

# Quantifying Benefits from Bonus Depreciation

## A. 3-year MACRS Assets



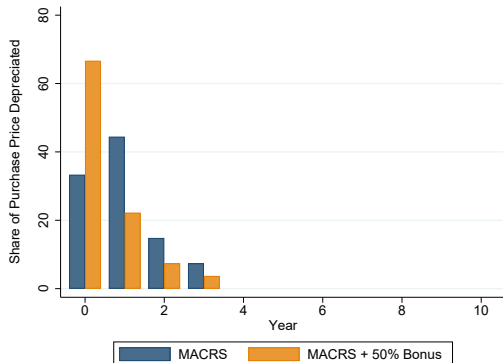
## B. 10-year MACRS Assets



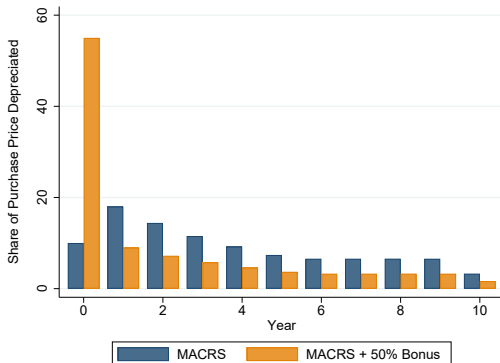
- Tax rules specify timeline of depreciation deductions  $D_t$

# Quantifying Benefits from Bonus Depreciation

## A. 3-year MACRS Assets



## B. 10-year MACRS Assets



- Tax rules specify timeline of depreciation deductions  $D_t$
- Bonus depreciation:  $\begin{cases} \text{Immediate depreciation} & b\% \\ \text{Remaining deductions} & (1 - b)D_t \end{cases}$

# Quantifying Benefits from Bonus Depreciation

- Present value of depreciation deductions for a \$1 investment

$$z_0 = \sum_{t=0}^T \frac{D_t}{(1+r)^t}$$

- $T$  is the recovery period
  - $D_t$  are the deductions allowed in year  $t$  such that  $\sum_t D_t = 1$
  - $r$  is discount rate
- $z_0$  is smaller for long-duration assets



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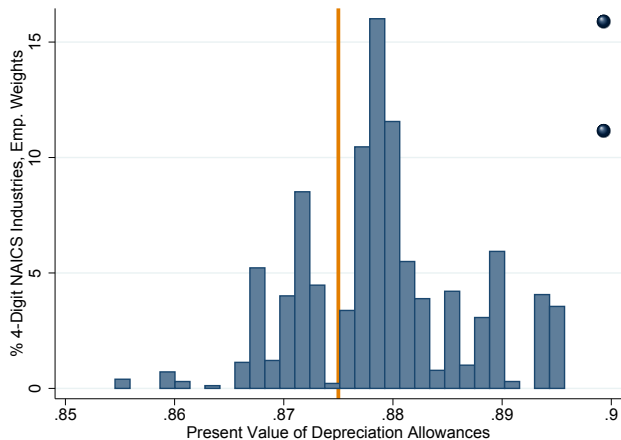
- Bonus increases PV of deductions by:

$$\underbrace{(b + (1-b)z_0)}_{\text{Bonus Depreciation}} - \underbrace{z_0}_{\text{MACRS}} = b(1 - z_0)$$

- Value of bonus is higher when  $z_0$  is small—i.e., for long-duration assets

# Defining Bonus Depreciation Treatment

- Zwick & Mahon (2017) compute  $z_0$  using tax data at 4-digit NAICS



- **Long-duration** industries:  
 $z_0 < 33\text{rd percentile in } 2001$
- **Short-duration** industries:  
 $z_0 > 33\text{rd percentile in } 2001$
- We use this indicator for four reasons:
  - 1 Natural break in distribution of  $z_0$  at 33rd percentile
  - 2 Long/Short dichotomy does not depend on discount rate
  - 3 Matches prior work (Zwick & Mahon, 2017; Garret et al, 2020)
  - 4 Robustness: 25th/40th percentile, continues exposure (QWI)

# Bonus Depreciation Treatment Examples

## Long Duration Industries:

- Dairy Products, 3115
- Springs and Wires, 3326
- Motor Vehicle Bodies and Trailers, 3362

## Short Duration Industries:

- Beverages, 3121
- Screws, Nuts, and Bolts, 3327
- Railroad Rolling, 3365

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**Tax rules arbitrarily classify similar machinery used in different industries as long or short duration**

- Detailed in IRS Publication 946

# Bonus Depreciation Treatment Examples

## Cement Manufacturing (3273)

- “assets used in the manufacture of cement ... are depreciated over 15 years”



## Stone Cutting (3279)

- “assets used in stone cutting and stone crushing ... are depreciated across 7 years”



## Event-study Regression Specification:

$$Y_{it} = \alpha_i + \sum_{y=1997}^{2011} \beta_y \mathbb{I}[\text{Long Duration}]_i \times \mathbb{I}[y = t]_t + \gamma \mathbf{X}_{i,t} + \varepsilon_{it}$$

- Outcome  $Y_{it}$  for plants  $i$  in year  $t$  (log investment, log employment)
- $\mathbb{I}[\text{Long Duration}]_i = 1$  for long-duration plants (2001 primary industry)
- $\beta_{1997} - \beta_{2011}$ : relative outcomes for long-duration plants
- $\gamma \mathbf{X}_{i,t}$ : fixed effects control for time-varying determinants of outcomes
- Cluster  $\varepsilon_{it}$  at 4-digit NAICS industry-state level

## Identifying Assumption

- Absent bonus depreciation, outcomes for long-duration industries would match those of short-duration industries

## Checks

- Pretrends: stable differences prior to treatment
- Larger effects on eligible capital (equipment) than ineligible structures
- Controls:
  - state  $\times$  year FE
  - plant size quintile  $\times$  year FE
  - firm size quintile  $\times$  year FE
  - TFP bins  $\times$  year FE

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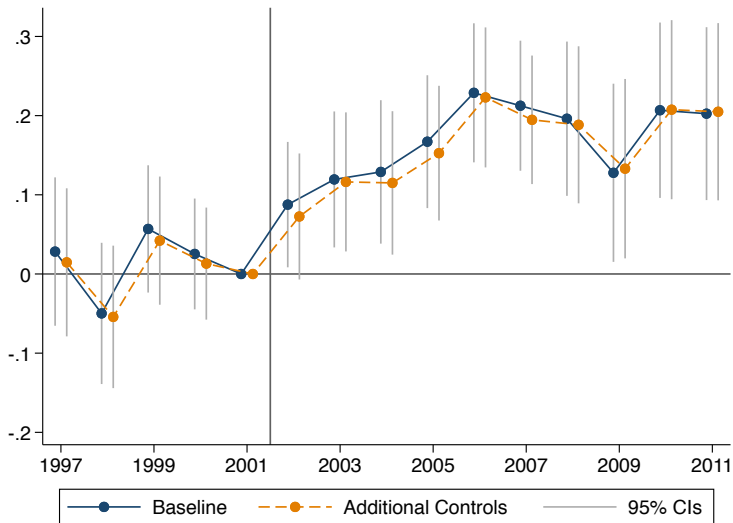
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- Manufacturing shocks:
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  - trade exposure (China), robots
- Robustness:
  - Entry (QWI data)
  - ICT exposure
  - Borrowing costs
  - Producers of capital goods
  - Business cycle exposure
  - Local Spillovers

# Bonus Depreciation Today

- 1 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act: 100% bonus depreciation from 2018–2022
  - Biden tax plan does not include repeal/extension
  - Depreciation deductions would be affected by book income tax
- 2 Treasury: Bonus depreciation will cost \$285 billion (2019–2028)
- 3 Economists and policymakers worry bonus encourages automation Quotes
- 4 Countries around the world have used similar policies
  - Canada, China, Germany, Japan, Poland, UK
- 5 Bonus and similar policies are now being used to
  - Transition to environmentally sustainable production methods
  - Stimulate investment in response to COVID-19

