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Aiding and Abetting the President: Agency Responsiveness to Presidential Electoral Interests

John Hudak

Abstract

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> *"Article I Section 9 says, clearly, we are the ones who are supposed to make these spending determinations in Congress. Now there are a lot of spending determinations that are made that I bitterly oppose. But if you say that you end all—they call them 'earmarks'…then that means all that is going to be done by Barack Obama in the White House. It will go to the Executive."*
>
> Senator James Inhofe (R-OK), March 14, 2010[1]

In this statement, Senator Inhofe explicitly discusses a battle constantly waged between the branches of government regarding who controls public policy. Inhofe defends the power of Congress to direct federal agencies in the allocation of funds. Failure to provide this direction amounts to what Indiana Senator Richard Lugar calls a, "surrendering of Constitutional authority to Washington bureaucrats and the Obama Administration" (Lugar 2010). Two issues drive this debate and underlie the Senators' concerns. To whom are agencies responsive? And what preferences do agency outcomes reflect?

Agency responsiveness to political elites has long been a topic of interest to scholars of executive branch politics. The question of whether public policy reflects the preferences of political principals drives research on political control. In doing so, scholars identify key agency characteristics that influence political control of the bureaucracy. However, much of this work rests upon narrow empirical or theoretical evaluations of this phenomenon.

Emerging from this stream of scholarship are three schools of thought: Congressional dominance, presidential dominance, and bureaucratic autonomy. These schools respectively expound the power of the legislative branch, the chief executive, or individual agencies as the engines that power policymaking in the United States. Though with exceptions, particularly of late, such studies narrowly examine one or a few federal agencies and explain how the interaction between an agency and political superiors demonstrates the core of power and

[1] Jeffrey, Terence P. "Leading Conservative Senator: Congress has a Right, and Duty, to Earmark." CNSnews.com. 14 March 2010. http://www.cnsnews.com/news/article/62746

control. The result is a theoretically engaging, yet empirically limited evaluation of political control of the bureaucracy.

Because of this research, scholars often view agency responsiveness as a linear concept born of an *ex ante* inertia that establishes a relationship between agencies (outcomes) and elected overseers. However, not all agencies function in a way such that Congress (or the President or the agencies themselves) is singularly empowered to affect all policy outputs. Instead, the system of separated powers drives compromises regarding the creation, reauthorization, and existence of agencies, such that a diversity of interests influences policymaking.

This paper considers how agency responsiveness to presidential electoral preferences varies across different agency structures. Specifically, I employ a systematic analysis of how key agency characteristics affect the way federal grants are allocated in the context of presidential electoral goals. At the same time, this paper offers an integrated theory of agency responsiveness that considers both legislative and executive influence over distributive public policy outcomes.

The paper proceeds as follows. First, I review the literature outlining the presidential electoral motive and discuss the ways in which it manifests in presidential behavior and public policy production. Second, I describe the theoretical and empirical weaknesses facing work in this area. Third, I present a theory of agency responsiveness to presidential electoral preferences. Finally, I present several models of federal grant allocations and estimate the conditional relationship between agency attributes and responsiveness to presidential preferences. The findings demonstrate that presidents are motivated by their own electoral preferences and seek policy outcomes that enhance those preferences. At the same time, ideological and structural factors condition agency responsiveness. Specifically, ideological proximity, degree of agency politicization, and level of political control enhance responsiveness and facilitate a presidential electoral strategy in the allocation of federal grants.

The Election Driven President

The president is typically viewed as a major player in universalistic public policy ventures involving issues such as security, foreign policy, and the macroeconomy (Alesina and Rosenthal 1989; Neustadt 1960; Tufte 1980). Much of the work in this area argues that partisan or ideological preferences drive these broad policy pursuits. Presidents signal their preferences in these policy areas through public support for legislative proposals (Canes-Wrone 2001; Canes-Wrone and Shotts 2004; Cohen 1997; Kernell 1993), budgeting and funding priorities (Bertelli and Grose 2009; Krause 1996), and guidance in administrative rulemaking (Cooper and West 1988; Wiseman 2009).

However, recent work notes that partisanship, ideology, and legacy are not the only or even the primary preferences that presidents seek to satisfy. Instead, presidents are primarily electorally-minded individuals whose electoral preferences will motivate control over bureaucratic outcomes. While existing research essentially regards as a truism that Members of Congress are election-driven actors who seek to provide particularized benefits to their constituencies, presidents are often seen as part of a different and unique category of elected officials (See Mayhew 1974, Lowi 1969, and their progeny).

However, this hierarchy of preferences, in which electoral concerns are primary and a necessary condition for success in other areas, must also exist for presidents. Of late, scholars have considered the presidential electoral motivation as an explanation for presidential behavior. In the context of campaigning, researchers have examined how presidents seek to control local media messaging and advertising in order to be successful in the race for the White House (Shaw

2006; Shaw and Roberts 2000). In fact, Shaw describes the expansiveness of the presidential electoral effort that exhausts time, financial, and personnel resources over the course of years.

Additionally, other work demonstrates that presidents will modify behavior as a response to the political and electoral environment and their own popularity (Canes-Wrone, Herron and Shotts 2001; Canes-Wrone and Shotts 2004). Such behavioral modifications can have real effects on policy outcomes in myriad ways. This paper focuses on how electoral politics motivates changes in distributive policy. Some work argues that the electoral competitiveness of states in presidential elections, the proximity of those elections, and constituency partisanship influence where the administration directs federal funds (Chen 2009; Hudak 2010; Mebane and Wawro 2002; Shor 2006). Others argue that co-partisan electoral considerations drive presidents to allocate federal funds to congressional districts or to states with governors of the same party (Berry, Burden and Howell 2010; Berry and Gersen 2010; Larcinese, Rizzo, and Testa 2006). What these studies suggest is that presidents are not only driven by electoral interests, but that presidents harness their policy making and translate it into a tool to aid in their electoral success.

This recent work also brings to light an oft-overlooked aspect of executive branch behavior: the presidential porkbarrel. Of course, the literature on legislative elections is saturated with studies that demonstrate that Members of Congress seek to funnel federal money to their constituencies. However, because of the size of the national constituency and the wide ranging responsibilities facing presidents, they are often precluded from such basic political behaviors, "prefer(ring) public policy ventures of more diffuse impact" (Mayhew 1974, 128). By relying on both the presidential electoral motive and executive branch discretionary authority over the allocation of certain federal funds, scholars observe that presidents behave in much the same way. For example, research finds that the agencies of the executive branch direct federal funds to swing states in presidential elections (Hudak 2010; Shor 2006), the districts and states of the president's co-partisans in Congress (Berry and Gersen 2010; Berry, Burden and Howell 2011; Bertelli and Grose 2008), and to the president's gubernatorial co-partisans (Larcinese, Rizzo, and Testa 2006).

