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Does Dividend Tax Impede Competition for Corporate Charters?

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## Highlights

- We develop a model of jurisdictional competition for corporate charters among the states in which a corporation's agency cost depends on the federal dividend income tax rate and the takeover regulations of its domicile state.
- When corporations are mobile across states, the federal dividend income tax rate affects both the intensity of competition among the states and the equilibrium level of state takeover regulations.
- Our model shows that increasing dividend tax rate weakens the competition for corporate charters under a condition: dividend-paying and the market for corporate control are complementary corporate governance mechanisms.
- Our results suggest that dividend tax not only discourages firms from paying dividends but also weakens their corporate governance by disincentivizing states to improve their corporate laws.

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