# Effects of Bonus Depreciation on Investment and Employment

# Log Capital Investment

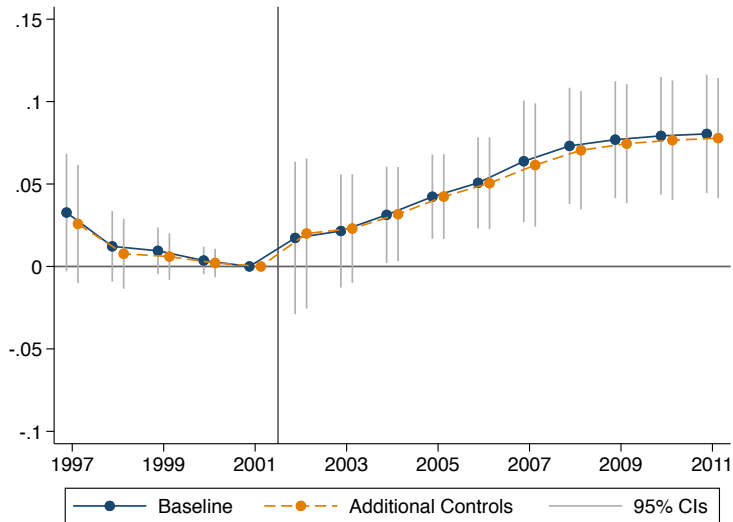


# Log Capital Investment (Diff-in-Diff)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Bonus	0.170***	0.156***	0.151***	0.152***	0.158***
(SE)	(0.029)	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.029)
[p-value]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]
Plant & Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
State×Year FE		✓	✓	✓	✓
PlantSize <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE			✓	✓	✓
TFP <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE				✓	✓
FirmSize <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE					✓

- Similar results on IHS of investment and  $\frac{I}{K}$  [More](#)
- Comparable magnitudes to Zwick & Mahon (2017) [More](#)

# Log Capital Stock

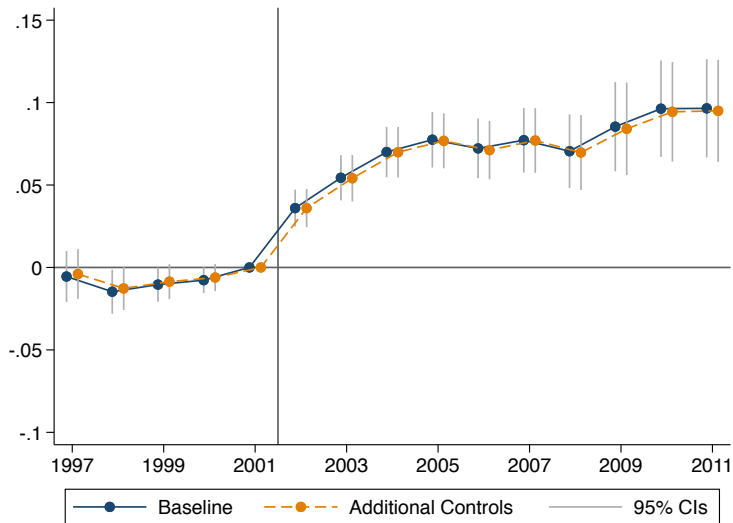


# Log Capital Stock (Long Differences)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Log Total Capital		Log Equipment		Log Structures	
Bonus	0.080***	0.078***	0.105***	0.096***	0.041**	0.032*
(SE)	(0.018)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.019)	(0.018)	(0.019)
[p-value]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.023]	[0.090]
Plant FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
State×Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PlantSize <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE		✓		✓		✓
TFP <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE		✓		✓		✓
FirmSize <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE		✓		✓		✓

- 3-times larger effects for eligible capital equipment

# Log Plant Employment





# Log Plant Employment (Long Differences)

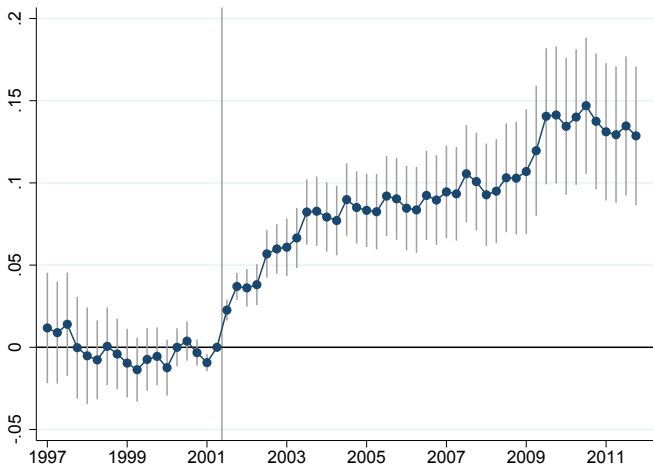
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Log Total Emp.		Log Prod. Emp.		Log Nonprod. Emp.	
Bonus	0.097***	0.095***	0.116***	0.115***	0.091***	0.081***
(SE)	(0.015)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.017)	(0.025)	(0.026)
[p-value]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.002]
Plant FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
State×Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PlantSize <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE		✓		✓		✓
TFP <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE		✓		✓		✓
FirmSize <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE		✓		✓		✓

- Larger effects on workers that interact with new equipment

# Quarterly Workforce Indicators Data

- QWI aggregates data from the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) to the state-4-digit NAICS level
  - Include roles of plant entry/exit
- We focus on manufacturing sector to match ASM/CM
- Employment and earnings data split by age, education, gender, race and ethnicity

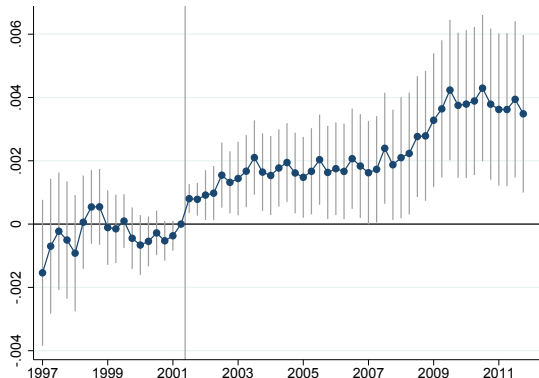
# Log Employment (QWI Data)



$$DiD = 0.097^{***} (0.016)$$

# Employment Effects by Education and Age

## Fraction High School or Less Education

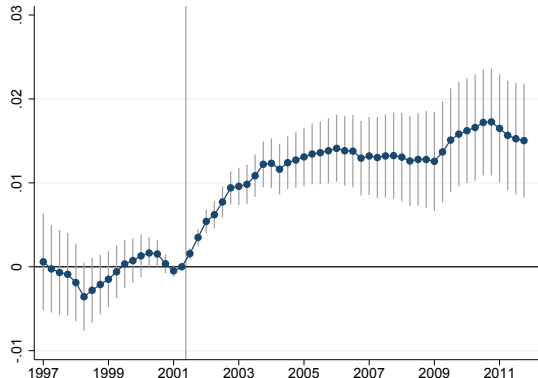


$$DiD = 0.0026^{***} (0.001)$$

2001 mean = 0.25

⇒ 1% increase

## Fraction 35 Years of Age and Younger



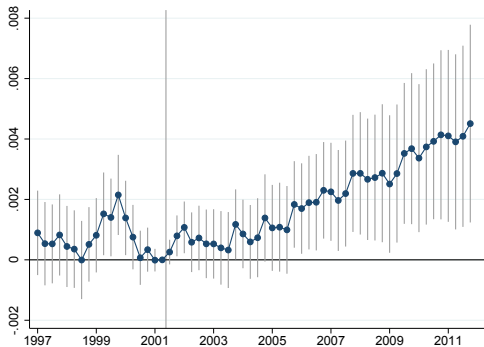
$$DiD = 0.0129^{***} (0.0025)$$

2001 mean = 0.30

⇒ 3.8% increase [More](#)

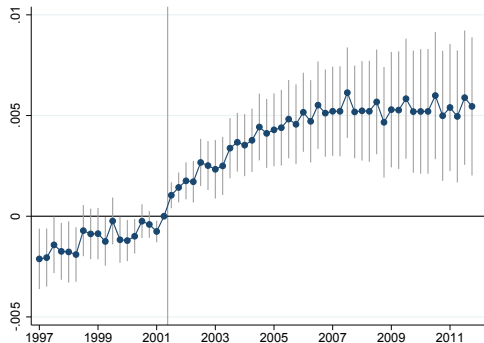
# Employment Effects by Race and Ethnicity