In the context of presidential elections, research empirically demonstrates that presidents are predominantly concerned with their appeal in swing states and that advertising dollars, campaign visits and parts of the federal largesse are directed to these states (Hudak 2010; Shaw 2006; Shor 2006). Theoretical work on distributive politics argues that swing constituencies are key recipients of government funds, as their voting decisions are most easily persuadable. Dixit and Londregan explain that moderate constituencies are appealed to because of their "relatively high willingness to abandon their ideological preferences in exchange for particularistic benefits"(1996, 1133; see also Lindbeck and Weibull 1987). While the swing voter hypothesis is the subject of debate among legislative scholars, Hudak (2010) notes that the institutional design of the Electoral College makes the swing voter (state) hypothesis particularly applicable to presidential elections. Thus, while participating in porkbarrel politics, the election driven president will be motivated to direct federal funds to swing states. It becomes a goal to make agencies responsive to these preferences and allocate funds in this electorally strategic manner.

The Myth of Agency Homogeneity

Research into the presidential porkbarrel informs our understanding of presidential motivations and enlightens our views of the political and electoral forces that influence policy outcomes. This research has done much to offer a dynamic view of federal fund distribution, departing from work that argues that absolute Congressional control over federal dollars determines outcomes. Additionally, scholarship in this area often disentangles federal outlays into their component parts (i.e., contracts, formula grants, project grants) to elucidate that different types of spending are subject to differential institutional influences.

Despite theoretical and empirical diversification that allows presidential influence to be more accessible to scholars, a single underlying assumption often limits the travel of this work. Typically, scholars examine the presidential porkbarrel in one of two ways. One approach examines federal spending at the aggregate level.[2] Often annual fund allocations to states or congressional districts serves as the unit of analysis (Berry Burden and Howell 2011; Hoover and Pecorino 2005; Hudak 2010; Larcinese, Rizzo, and Testa 2005; Shor 2006). Another approach offers a detailed examination of the allocation processes of one or a few federal agencies and draws conclusions about government outlays accordingly (Bertelli and Grose 2009; Chen 2008; Gasper and Reeves 2011). What unites these works is a theoretical assumption that distributive federal agencies operate similarly. This research has offered a greater understanding of strategic distribution at the aggregate level, while failing to consider how institutional dynamics influence agency operations and responsiveness to political principals (but see Berry and Gersen [2010]).[3]

Although informative, this approach to evaluating presidential influence does not reflect decades of research into presidential politics that suggests that the executive branch is a dynamic entity and that differences across institutions dramatically influence the production of public policy. In describing the processes and considerations that guide political elites in the design of bureaucratic institutions, Terry Moe explains that, “structural choices have important consequences for the content and direction of policy” (1989, 268).

[2] Although some works examines aggregate federal outlays, often this work focuses on specific types of federal spending. However, scholars often consider the aggregate allocation of these funds to specific recipient types.

[3] Of course, such an oversight of the importance of agency structure can occur for many reasons, including the availability of data. I do not suggest such approaches to research occur because a lack of thoughtful research design, but rather because the presidential porkbarrel is an emerging literature and some of the previous work has built the foundation for such an analysis.

Scholars have discussed myriad agency structures and characteristics that condition agency responsiveness and policy outcomes. Generally, these characteristics fall into two categories: internal behavioral traits and externally-devised design traits. The manner in which an agency is designed has dramatic effects on policy outcomes. Internal behavioral traits can include agency ideology, professionalization and expertise, and the personality of bureaucrats. External traits are numerous and include politicization, centralization, insulation and independence, and discretion, among others.[4]

From a theoretical perspective, considering agency characteristics in the evaluation of presidential porkbarrel politics is vital. The only constructs under which agency characteristics would be irrelevant to presidential influence over the distribution of funds would involve direct presidential intervention in every distributive decision or perfect agency responsiveness to presidential preferences. In the first scenario, agencies would not be responsible for the distribution of funds, but instead, the president would be directly. In the second scenario, agencies would be mechanized middle-men simply translating presidential preferences into outcomes. Of course, the administration of policy broadly and federal fund allocation specifically does not function in this way. Instead, decision making is made within some agency (sub-presidential) hierarchy. Because of this bureaucratic decision making process, any theory of presidential intervention in policy making must consider both presidential preferences over outcomes and the structural features of agencies that may condition responsiveness to those preferences.

Agency Responsiveness to Presidential Preferences over Pork

[4] Among internal traits, see Altfield and Miller 1984; Bertelli and Grose 2009; Bendor, Taylor and van Gaalen 1985; Carpenter 1999; Clinton and Lewis 2008; Gailmard and Patty 2007; Heclo 1977; Huber and McCarty 2004; Rourke 1984; Wilson 1989; and Wood and Waterman 2004. Among external traits, see Clayton 1992, Lewis 2008, Moe 1982, Nathan 1986, Randall 1989, Stewart and Cromartie 1982, Wood 1990; Hammond 1986, Moe 1985; Krause 1999, Lewis 2003, Moe and Wilson 1994, Seidman 1998, Seidman and Gilmour 1986, Wood and Waterman 1994.

Which agency characteristics influence bureaucratic responsiveness to presidential electoral preferences? In order to address this question, it is important to consider the means, mechanisms, and tools presidents use to motivate agencies to be responsive. Additionally, variation in these attributes across agencies will illuminate both the efficacy of these tools and their effect on responsiveness.

Moe and Wilson (1994) explains that four attributes of agencies condition the elected branches' power over the bureaucracy. "The design, location, staffing, and empowerment of administrative agencies," all influence the ability to control the institutions of the executive branch (Moe and Wilson 1994, 4). Such structures serve as key components to agency operations and can dictate not just the level of political control, but which branch will exercise such control.

Building upon this theoretical foundation, I argue first that ideological congruence between an agency and the president (a symptom of staffing and design considerations) serves as an important condition for bureaucratic responsiveness. This congruence—motivated by shared preferences and overlapping interests—will facilitate the production of policy consistent with presidential goals. Beyond ideology, other structural features of agencies are keys to enhancing or limiting responsiveness. Specifically, agency discretion (empowerment), independence (location and design), and politicization (staffing) condition presidential control over the bureaucracy and thus agency responsiveness. Because the exercise of presidential power is dependent on these agency structures, it is vital to understand what conditions enhance the president's ability to extract preferred policy outcomes.