## Fraction Black



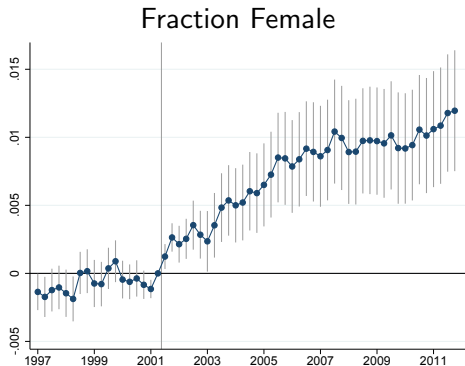
$DiD = 0.0012(0.0007)$   
2001 mean = 0.07  
 $\Rightarrow$  1.6% increase

## Fraction Hispanic



$DiD = 0.0054^{***}(0.0010)$   
2001 mean = 0.06  
 $\Rightarrow$  8.5% increase [More](#)

# Employment Effects by Gender



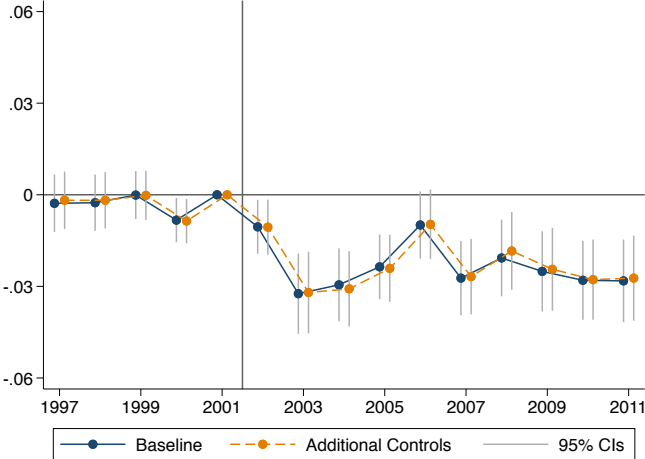
$$DiD = 0.0082^{***} (0.0015)$$

2001 mean = 0.26  $\implies$  3.2% increase [More](#)

**Bonus depreciation has larger employment effects on younger, non-college, female, Black, and Hispanic workers!**

# Effects of Bonus Depreciation on Mean Earnings and Productivity

# Log Mean Earnings



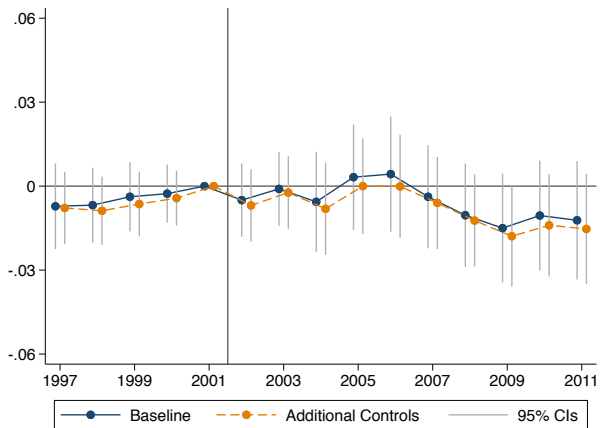


# Change in Workforce Composition Explains Wage Effect

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Difference-in-Differences				
Bonus	-0.031*** (0.005) [0.000]	-0.028*** (0.005) [0.000]	-0.003 (0.005) [0.495]	-0.003 (0.005) [0.549]	0.007 (0.005) [0.126]
Industry × State FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
State × Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Age Shares		✓	✓	✓	✓
Education Shares			✓	✓	✓
Race Shares				✓	✓
Sex Shares					✓

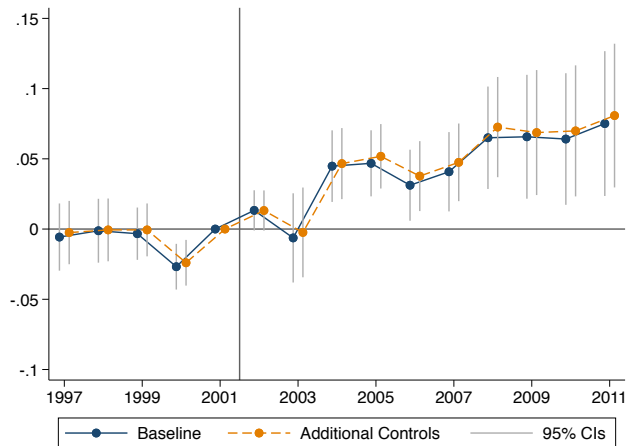
- Obtain similar results using a regression decomposition

# Effects on Log Plant Productivity



DiD 95% CI =  $(-0.014, 0.008)$

# Effects on Log Plant Output



$$LD = 0.081^{***}(0.027)$$

# Tax Policy in a Transforming Manufacturing Sector

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- US manufacturing saw significant changes between 2001–2011 [more](#)
- Charles, Hurst, and Schwartz (2019): transformation driven by four main factors
  - **Skill Intensity**
  - **Capital Intensity**
  - **Trade Exposure**
  - **Robotization**

# Tax Policy in a Transforming Manufacturing Sector

- US manufacturing saw significant changes between 2001–2011 [more](#)
- Charles, Hurst, and Schwartz (2019): transformation driven by four main factors
  - **Skill Intensity:** Non-production share of employment in 2001
  - **Capital Intensity:** Asset-to-employee ratio in 2001
  - **Trade Exposure:** Exposure imports from China (2000–2007) (AADHP, 2013)
  - **Robotization:** Change in robotization 3-digit NAICS (1993–2007) (AR, 2020)
- Controls: quartile bins for each factor  $\times$  Year FE
- Heterogeneous effects: does bonus prop-up “20th century production”?

# Baseline Results are Robust to Shock Controls

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Log Investment		Log Employment		Log Mean Earnings	
Bonus	0.158***	0.157***	0.079***	0.069***	-0.021***	0.0001
(SE)	(0.029)	(0.032)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.004)	(0.005)
[p-value]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.983]
Plant FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
State×Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Plant Controls	✓		✓		✓	
Year FE Interactions:						
Skill Intensity		✓		✓		✓
Capital Intensity		✓		✓		✓
Trade Exposure		✓		✓		✓
Robot Exposure		✓		✓		✓

# Heterogeneous Effects of Bonus: Log Investment

Interaction Term	(1) Skill Intensity	(2) Capital Intensity	(3) Trade Exposure	(4) Robot Exposure
Bonus	0.180***	0.157***	0.125***	0.158***
(SE)	(0.034)	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.031)
[p-value]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]
Bonus×Interaction	0.098*	0.032**	-0.086***	0.0158
(SE)	(0.055)	(0.015)	(0.028)	(0.012)
[p-value]	[0.075]	[0.038]	[0.003]	[0.188]
Plant FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE Interactions:				
State	✓	✓	✓	✓
Skill Intensity	✓	✓	✓	✓
Capital Intensity	✓	✓	✓	✓
Trade Exposure	✓	✓	✓	✓
Robot Exposure	✓	✓	✓	✓



# Heterogeneous Effects of Bonus: Log Employment

Interaction Term	(1) Skill Intensity	(2) Capital Intensity	(3) Trade Exposure	(4) Robot Exposure
Bonus	0.074***	0.069***	0.054***	0.070***
(SE)	(0.011)	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.010)
[p-value]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]
Bonus×Interaction	0.0215	0.005*	-0.041***	0.013***
(SE)	(0.018)	(0.003)	(0.011)	(0.004)
[p-value]	[0.232]	[0.091]	[0.000]	[0.001]
Plant FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE Interactions:				
State	✓	✓	✓	✓
Skill Intensity	✓	✓	✓	✓
Capital Intensity	✓	✓	✓	✓
Trade Exposure	✓	✓	✓	✓
Robot Exposure	✓	✓	✓	✓

# Structural Model of Factor Demands

# Scale vs. Substitution Effects

- Marshall (1890) & Hicks (1932) note labor demand depends on:
  - Scale effect: firm expands production and hires more workers
  - Substitution/complementarity between labor and capital

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● To separate these effects model assumes

① Bonus lowers cost of capital  $\phi = \frac{\partial \ln(\text{Cost of Capital})}{\partial \text{Bonus}} < 0$

② Product demand elasticity (CES)  $\eta > 1$

③ Production function has CRTS with inputs  $K, L, J$

$s_K, s_L, s_J$ : Cost shares  
 $\sigma_{KL}$ : Allen elasticity of substitution  
Substitutes  $\sigma_{KL} > 0$   
Complements  $\sigma_{KL} < 0$

# Reduced-Form Effects in Model

- Model predictions for reduced-form effects:

$$\text{Capital : } \beta^K = \underbrace{(s_K \eta)}_{\text{Scale}} + \underbrace{(s_J \sigma_{KJ} + s_L \sigma_{KL})}_{\text{Substitution}} \times \underbrace{-\phi}_{\text{Cost of Capital}} > 0$$

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$$\text{Labor : } \beta^L = s_K(\eta - \sigma_{KL}) \times -\phi$$

$$\text{Revenue : } \beta^R = s_K(\eta - 1) \times -\phi$$

- Labor demand increases if:

- 1 K-L are complements:  $\sigma_{KL} < 0$
- 2 Scale effect dominates:  $\eta > \sigma_{KL} > 0$

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- Reduced-form estimate of scale effect,  $s_K \eta \times -\phi$  :

$$\bar{\beta} \equiv s_J \beta^J + s_K \beta^K + s_L \beta^L = s_K \eta \times -\phi > 0$$

# Scale vs. Substitution in Reduced Form Effects

- Compare labor and scale effects:

$$\text{Labor : } \beta^L = s_K(\eta - \sigma_{KL}) \times -\phi$$

$$\text{Scale effect : } \bar{\beta} = s_K \eta \times -\phi$$



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- Let  $\left\{ \begin{array}{lll} L = \text{Production Labor} & \beta^L = 11.5\% & s_L = 50\% \\ J = \text{Non - Prod Labor} & \beta^J = 8.1\% & s_J = 30\% \\ K = \text{Capital} & \beta^K = 7.9\% & s_K = 20\% \end{array} \right.$

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$$\implies \text{Scale Effect } \bar{\beta} = 10\% \quad (SE = 1\%)$$

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- Absent substitution, bonus  $\uparrow$  all inputs by 10%
- Non-production workers substitute for capital:  $\bar{\beta} > \beta^J \implies \sigma_{KJ} > 0$
- Production workers complementary with capital:  $\bar{\beta} < \beta^L \implies \sigma_{KL} < 0$

# Identification and Estimation

- Previous expression  $\frac{\beta^L}{\beta} = 1 - \frac{\sigma_{KL}}{\eta}$  implies  $\sigma_{KL} = \eta \left(1 - \frac{\beta^L}{\beta}\right)$

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# Identification and Estimation

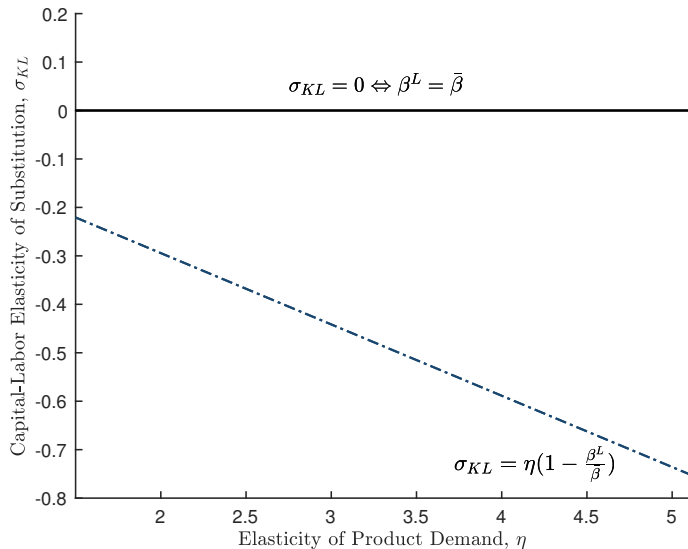
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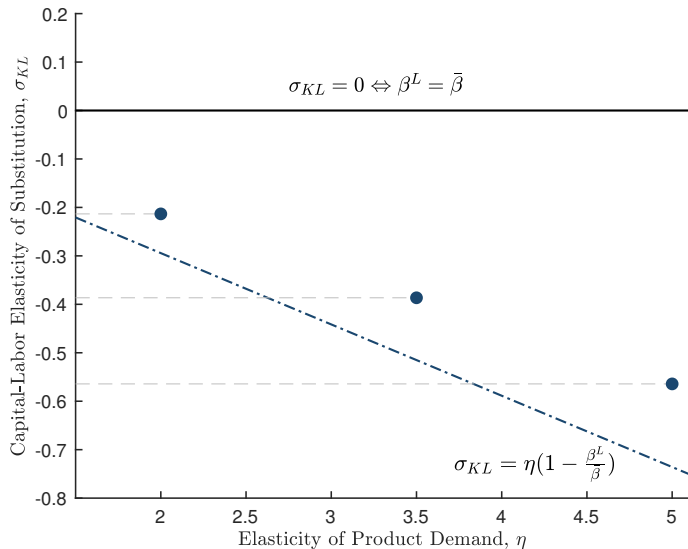
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- Estimate model parameters via Classical Minimum Distance
  - Calibrate  $\eta \in [2, 5]$  (Shapiro and Walker, 2020) or estimate it
  - Impose cost minimization  $s_J \sigma_{KJ} + s_L \sigma_{KL} > 0$  (Allen, 1938)

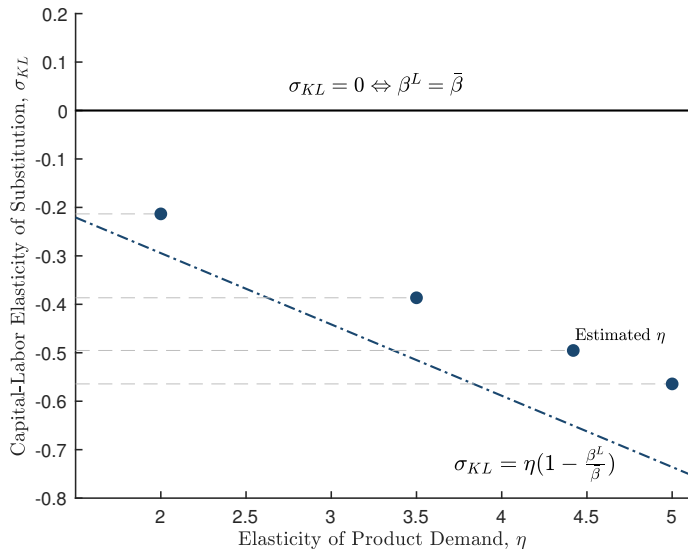
# Classical Minimum Distance Estimates of $\sigma_{KL}$