The ideological proximity between an agency and the president is key to understanding the policy process. Specifically, the ideology of bureaucrats and appointees has been shown to influence the types of policy that is produced (Clinton and Lewis 2008) as well as the responsiveness to presidential preferences (Bertelli and Grose 2009). Thus, agencies with ideologies more proximate to the president will be more responsive to presidential preferences, as presidents will face the least resistance from agencies. With a set of shared goals and preferences, ideologically proximate agencies will be more likely to produce outcomes consistent with presidential interests. Beyond a shared interest over policy, proximate agencies also see external benefits to an ideologically congruent president (or successor) being (re)elected. For example, employees in the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid or staffers at the Office of English Language Acquisition prefer a Democratic president at the helm of the bureaucracy to a Republican administration. When comparing ideologically distant and proximate agencies, differences in both policy processes and outcomes are profound. In this way, presidents face a much easier path toward extracting preferred outcomes from ideologically agreeable institutions.

When an agency is subject to drift because of ideological disparity, presidents rely on key institutional mechanisms in an effort to control bureaucratic institutions. The first means by which presidents can garner greater responsiveness occurs when Congress delegates power to the executive branch. Discretion is the lifeblood of executive power and offers presidents the primary opportunity to exercise power and affect policy making. Specific statutes can meticulously outline not only the processes of public policy but also the expected outcomes. In this setting, the bureaucracy is substantially influenced by the will of Congress and is more responsive to the legislative branch. On the other hand, presidential influence is its greatest when the locus of decision making over policy rests in the executive branch. Such influence occurs when Congress directly relies on agencies to make policy decisions, allows executive interpretation of vague statutes (Epstein and O'Halloran 1999; Huber and Shipan 2002; Moe

1999), or when presidents act unilaterally (Cooper 2002; Howell 2003; Lewis 2003).[5] The context of federal spending offers presidents discretionary authority over a pool of government funds. Each year, Congress delegates decision making over the allocation of tens of millions of federal dollars. It is this authority that serves as the foundation for the presidential porkbarrel.

In addition to discretion, the leadership of individual agencies can have an important effect on responsiveness. The number of political appointments to be made within the institutions of the bureaucracy varies dramatically from one agency to the next. The saturation of political appointees within an agency (politicization) affects agency responsiveness, as well (Clayton 1992; Lewis 2008; Moe 1982; Randall 1989; Stewart and Cromartie 1982; Wood 1990). Presidents staff the upper-echelons of federal agencies often with individuals sympathetic to his interests (Lewis 2008; Moe 1982, 1985; Nathan 1986; Snyder and Weingast 2000; Stewart and Cromartie 1982; Wood and Waterman 1991, 1994). Appointees serve in key leadership and decision making posts throughout the bureaucracy and can have a dramatic effect on policy outcomes (Lewis 2008; Snyder and Weingast 2000).

The ability of a president to place individuals into leadership and decision making roles and affect their performance influences how closely policy outcomes will mirror presidential preferences. Agencies that are organized with few if any presidential appointees will likely be more responsive to other forces (Congress or their own agency preferences). However, more politicized agencies will likely respond to presidential will, as appointees often share presidential preferences or are subject to his influence directly. Nathan (1986) explains that presidents use

[5] If discretion empowers a president, even motivating him to enhance his electoral prospects, one must ask why would Congress delegate? Eisner argues that in a basic way, “delegation is the child of necessity” (1991, 6), as time and information asymmetries serve as key Congressional resource constraints (Epstein 1997; Epstein and O’Halloran 1999; Gilligan and Krehbiel 1987; Ripley and Franklin 1984). Additionally, some describe delegation as a means of directing blame for government failure (Fiorina 1977) or as a necessary part of coalition building in the legislative process (Arnold 1990; Epstein and O’Halloran 1999; McCubbins 1985).

signals to convey their (un)happiness with an appointee's work. In the context of influencing appointees and senior members of the bureaucracy, there is an ease in which signals if, "used skillfully…can reinforce the idea that presidential appointees should pursue presidential purposes and should devote time and attention to administrative process (Nathan 1986, 91).

Additionally, the internal structures and location of agencies can influence responsiveness. The intersection of structure and location can lead to *insulated independence*. Insulated independence occurs when an agency is designed in such a way that presidential control over the institution is dramatically limited. The location of an agency is the first step to understanding political influence. In studying agency location, scholars often argue that agency independence is an important factor in evaluating agency responsiveness. The definition of independence ranges from being located outside of a cabinet department (Seidman and Gilmour 1986) to an agency has "no layers of bureaucratic organization above it" (Lewis 2003, 46). However, according to these definitions both the Executive Office of the President and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission are independent. Yet, their exposure to presidential control is quite different. As a result, while institutional location vis-à-vis independence is important, it alone does not explain political control.

Instead, it is important to understand both independence and insulation. In this way, internal structures of agencies can work to insulate them from direct presidential control and thus allow it to be less responsive to presidential preferences. Here, certain agency rules and obligations can serve as a buffer to political control. For example, an agency budget process can be a source of insulation. Dependence on presidential approval or review before the submission of requests to Congress allows the president a means of control (Seidman and Gilmour 1986).

Next, Lewis (2003) explains that if an agency is governed by a commission structure, it tends to be insulated, “from presidential control by increasing the number of actors who must be influenced to change the direction of an agency” (46). Finally, what is called “specific qualifications for administrators” (Lewis 2003, 27) such as fixed or staggered terms and party balancing limits not only presidential influence, but how influential are presidential appointees in the leadership of an agency. As a result, the responsiveness of members of an insulated agency’s leadership can span different presidents and divergent ideologies. In this way, insulated independence closely reflects what George Krause calls, “the institutional proximity of bureaucratic and political institutions” (1999, 37). The effective means of presidential political control is dictated by more than simply the location of an agency within the bureaucracy, but also the president’s access to the policy making mechanisms within that agency (Seidman and Gilmour 1986; Seidman 1998; Wood and Waterman 1994). Thus, insulated independence serves as a means of lowering agency responsiveness to presidential preferences by limiting presidential influence within these agencies.