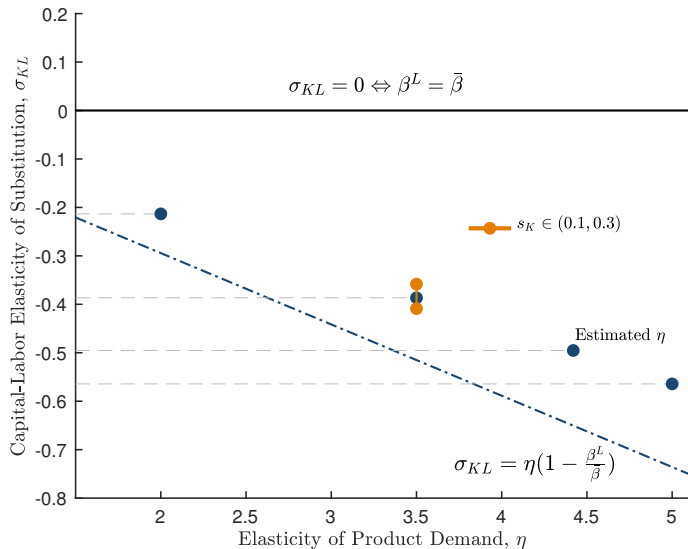
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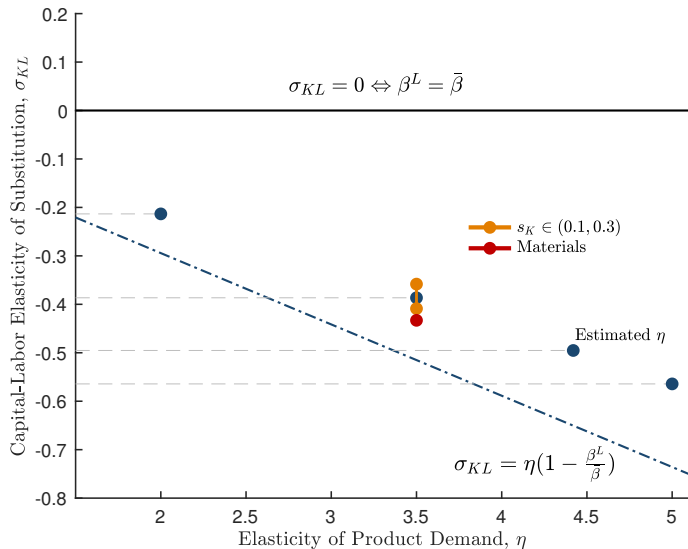
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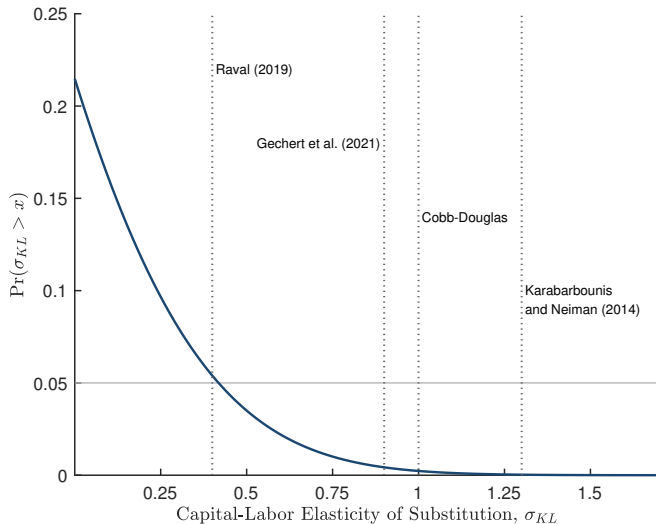
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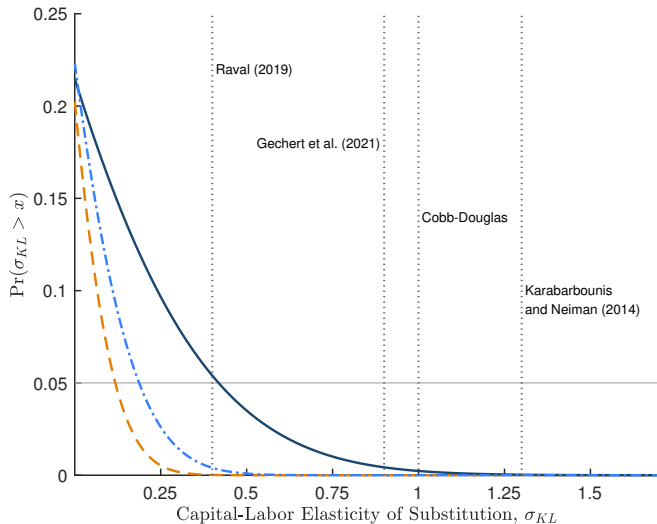
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# Empirical Implications of Complementarity

- K-L complementarity  $\implies$  larger investment effect when wages are low  
a.k.a. “Marshall’s Second Law of Derived Demand”

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- K-L complementarity  $\implies$  larger investment effect when wages are low  
a.k.a. “Marshall’s Second Law of Derived Demand”
- Test for heterogeneous effects by labor market characteristics:
  - ① Union status
    - Unions raise cost of labor
    - Plant-level data (MOPS, 2005):  $\mathbb{I}[\text{unionization} > 60\%]$
  - ② Right-to-Work States (as of 2001)
    - Lower wages due to anti-union sentiment, low bargaining power
  - ③ Labor market concentration
    - Monopsony power  $\implies$  lower wages (Robinson, 1933)
    - Compute Log HHI at NAICS 3-digit by CZ using LBD

# Heterogeneity by Labor Costs: Investment

	(1) Union	(2) RTW	(3) ln(HHI)
Bonus	0.197***	0.062*	0.150***
(SE)	(0.034)	(0.036)	(0.028)
[p-value]	[0.000]	[0.087]	[0.000]
Bonus×Interact	-0.085**	0.200***	0.038**
(SE)	(0.039)	(0.055)	(0.018)
[p-value]	[0.027]	[0.000]	[0.037]
Plant FE	✓	✓	✓
State×Year FE	✓	✓	✓

**Investment is higher when labor costs are lower!**

# Summary of Results

- **Bonus depreciation did not raise mean earnings or productivity**

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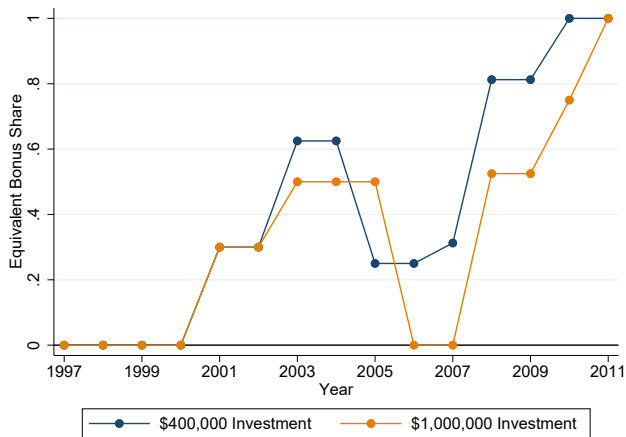
- **Bonus depreciation did not raise mean earnings or productivity**
- **Tax incentives for investment stimulate employment**
  - Estimate larger gains for disadvantaged workers: non-college, young, female, Black, and Hispanic
  - Effects larger in manufacturing industries most likely to thrive: high skill and capital intensity, comparative advantage, robot adoption

# Summary of Results

- **Bonus depreciation did not raise mean earnings or productivity**
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  - Estimate larger gains for disadvantaged workers: non-college, young, female, Black, and Hispanic
  - Effects larger in manufacturing industries most likely to thrive: high skill and capital intensity, comparative advantage, robot adoption
- **Capital and labor are complements in our setting**
  - Scale effect explains 90% of increase in employment
  - Rules out concern that tax incentives for investment eliminate jobs
  - Labor market policy impacts investment decisions

Additional Slides

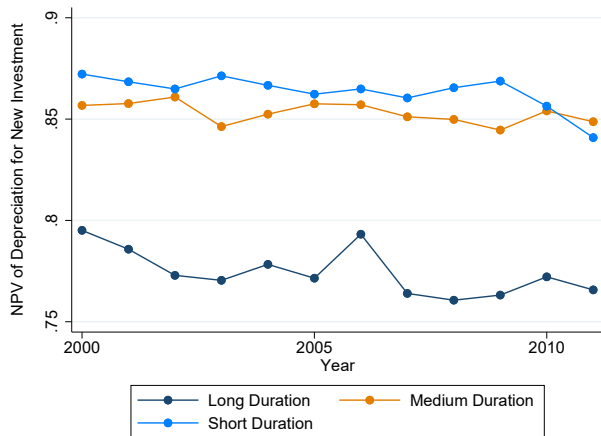
# Bonus Depreciation Rate Over Time



- §179 expensing raises average bonus rate for projects  $< \$1/2M$ , especially in later years
- Includes 2005 extension for long-duration capital projects  $> \$1M$
- Extensions, backdating  $\implies$  expected bonus rate between 25–50%, even in 2006–2007 (House & Shapiro, 2008)



# Stability of Bonus Depreciation Treatment Measure



- Potential concern: mix of long / short investment may respond to policy
- Asset classes are often defined by asset *use* not by asset *type*
- Sector-level IRS SOI data on investment by each asset class shows stability of sector-level  $z_0$  2000–2014

Back

# Empirical Evaluations of Bonus Depreciation

## General Strategy

- Cummins, Hassett & Hubbard (1994) estimated investment effects of accelerated depreciation in the 1986 tax reform by comparing firms that, on average, investment in longer-lived capital to firms that invest in shorter-lived capital

## Bonus Depreciation Estimates

- House and Shapiro (2008): effects of bonus depreciation 2001–2004 on investment
- Zwick & Mahon (2017): effects of bonus depreciation on investment, tax return data
- Garrett, Ohrn, & Suárez Serrato (2020): effects of bonus depreciation on local labor markets

# Economists' Beliefs about Bonus Depreciation

*“Bonus depreciation will subsidize companies to cut even more jobs”*

– Robert Reich (2010, former US Secretary of Labor)

*“Capital deepening, which brings additional returns to the owners of capital, brings substantial returns to workers as well.”*

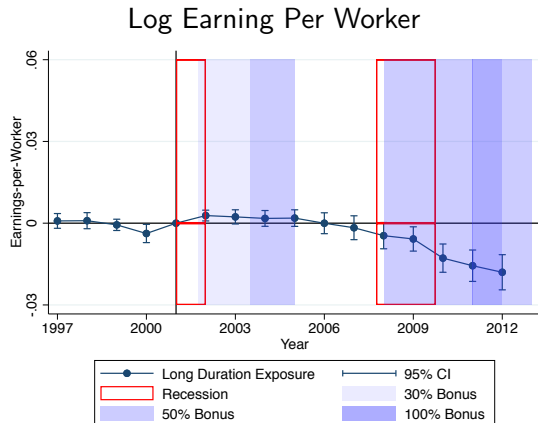
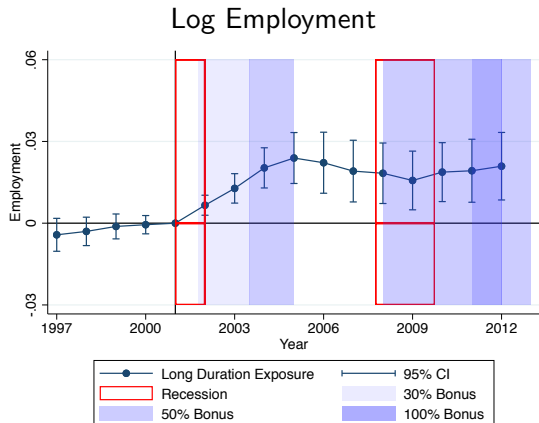
–Trump's CEA (2017)

*“The US tax system is biased against labor and in favor of capital, has become more so in recent years, and has promoted levels of automation beyond what is socially desirable”*

–Acemoglu, Manera, Restrepo (2020)

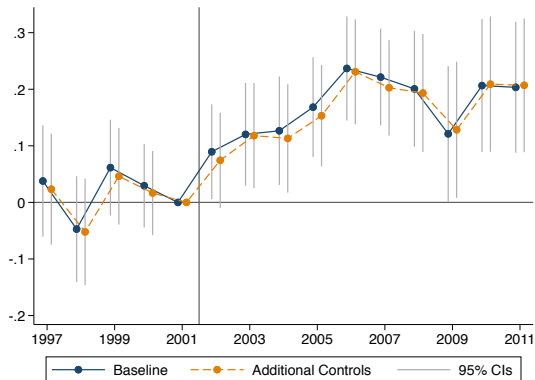
# External Validity: Employment and Wages

- Garrett et al. (2020): effect of local exposure to bonus depreciation on local labor markets



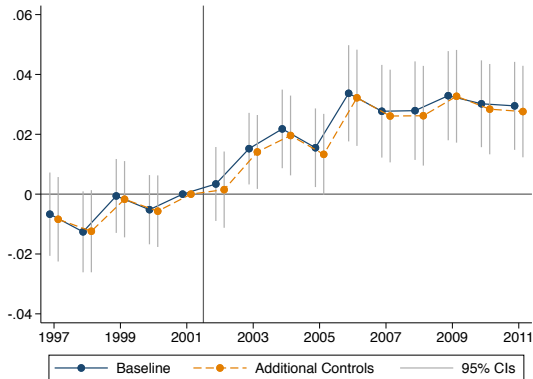
# Alternative Measures of Capital Investment

## IHS Investment



$$DiD = 0.168^{***}(0.030)$$

## Capital Investment / Pre-Period Capital



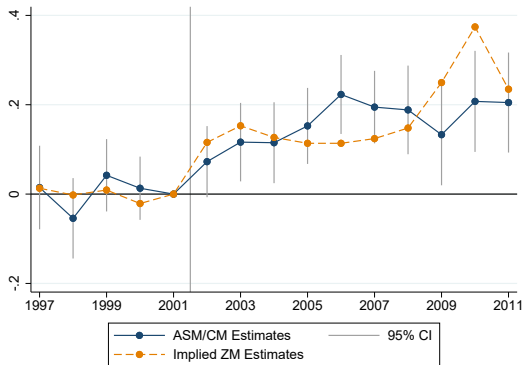
$$DiD = 0.031^{***}(0.004)$$

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Bonus	0.168***	0.153***	0.149***	0.150***	0.156***
(SE)	(0.030)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.030)
[p-value]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]
Plant & Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
State×Year FE		✓	✓	✓	✓
PlantSize <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE			✓	✓	✓
TFP <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE				✓	✓
FirmSize <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE					✓

# Capital Investment / Pre-Period Capital

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Bonus	0.031***	0.029***	0.027***	0.027***	0.028***
(SE)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.005)
[p-value]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]
Plant & Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
State×Year FE		✓	✓	✓	✓
PlantSize <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE			✓	✓	✓
TFP <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE				✓	✓
FirmSize <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE					✓

# Comparison of Investment Event Study Results with Zwick & Mahon (2017)

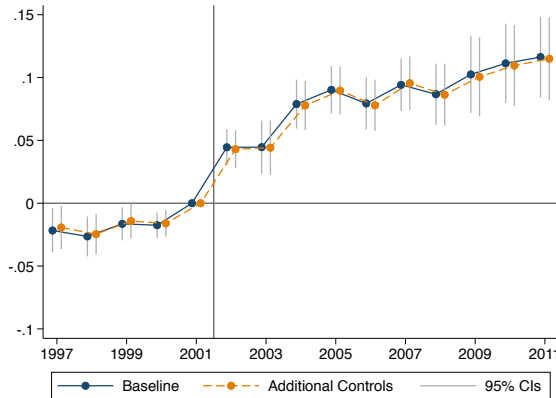


- Similar magnitudes despite differences: firms/plant, tax/survey data, all sectors/manufacturing, unbalanced/balanced, and sets of controls

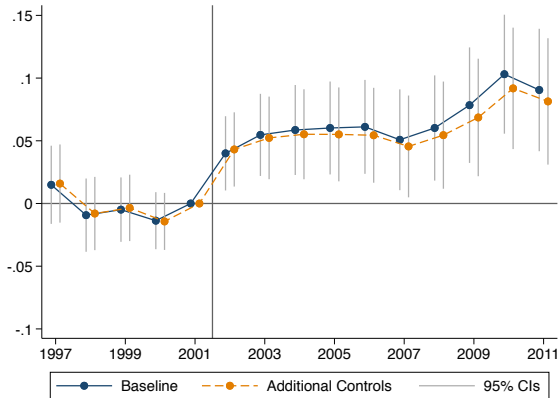


# Effects on Log Plant Employment by Task

## Log Production Employment



## Log Non-Production Employment



# Log Mean Earnings

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Bonus	-0.018***	-0.021***	-0.021***	-0.020***	-0.021***
(SE)	(0.005)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
[p-value]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]
Plant & Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
State×Year FE		✓	✓	✓	✓
PlantSize <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE			✓	✓	✓
TFP <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE				✓	✓
FirmSize <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE					✓

# Kitagawa-Oaxaca-Blinder Decomposition

- We now quantify effect of composition changes on mean earnings
- Change in wages for treated firms is:

$$\Delta \ln(\hat{wage})^{\text{treat}} = \underbrace{\Delta \hat{\alpha}^{\text{treat}} + \Delta \hat{\beta}^{\text{treat}} \bar{X}^{\text{treat, pre}}}_{\text{Wages conditional on observables}} + \underbrace{\hat{\beta}^{\text{treat, pre}} \Delta \bar{X}^{\text{treat}}}_{\text{Composition}}$$

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- In the DiD context:

$$\begin{aligned} \Delta \ln(\hat{wage})^{\text{treat}} - \Delta \ln(\hat{wage})^{\text{control}} &= \Delta \hat{\alpha}^{\text{treat}} - \Delta \hat{\alpha}^{\text{control}} \\ &+ \Delta \hat{\beta}^{\text{treat}} \bar{X}^{\text{treat, pre}} - \Delta \hat{\beta}^{\text{control}} \bar{X}^{\text{control, pre}} \\ &+ \hat{\beta}^{\text{treat, pre}} \Delta \bar{X}^{\text{treat}} - \hat{\beta}^{\text{control, pre}} \Delta \bar{X}^{\text{control}} \end{aligned}$$