Thus, agency responsiveness depends on the unique relationship between agencies and presidential preferences and powers. Certain agencies are likely to be more responsive to presidential (electoral and policy) preferences because of common ideology and shared goals. However, in situations where responsiveness is uncertain (or an agency is subject to drift), specific structures condition presidential power and affect responsiveness. Discretion, politicization and agency independence all influence the president’s ability to extract preferred outcomes from the bureaucracy.

From this theoretical discussion, I proceed with a few basic hypotheses to test agency responsiveness to presidential preferences. These hypotheses predict the manner in which agency structures affect presidential influence over bureaucratic institutions and ultimately how responsive those agencies are to presidential electoral preferences.

H1: Ideological Congruence Hypothesis. Liberal agencies will be more responsive to a Democratic president's electoral interests.

H2: Politicization Hypothesis. More politicized agencies will be more responsive to presidential electoral interests.

H3: Insulated Independence Hypotheses. Less insulated agencies will be more responsive to presidents' electoral interests.

DATA

To address this research question, I rely on an evaluation of federal discretionary grants. Federal grants provide an ideal setting to test a theory of agency responsiveness, and discretionary grants serve an important role in this project specifically. Federal grants are allocated by hundreds of agencies each year and offer researchers the benefit of easily quantifiable measures of policy production: the number of grants and grant dollars. Scholars of political control, the bureaucracy, the presidency, and Congress have long relied on federal grants as a means to test hypotheses within the discipline. In studies of Congress, scholars have examined federal outlays generally, as well as formula and block grants to evaluate the effect of the legislative branch on policy outcomes (Anagnoson 1982; Carsey and Rundquist 1999; Ferejohn 1974; Lee 2000, 2004; Levitt and Snyder 1995, 1997; Stein and Bickers 1995).

Moreover, as mentioned previously, presidency scholars have also used this arena for evaluating questions relevant to the study of the executive branch. However, as research points out, in evaluating presidential power in the realm of distributive politics, one must focus on discretionary grants.[6] Federal agencies make allocation decisions over discretionary grants, and this area of spending allows presidents clear influence (Berry, Burden and Howell 2010; Berry and Gersen 2010; Hudak 2010; Shor 2006). Additionally, consistent with the above theory, these grants hold constant an important variable in agency responsiveness to presidential preferences: discretion.[7]

In this paper, I examine agency-level discretionary grant allocations from 1996-2008. The grants data for this paper are drawn from the Federal Assistance Award Data System collected by the US Census Bureau. The data have been organized, such that the unit of analysis is the agency-state-year. The result is a database of 59,650 agency-state-year allocations.[8] Table 3.1 offers an overview of the average annual allocations by agencies in each Cabinet department. The table shows that while some departments typically distribute large sums of money, grant making exists across the bureaucracy.

For this project, I rely on two, related dependent variables that measure grant distribution.[9] First, I examine the logged number of grants allocated by an agency per state-year.[10] Second, I measure grants in dollars. However, a simple measure of constant grant dollars introduces a set of problems for analysis. Instead, I use real grant dollars per 100,000 people as a

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[6] For clarification, discretionary grants are those grant programs administered by the executive branch. They are almost always competitive in nature and seek funding for specific projects. Applicants apply to federal agencies for funding and those agencies have *discretion* over which applicants will receive funding.

[7] Other studies such as Lee (2004) Oppenheimer and Lee (1999) have looked specifically at non-discretionary grants to perform similar analyses of the role of Congress in distributive politics. Because funding allocation formulas for non-discretionary grants are developed and detailed in legislation and delegate little if any power to the executive branch, they are a key means of studying the power of Congress.

[8] Between 1996 and 2008, 152 agencies allocated grants to the states. However, not every agency allocated funds in every year. In this case, agencies that failed to allocate any funds in a given year do not appear in the dataset for that year. Also excluded were a set of data that were allocated not under an agency heading, but under a departmental heading. For example, the allocation label “Department of Agriculture” was too broad to be considered as consistent with other agency-specific data and were thus excluded.

[9] All models will be separately estimated for each dependent variable. This approach will offer key insight into allocations at the agency level and serve as a robustness check on the general findings.

[10] For all models that use the number of grants as the dependent variables, I include a control variable measuring state population in millions.

dependent variable. This dependent variable naturally controls for the effects of population differences among states and inflation over time.[11]

Independent Variables of Interest

Electoral Competitiveness

The core concept in this analysis of federal fund distribution is agency responsiveness to presidential electoral interests. Because an attention to and a focus on swing states drive presidential electoral behavior, I rely on a common measure of state electoral competitiveness to denote states as "swing" (see Abramowitz, et al 2006; Ansolabehere, et al 1992). By using the incumbent party share of the two party presidential vote from the previous election, a state is labeled swing if it was decided by 10% of less.[12] This measure has been used as a standard in the literature and serves as the most valid indicator, given that presidential strategy endures over presidential tenure[13] (see Hudak 2010).

Agency Characteristics

The first characteristic of interest measures the ideological relationship between agency and president. This measure, based on agency ideal points from Clinton and Lewis (2008), is dichotomous, taking the value of one for a liberal agency under a Democratic president (conservative agency under a Republican). This measure effectively captures the ideological alignment (divergence) between bureaucratic institutions and their chief executive.

[11] The choice of 100,000 people as a base for the population adjustment allows for more easily interpretable results.
[12] For all analyses, the reference case is "non-swing"—a state decided by more than 10%.
[13] This measure is ideal because the information is available immediately after an election. More accurate indicators regarding the state of the presidential race, of course, update as an election draws near. For example, Shaw (2006) offers lists of states active presidential campaigns consider most competitive. While Shaw's information is important and highly valid for its own purposes, such lists are not available across all presidential elections nor immediately devised post-election. Instead, these data are created in the months leading up to an election and provide little insight into presidential strategy far in advance of an election. Instead, reliance on previous electoral outcomes utilizes the most available, accurate, useable, and consistent information regarding the electoral competitiveness of states.

Next, I include a measure of agency politicization, using the measure from Lewis (2008). Specifically, politicization is the ratio between presidential appointees and career-level managers within an agency.[14] This measure notes the saturation of political actors in the decision making structure of agencies, compared to senior civil servants.

Finally, I use a three part measure of an agency's insulated independence. This measure accounts for both the location and structure of agencies that may insulate them from (or wed them to) political control. Dummy variables denote a bureaucratic institution as being part of the Cabinet, as an independent agency, or as an independent commission.[15]

Timing

I also include two measures of timing that serve multiple purposes. First a dichotomous variable measures the proximity of a presidential election, taking the value of one in the two years prior to an election. The second variable denotes a president's first term. In addition to measuring the salience of electoral concerns to an incumbent administration, these measures offer fixed effects for time. Thus, these measures allow a more conservative modeling approach, while providing substantive insight into federal fund allocation.

Controls

Congress: A Primary Alternative

Much of the literature on distributive politics focuses on the role of Congress as the chief appropriator. While this paper examines a type of spending for which Congress has delegated allocation authority, legislative influence still serves as the chief alternative hypothesis. As such, I rely on a host of Congress controls in order to evaluate this hypothesis. Specifically, I include standard measures of ideological, electoral, and institutional measures often association with

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[14] A political appointee is defined as an individual who is Senate confirmed, a schedule C employee, or a non-career member of the Senior Executive Service. A sample of agencies and politicization scores can be found in Table 3.2.
[15] Data on agency structure and location are drawn from David Lewis' *Administrative Agency Insulation Data Set*

legislative distributive power.[16] Additionally, because this analysis focuses on the agency level, I include measures of a state's representation on House and Senate Appropriations subcommittees with oversight over given agencies. These measures offer a direct evaluation of Congress' distributive power and the influence of key members. Finally, I include a dichotomous measure of divided government.

Federalism and Partisan Support

Other research into the distribution of federal funds (most notably Larcinese, Rizzo, and Testa 2006) suggests presidents seek the distribution of funds support states with gubernatorial copartisans. To account for such influence, I include measures of partisan alignment between president and governor, gubernatorial election year, and the interaction of the two.

State-Level Demand

Last, I consider the state need and demand for federal funding as an alternative. Measures of gross state product, miles of roads, and number of universities and hospitals measure the economic and research capacities of states. The inclusion of the percentage of the population that is elderly offers insight into the specific demographic demands facing a state. Finally, a disaster measure controls for the demand for funds in the aftermaths of the 2001 terror attacks in New York and Hurricane Katrina in Louisiana and Mississippi.

Methods

To test the hypotheses, I construct a methodological approach that reflects the theoretical understanding of the impact of agency characteristics on responsiveness to presidential electoral interests. In this section, I detail this methodological approach and the modeling decisions used in evaluating the broader research question. Although multiple models are used in this paper, there remains a consistency throughout in the use of both dependent variables and the

[16] A full listing of all dependent and independent variables and their operationalization can be found in Appendix I.

employment of two estimation techniques. Specifically, for all models and both dependent variables, I first estimate the data using ordinary least squares with fixed effects appropriate for that specific model. Second I employ the use of Tobit to estimate the data.

The choice of two estimation techniques aids in the evaluation of the research question in several ways. While the techniques differ methodologically, they calculate estimates in reasonably similar ways. As a result, consistency in estimates across techniques (and dependent variables) serves as a robustness check on the findings. Additionally, each estimation technique has its own strengths. Employing ordinary least squares with fixed effects offers a more conservative methodological approach with the inclusion of added controls; the use of Tobit takes into account the left censoring of data at zero.[17]

The empirical effort will proceed as follows. First, I offer a direct test of hypothesis one, estimating the effect of ideological convergence on agency responsiveness. Second, I include politicization variables as a direct test of hypothesis two. Third, I introduce measures of insulated independence as a test of hypothesis three. I interact each of these variables of interest with the swing state variable to evaluate responsiveness to presidential electoral interests.

As an additional test of hypotheses one and two, I divide the data according to measures of insulated independence—Cabinet agencies, independent agencies, and independent commissions. The division of the data offers a pure assessment of the research question, particularly if different agency types allocate grants according to different functional forms. I

[17] Ordinary least squares offers insight into this variation in an important, conservative way. However, the abundance of "zero allocations" (left censoring of the data) presents a methodological challenge. In the data as much as 30% of the observations are zero, as many federal grant programs do not allocate universally to all states in all years. Estimating censored data with ordinary least squares can bias estimates downward (Amemiya 1984; Greene 1993; Tobin 1958). Employing Tobit allows for the estimation in a manner that accounts for this character of data. As a result, Tobit serves as an appealing alternative, while further demonstrating that ordinary least squares with fixed effects is a more conservative estimation technique.

then separately reestimate the models that test the effect of ideological convergence and politicization on responsiveness.

In sum, this methodological approach offers a rigorous test of the hypotheses and evaluation of the broader research question. Moreover, the reliance on multiple dependent variables, estimation techniques, and models can speak to the robustness of the findings, suggesting the strength and validity of findings and conclusions.

RESULTS

Table 3.3 reports the estimates of model that evaluate the effect of ideological convergence on responsiveness to presidential electoral interests. This model serves as a direct test of hypothesis one. The data offer interesting results. The interaction term between ideological convergence and swing state fails to reach statistical significance. This finding suggests that ideological proximity between president and agency does not influence responsiveness. However, it does not suggest agencies are not responsive. Instead, the estimate for the effect of state electoral competitiveness has an independent and robust effect on grant allocations. Specifically, swing states can expect to receive 4-5% more grants and 7-9% more grant dollars than non-swing states. Such results translate into real benefits. In concrete terms, consider a non-swing state of average size such as Tennessee. These results suggest that if Tennessee were a swing state, it could expect to see agency-level grant allocations increase by an average of $1.1-$1.3 million annually. Taken together, these findings demonstrate that bureaucratic responsiveness to presidential electoral interests occurs across federal agencies, regardless of ideological alignment with the president.

Next, the estimates demonstrate the importance of a dynamic theory of grant distribution that incorporates executive and legislative influence. The estimates suggest a benefit associated with membership on the Senate Appropriations Committee and the relevant House and Senate Appropriations subcommittees with oversight. However, it is important to note that this project does not isolate the source of this (sub)committee benefit. While funding could be directed in this way because of direct Congressional intervention, such allocations can also occur because a president seeks to placate Congressional appropriators who he depends on for continued discretionary authority.

In addition to evaluating the effect of ideology, the theory suggests politicization provides the president a useful means of controlling the bureaucracy. As such, I reestimate the models from Table 3.3, but include a measure of politicization and the interaction of politicization and the swing state variable. Table 3.4 reports the estimates of this analysis. Here, a few important trends emerge. First, the ideology-swing state interaction fails to reach statistical significant, in a manner similar to the estimates in previous models. Similarly, the interaction between politicization and state competitiveness either fails to reach statistical significance or has a substantively small effect in the direction opposite that predicted in hypothesis two. Despite these results, the independent effect of the swing state variable is strong significant and consistent with the expectations of the broader theory and is robust across specifications and estimation techniques. Once again findings suggest agency responsiveness to presidential electoral interests is symptomatic of bureaucratic behavior more generally and occurs regardless of ideological congruence or agency politicization.[18]

Consistent with the estimates presented in Table 3.3, state representation on relevant Appropriations committees is consistent with a benefit in the receipt of grants and grant dollars.