# Kitagawa-Oaxaca-Blinder Decomposition

$\Delta\Delta$ Wages Conditional on Observables	$\Delta\Delta\hat{\alpha} + \Delta\hat{\beta}^{\text{treat}}\bar{X}^{\text{treat, pre}} - \Delta\hat{\beta}^{\text{control}}\bar{X}^{\text{control, pre}}$	-0.003
$\Delta\Delta$ Worker Composition	$+ \hat{\beta}^{\text{treat, pre}}\Delta\bar{X}^{\text{treat}} - \hat{\beta}^{\text{control, pre}}\Delta\bar{X}^{\text{control}}$	-0.028
DiD Estimate	$\Delta\ln(\hat{wage})^{\text{treat}} - \Delta\ln(\hat{wage})^{\text{control}}$	-0.031*** (0.011)

- Wage declines are over 90% attributable to shifting composition! [Back](#)

# Log Total Output

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Bonus	0.057***	0.051***	0.051***	0.052***	0.054***
(SE)	(0.015)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.014)
[p-value]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]
Plant & Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
State×Year FE		✓	✓	✓	✓
PlantSize <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE			✓	✓	✓
TFP <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE				✓	✓
FirmSize <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE					✓

# Log Total Factor Productivity

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Bonus	-0.0007	-0.0015	-0.0011	-0.0017	-0.0028
(SE)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.006)
[p-value]	[0.910]	[0.806]	[0.857]	[0.777]	[0.635]
Plant & Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
State×Year FE		✓	✓	✓	✓
PlantSize <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE			✓	✓	✓
TFP <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE				✓	✓
FirmSize <sub>2001</sub> ×Year FE					✓

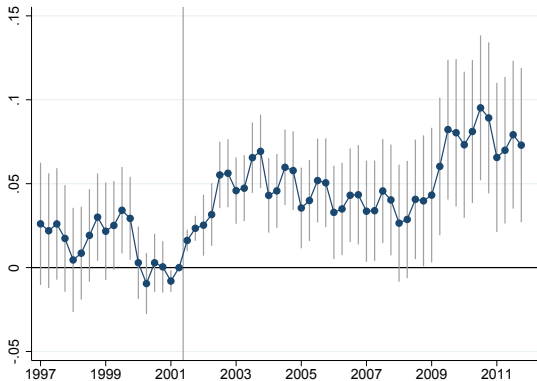
# Additional Outcomes

	(1) Log Prod. Hours	(2) Log Nonprod. Hours	(3) Log Materials
Bonus	0.0863*** (0.0181) [0.000]	0.0582* (0.0311) [0.061]	0.0832** (0.0344) [0.016]
Plant FE	✓	✓	✓
State×Year FE	✓	✓	✓