[18] Additional specifications of this model can be found in Appendix 1. Specifically, I separate agencies into ideologically convergent and divergent types and re-estimate all models in order to see whether politicization affects responsiveness conditionally according to the ideological relationship with the president. Consistent with the results reported in Table 3.4, the independent effect of state electoral competitiveness is significant and robust, while the politicization interaction fails to reach statistical significant.

Similar to the previous results, and almost universally across all specifications in this project, the only significant Congress effects are those associated with the relevant Appropriations institutions. Other variables measuring Senate leadership or Senate electoral and partisan motives appear not to be related to grant allocations.

Table 3.5 reports the estimates of the four models including the same specification from 3.4, but including measures of agency insulation and interactions with state electoral competitiveness. Specifically, I include two dummy variables that denote whether an agency is in the Cabinet or is an independent agency. Independent commission serves as the reference case. The insulation variables are interacted with the swing state variable to allow an evaluation of their effects on responsiveness and as a test of hypothesis three. Here again the respective interactions of ideological convergence and politicization with state electoral competitiveness fail to reach statistical significance. However, the estimates for the interactions of insulation variables and swing state suggest that agency insulation conditions agency responsiveness to the president. However, the nature of the interaction variables makes interpretation difficult, and ultimately, limited. For example, the estimates from model 3 of Table 3.5 suggest that compared to independent commissions, cabinet agencies allocate more grant dollars to swing states than to non-swing states.[19] Although this finding is both substantively and statistically significant, the interpretation of the estimate is a bit opaque. Additionally, as mentioned before, there exist a concern theoretically (and now empirically) that the functional form of agencies of varying levels of insulation differ.

To this end, I divide the data for Cabinet agencies, Independent agencies, and Independent commissions and reestimate the four models for each type. Table 3.6 presents the estimates for Cabinet agencies. The estimates generally reflect the trends observed in the full

[19] The estimates here are imprecise but all approach statistical significance and are in the expected direction.

dataset. This result comes as no surprise, given that the majority of agencies in the dataset is located in the Cabinet. Briefly, the estimates for the interaction variables fail to reach statistical significance while those for the swing state variable demonstrates that there is a large, significant and robust effect associated with state electoral competitiveness. This result suggests that across the Cabinet, agencies are generally responsive to presidential electoral interests. That is, the President's Cabinet allocates more grants and grant dollars to swing states than to non-swing states. Moreover, this finding is robust across different specifications and estimations and after controlling for Congressional influence, state-level copartisanship, and state need.

The analyses involving non-Cabinet agencies offer unique and interesting results. First, Table 3.7 presents the estimates of models of agency responsiveness for independent agencies. The estimates fail to show a direct relationship between state electoral competitiveness and grant allocations—a finding that was robust in earlier specifications. Instead, the estimates show a strong interactive relationship between politicization and state competitiveness on grant allocations. Specifically, for a politicized agency, swing states can expect to receive between 50%-70% more grant dollars than non-swing states. Again, using the Tennessee example, as a swing state, it would receive an additional 30-43 grants and 8-10 million additional dollars from a more politicized agency. Such benefits mean a real impact on the lives of those who live in electorally competitive states. Beyond a large substantive impact on grant allocations, the politicization finding offers key insight into the function of bureaucratic institutions, while offering support for hypothesis two. It suggests that independent agencies' responsiveness to presidential interests is dependent on and influenced dramatically by the saturation of political appointees in a given institution.

This result makes sense from a theoretical perspective, while lending support and adding texture to hypothesis two. Independent agencies are often designed in a manner that seeks to insulate it from political control. These results offer an understanding of the way in which political control manifests and agencies become responsive to political principals. Presidents require political appointees to motivate agencies to be responsive. When political appointees saturate the management of an agency, the distribution of federal grants will better reflect presidential electoral interests.

Moreover, Congress remains the source of funding for nearly all independent agencies. As such, membership on the Senate Appropriations Committee and relevant House Appropriations subcommittees is associated with a benefit in grant allocations. It should be noted that while the results in this set of models are robust and strong, the number of independent agencies allocating discretionary grants is limited. While the 13 years under analysis in this paper increases the number of cases, the conclusions drawn here are based on eight distinct independent agencies. As a result, these findings should be put into perspective. Although they offer substantial and robust evidence of specific political phenomena that well reflect theoretical expectations, the findings cannot be considered absolutely conclusive.[20] Ideally, more data would be used to offer a broader perspective; however, such expanded analysis is limited by the small number of independent agencies and the even smaller subset that allocates discretionary grants.

Finally, I reestimate the models using only data from independent commissions. Commissions are considered more insulated than Cabinet or independent agencies because they often have fixed and staggered terms and party balancing rules for commissioners. In this analysis as reported in Table 3.8, unlike that of independent agencies, there appears to be no

[20] A similar caveat must be applied to the results for independent commissions. Like the data for independent agencies, the conclusions are based on eight independent commissions.

effect associated with politicization. This finding emerges logically from the structures of commissions. A single president's ability to staff the leadership of a commission is diluted by staggered terms and party balancing rules governing appointments. Because of these rules, some appointees are often installed by previous presidents. Such institutional details should limit agency responsiveness, particularly in the context of politicization. However, the interaction between agency ideological convergence and state electoral competitiveness is strong and fairly robust. The estimates show that agencies ideologically aligned with the president allocate between 31% and 42% more grant dollars to swing states than to non-swing states.[21] This finding suggests that when an agency is insulated politically, bureaucratic ideological alignment becomes a source of responsiveness to presidential electoral interests.

In terms of Congressional effects for independent agencies and commissions, interesting results emerge. First, departing from the robustness of previous estimations, the results here are mixed. Membership on the Senate Appropriations Committee is not associated with an increase in grants from independent institutions. Membership on relevant appropriations subcommittees with oversight also offer mixed results. House subcommittee membership is associated with an increase in grant dollars from independent agencies. Similarly, Senate subcommittee membership increases grant dollar allocations from commissions. One counterintuitive yet robust finding is that a state represented by a House member seated on the relevant Appropriations subcommittee with oversight will see a dramatic *decrease* in commission-level grant allocations. Such a finding suggests that independent commissions seek to satisfy a different (committee) constituency in the House of Representatives, such as the authorization (sub)committee(s).

In sum, these findings support the general claim that federal agencies, particularly those subject to White House influence are responsive to presidential electoral interests. Additionally,

[21] The estimates for the number of grants are imprecise, but in the expected direction.

while state electoral competitiveness has an effect on grant allocations across all federal agencies, the manner in which it manifests is contingent on the level of insulation of an agency vis-à-vis the president. Finally, membership on relevant Congressional Appropriations Committees is often associated with increased grant allocations. Taken as a whole, these findings suggest that both presidential and Congressional preferences must be considered in the study of the distribution of federal funds.

ANALYSIS

This paper offers general support for the theoretical claim that presidents are motivated by electoral interest and participate in porkbarrel politics to advance those interests. Throughout the analyses presented here, the distribution of federal discretionary grants are biased toward those states most competitive in presidential elections. Swing states consistently fare better than non-swing states in receipt of funds over which the executive branch maintains discretionary authority. These findings advance claims by previous research that argues that, like with Members of Congress, presidential interests influence the allocation of federal funds. This research argues specifically that in the context of discretionary funds, those interests most central to influencing allocations are a president's own electoral interests.

The presidential electoral motivation suggests the need for a specific empirical approach to the study of executive branch politics. The idea that presidents are interested in electoral success is certainly non-controversial. Despite this general understanding of presidential motives, research often portrays the chief executive as a policy-motivated partisan ideologue seeking to advance broad public policy efforts in areas such as defense, the macroeconomy, and social services. This research suggests the scope of the office and network of people and powers available to the president may mean that the administrative presidency has a more micro-level focus. Certainly, this research does not support the idea that the president makes a decision on every grant processed in the executive branch. Instead, through a transparent set of electoral preferences, a set of institutional powers, ideological support, and an army of bureaucratic executives, agencies are responsive to the electoral goals of the president. This responsiveness can take the form of the strategic allocation of federal funds to key constituencies—a basic premise in porkbarrel politics. The result is an administrative network that drives micro-level policy outcomes to be consistent with presidential electoral interests.

Beyond simply understanding that swing states are the beneficiaries when electoral politics influences public policy, this paper explores the conditions and mechanisms that enhance bureaucratic responsiveness. The findings presented above suggest that Cabinet agencies function differently than non-Cabinet agencies. While this general finding is not surprising, the results suggest that while agencies are responsive to presidential electoral interests, the insulated independence of an agency conditions the manner in which responsiveness manifests.

In the least insulated (or more politically controlled) agencies—those located in the Cabinet—there is uniform responsiveness to the electoral interests of the president. Such responsiveness occurs regardless of politicization or an agency's ideological relationship to the president. This finding reflects and reinforces that idea that presidential control is its strongest and agency responsiveness most fluid in the Cabinet. Unlike the design of independent agencies, Cabinet agencies are structured with the expectation that they will be responsive to the president. Because of a large, multi-layered network of administrative management, the president's use of executive orders and memoranda, the budget proposal power, as well as the influence of the Office of Management and Budget, Cabinet agencies face greater presidential influence and control. Thus, an institutional environment that fosters or even encourages greater presidential control should also foster a greater uniformity in responsiveness.

The theoretical expectations of this project included the idea that politicization would affect responsiveness. That Cabinet agency responsiveness occurs despite politicization suggests that the broader network of powers within that segment of the executive branch may spur greater support for presidential preferences. Moreover, in my interviews with agency appointees and federal grant managers, respondents explained that in many grantmaking agencies, final decisions over grant allocations are made by or with the approval of political appointees. This decision making structure will allow an avenue for political influence. Such influence would manifest regardless of the *saturation* of appointees. Instead, simply having a presidential appointee to make such decisions could enhance agency responsiveness. Combining such a decision making structure with the myriad administrative tools the president wields over the Cabinet may help explain the uniform support of presidential electoral preferences.

In agencies that are more insulated and independent, responsiveness to presidential electoral interests is not as uniform. Instead, certain institutional characteristics theorized to be associated with differing levels of responsiveness have such effects. The results bear out an understanding of conditional responsiveness that is dependent on the institutional dynamics of different types of agencies. Specifically, this paper looks separately at independent agencies and independent commissions.

Independent agencies are responsive to presidential electoral interests, but this responsiveness is dependent on politicization. Unlike in the Cabinet where presidential influence is more pervasive, independent agencies are designed to be less responsive to the president. Because of different rules regarding budgetary influence and proposal power and a smaller vertical network of administrative oversight and presidential influence, independent agencies are, as their title implies, designed to be more independent of political control. In this context, political appointees are the dominant means for presidents to influence outcomes in these institutions. The findings for independent agencies reflect this institutional design. The saturation of political appointees in independent agencies has a dramatic impact on responsiveness. In more politicized independent agencies, swing states receive dramatically more grants and grant dollars than do non-swing states. This finding speaks both to the importance of understanding politicization and the role of appointees in advancing the presidential agenda. Additionally, this research suggests that when facing insulation, presidents must rely on specific powers to advance his interests and motivate agency support.

For independent commissions, politicization of an agency does not enhance agency responsiveness. This finding likely emerges from the institutional design governing the appointment of commissioners. One means by which independent commissions are insulated and independent are through rules such as fixed and staggered terms and party balancing requirements for commissioners. Because of these rules, independent commissions are almost always governed in part by former presidents' appointees and/or commissioners from the party opposite the president. This detail severely limits the efficacy of the appointment power. By design, this construct also limits the ability of chiefs executive to use political appointees to extract policy outcomes consistent with their preferences.

Although politicization is a less effective means of motivating agency responsiveness, the results suggest that the ideological alignment of independent commissions with the president is an effective means of accomplishing the same. More than an understanding of how independent commissions function, there are broader implications for this finding. In independent commissions, presidential power can be limited. In the context of using federal discretionary grants for presidential porkbarrel politics, presidents appear to rely on an indirect means to achieve agency responsiveness When agencies are insulated from political control and political appointees are less reliable agents for pushing presidential preferences, other institutional details serve as the source of responsiveness. However, because agency ideology is generally exogenous and static, these results suggest the extent to which presidential power can be constrained, particularly in independent commissions.