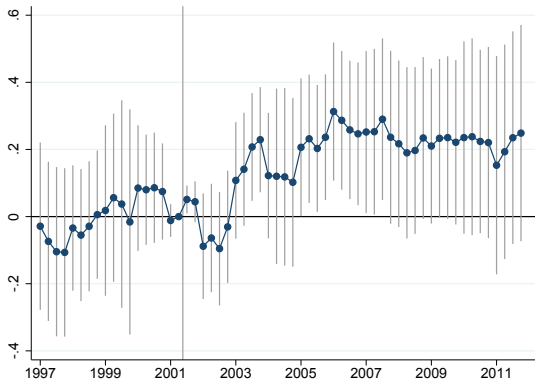


# Small and Young Firms

## Firms with 1-50 Employees

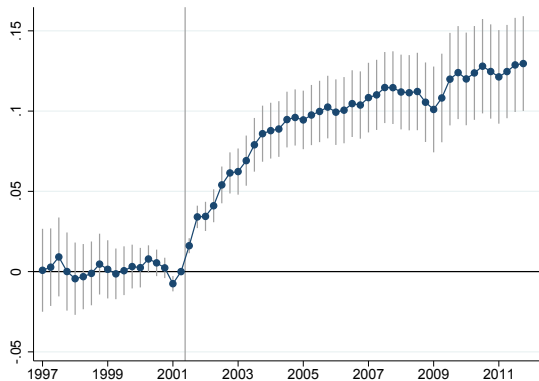


## Firms 0-5 Years Old

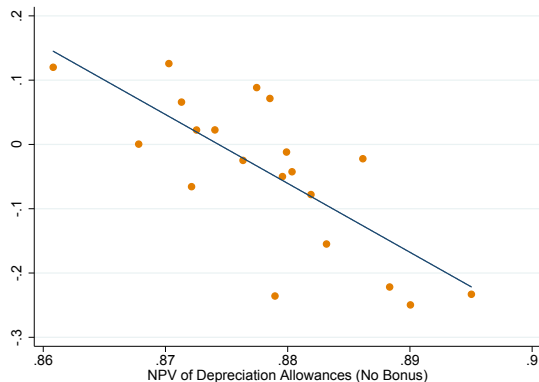


# Log Employment (QWI Data) Continuous Treatment

Continuous Treatment

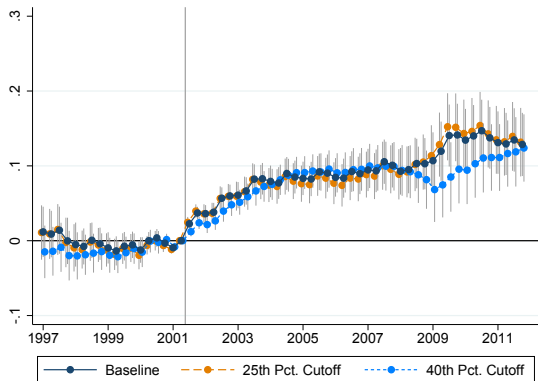


Bin scatter of Year Changes by  $z_0$

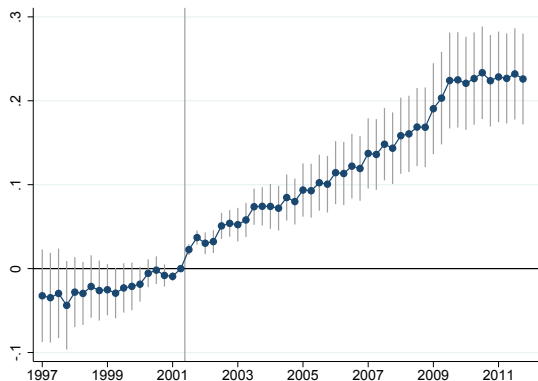


# Effects of Bonus on Employment: Robustness (1/2)

## Different Treatment Cutoffs

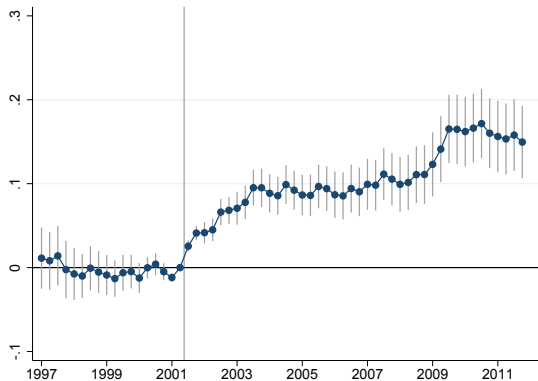


## Capital Producer Controls

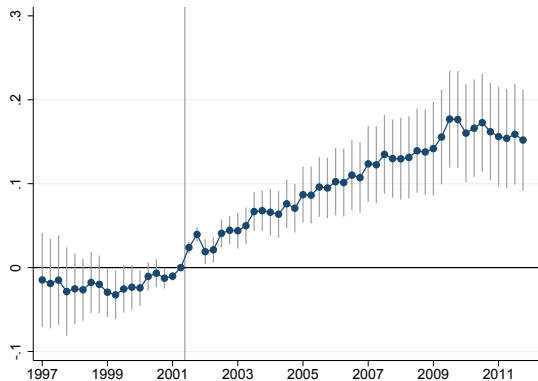


# Effects of Bonus on Employment: Robustness (2/2)

## Cost of Capital Controls

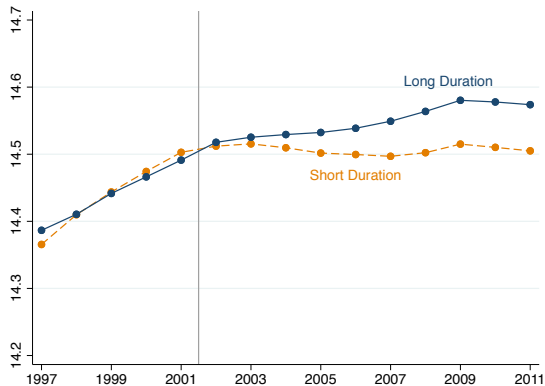


## ICT Intensity Controls

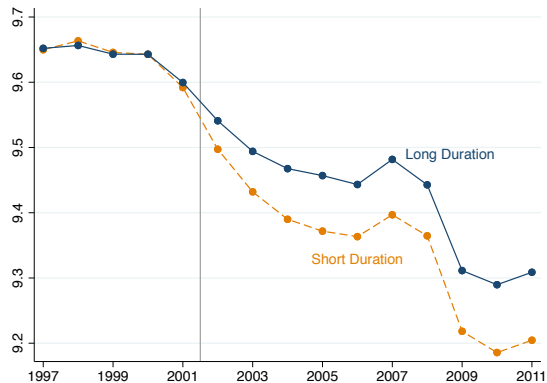


# Effects of Bonus Depreciation on Aggregate Trends

## Log Capital Stock



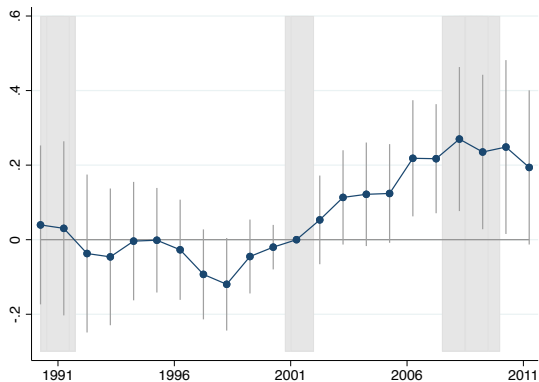
## Log Employment



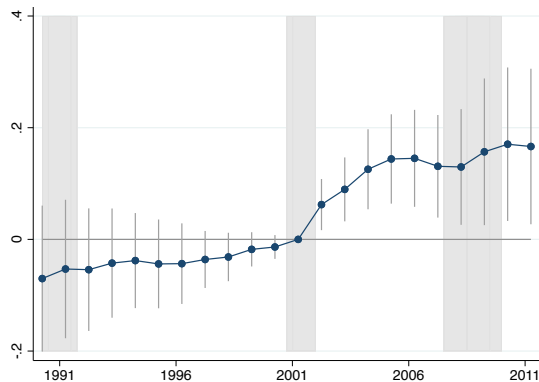
Back

# U.S. Manufacturing Over the Business Cycle

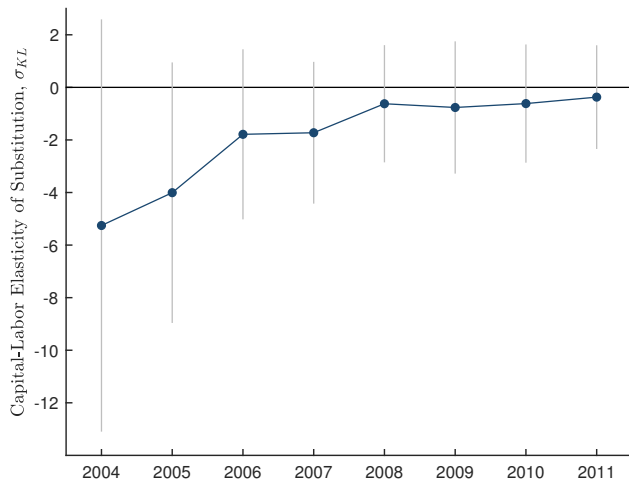
## Log Investment



## Log Employment



# Capital-Production Labor Substitution over Time



# Estimates of Nested CES Production Function

	(1) Baseline	(2) Low $s_K$	(3) High $s_K$	(4) Low $\eta$	(5) High $\eta$	(6) Est. $\eta$
Panel A: CES Parameter Estimates						
Nonproduction Labor, $\rho_1$	-0.552 (2.152)	-0.556 (2.155)	-0.551 (2.156)	-1.812 (4.863)	-0.063 (1.330)	-0.211 (1.564)
Production Labor, $\rho_2$	3.587 (4.682)	3.446 (4.213)	3.791 (5.510)	5.687 (10.450)	2.772 (2.907)	3.019 (3.415)
Panel B: p-values for Skill Complementarity Test						
$H_0 : \sigma_{KL} - \sigma_{KJ} - 1 > 0$	0.052	0.054	0.051	0.003	0.127	0.098
<i>Cost shares:</i>						
Production labor	0.50	0.55	0.45	0.50	0.50	0.50
Nonproduction labor	0.30	0.35	0.25	0.30	0.30	0.30
Capital	0.20	0.10	0.30	0.20	0.20	0.20
Effect on Cost of Capital, $\phi$	-0.14	-0.28	-0.09	-0.25	-0.10	-0.11
Demand Elasticity, $\eta$	3.50	3.50	3.50	2.00	5.00	4.42

$$F(K, J, L) = \left[ \mu_1 J^{\rho_1} + (1 - \mu_1) (\mu_2 L^{\rho_2} + (1 - \mu_2) K^{\rho_2})^{\frac{\rho_1}{\rho_2}} \right]^{\frac{1}{\rho_1}}$$



# Employment Effects by Education and Age

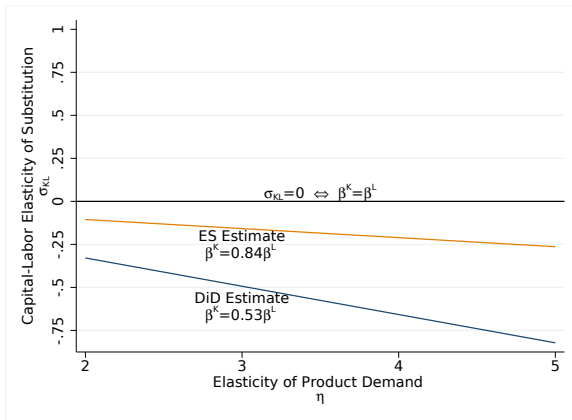
	(1) Log(Emp)	(2) Log(Earn)	(3) % < HS	(4) % < 35 years
Difference-in-Differences				
Bonus	0.097*** (0.0156) [0.000]	-0.031*** (0.00547) [0.000]	0.00259*** (0.000605) [0.000]	0.01285*** (0.0024862) [0.000]
Long Differences				
Bonus	0.135*** (0.0216) [0.000]	-0.0314*** (0.0078) [0.000]	0.00394*** (0.000724) [0.000]	0.0306*** (0.00679) [0.000]
Share2001			0.25	0.3
State×NAICS FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
State×Quarter FE	✓	✓	✓	✓

# Employment Effects by Gender, Race, and Ethnicity

	(1) % Female	(2) % Nonwhite	(3) % Black	(4) % Hispanic
Difference-in-Differences				
Bonus	0.00822*** (0.00151) [0.000]	0.000267 (0.000958) [0.780]	0.0012 (0.00074) [0.105]	0.00536*** (0.000969) [0.000]
Long Differences				
Bonus	0.0118*** (0.0022) [0.000]	0.000678 (0.00211) [0.748]	0.00409*** (0.00153) [0.008]	0.00589*** (0.0017) [0.001]
Share2001	0.25	0.26	0.07	0.06
State×NAICS FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
State×Quarter FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pre-Period Growth FE	✓	✓	✓	✓

## 2 Input Model: Capital-Labor Elasticity of Substitution

$$\sigma_{KL} = \eta \left( 1 - \frac{\beta^L}{s_L \beta^L + s_K \beta^K} \right)$$



# Heterogeneity by Labor Costs: Employment

	(1) Union	(2) RTW	(3) ln(HHI)
Bonus	0.111***	0.068***	0.082***
(SE)	(0.011)	(0.013)	(0.010)
[p-value]	[0.000]	[0.000]	[0.000]
Bonus×Interact	-0.062***	0.0294	-0.0053
(SE)	(0.012)	(0.019)	(0.005)
[p-value]	[0.000]	[0.124]	[0.308]
Plant FE	✓	✓	✓
State×Year FE	✓	✓	✓

# Heterogeneity by Labor Costs: Earnings

	(1) Union	(2) RTW	(3) ln(HHI)
Bonus	-0.016***	-0.023***	-0.022***
(SE)	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.004)
[p-value]	[0.003]	[0.000]	[0.000]
Bonus×Interact	-0.010*	0.0052	0.008***
(SE)	(0.006)	(0.009)	(0.003)
[p-value]	[0.097]	[0.545]	[0.005]
Plant FE	✓	✓	✓
State×Year FE	✓	✓	✓