Additionally, these findings offer evidence of the effectiveness of efforts to insulate federal agencies. Essentially, there appears to be a spectrum of responsiveness through presidential preferences. This spectrum ranges from uniform responsiveness in the Cabinet to responsiveness through political appointees in independent agencies to ideologically-motivated responsiveness in commissions. In increasingly insulated agencies, the president's ability to extract desired outcomes becomes conditional upon specific agency attributes. Despite this view of the limitations of presidential power, this paper also speaks to the reach of the president. Even in an environment of institutionally-designed power constraints, presidents are still able to engage in porkbarrel politics. Across a wide variety of agencies, presidents can still rely on a subset to direct grants in ways that reflect his electoral preferences.

Finally, in exploring the contours of the presidential porkbarrel, the effect of Congressional preferences must be recognized. Despite a host of controls for the effect of Congress on the distribution of grants, one set of variables emerges as relevant. Membership on relevant Congressional appropriations institutions is consistent with increases in grant allocations. Of note, I control for membership on the Appropriations subcommittees with oversight over each agency. States with those relevant appropriators see substantial benefits in the receipt of grants. However, as mentioned before, the source of this benefit is not immediately clear. True, Members of Congress and Senators may be intervening directly in the allocation of grants through direct or indirect political pressure. However, in my interviews with federal grant and program managers, respondents often described very limited contact with Congress. In fact, in some agencies, contact was essentially forbidden. Instead, all communication with the legislative branch was referred or directed to an in-house policy shop or legislative relations office who reported concerns to agency leadership.

An appealing alternative to direct Congressional intervention is the idea of the placating president. In a separation of powers system, presidents understand the delicate relationship the executive must maintain with the legislature. More directly, in the area of federal grants, this relationship is more crucial. Presidents depend on discretionary authority to allocate the grants analyzed in this project. That power is delegated from Congress. As a way of continually extracting discretionary authority, presidents may seek to funnel funds to the states from which appropriators hail. One way to keep open the pipeline of discretionary dollars to the executive branch is by ensuring appropriators are happy and well-funded. What emerges is a bifurcated fund allocation system. First, presidents maintain discretionary authority by directing funds to key legislative constituencies. Second, with this authority, presidents implement an electorally strategic allocation scheme that benefits swing states. In the end, whether Congressional effects emerge from legislative or executive efforts rests beyond the scope of this work. However, this paper highlights the importance of an integrated empirical approach to distributive politics that incorporates both presidential and legislative interests.

Conclusion

Agency responsiveness to democratically elected officials is crucial to understanding how the machine of government functions and what forces generate public policy. Often, bureaucratic responsiveness is conceptualized as policy outcomes that reflect the ideological or partisan interests of political actors. This paper considers bureaucratic responsiveness to the president's electoral interests. I argue this behavior most often occurs when a federal agency directs federal funds to key states in presidential elections. The National Park Service is one such agency.

The National Park Service (NPS) administers hundreds of nationally protected areas. Chief among these areas, of course, are America's national parks. Eight of the nation's 58 national parks are found in the most populous state California—a protected area roughly the size of Massachusetts. In fact 30 sites protected by NPS can be found in California. By comparison, Pennsylvania is the home to no national parks and only 18 federally protected areas. Between 1996 and 2008, NPS allocated more than 200% more grants to Pennsylvania than to California. Despite California's population advantage (300%), geographic size advantage (400%), and advantage in the number of areas protected by NPS (67%), Pennsylvania, one of the most politically important states in presidential elections, saw dramatically more federal funds.

This paper demonstrates that bureaucratic structures and design condition agency responsiveness to presidential electoral interests. In key ways, the level of independence and insulation has a significant effect on presidential control of the bureaucracy. However, unlike previous work, this paper does not argue that insulated independence stifles presidential control and agency responsiveness. Instead, institutional characteristics of bureaucracies intended to limit political (or electoral) influence simply redirect it through different avenues.

The unique behaviors and motivations behind agency responsiveness mark important structural features that lead to variable agency outcomes. The results suggesting different behaviors across the bureaucracy reinforce the idea that structure matters. The proximity to direct political and administrative control, the presence of appointees and the rules governing their seating, and the ideological relationship between president and agency all condition power, influence, and ultimately, responsiveness.

Similarly, this paper shows the political responsiveness of agencies to extend both to presidents and to key Congressional constituencies. Rather than an approach that ignores or commits to the influence of a single branch, this work offer a more integrated view of responsiveness in the context of distributive politics. This paper rigorously tests and finds robust support for Congressional influence in conjunction with that of the president. I further suggest benefits associated with Congressional constituency may come not from direct legislative intervention, but from a strategic president seeking to maintain discretionary authority.

Thus, future work must evaluate federal fund distribution and agency responsiveness in more dynamic ways. From a broader government perspective, institutional and electoral incentives must be considered for both legislative and executive branch influence. A simple focus on one ignores important variation associated with the other. Within the executive branch, an understanding of institutional variation and the implications of structural differences serve as key concepts. In the same way that political elites' interests and motivations are multi-faceted, so too are the institutional structures in which the component parts of the executive branch operate. These factors call for a more comprehensive and integrated theoretical and methodological approach to these important areas of public policy.

Table 3.1 Average State-Year Grant Allocations by Source, 1996-2008

Institution	Average Allocation (Millions of Dollars)
Department of Defense	3.5
Department of Agriculture	2.0
Department of Commerce	2.3
Department of Justice	45.2
Department of Labor	0.4
Department of Energy	14.3
Department of Education	15.1
Department of Health and Human Services	59.0
Department of Homeland Security	99.6
Department of Housing and Urban Development	14.4
Department of the Interior	1.3
Department of State	0.2
Department of Transportation	33.1
Department of the Treasury	0.1
Department of Veterans Affairs	0.002
Independent Agencies	11.8
Independent Regulatory Commissions	8.6
Government Corporations	5.3

Note: Allocations are the mean state-year allocations in millions of real dollars for the 15 cabinet departments and separate, non-cabinet institutions. Data is drawn from the Federal Assistance Award Data System.

Table 3.2. Examples of Agencies and Levels of Politicization

Agency (Department)	Politicization Score
Centers for Disease Control (HHS)	0.1
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Interior)	0.1
Agricultural Marketing Service (USDA)	0.1
Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Labor)	0.5
Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs (ED)	0.5
National Historical Publications and Records Commission (IND)	0.5
Office of Community Planning and Development (HUD)	1.0
Office of Justice Programs (DOJ)	1.0
Federal Aviation Administration (DOT)	1.0
Office of the Secretary (HUD)	5.0
Minority Business Development Agency (COMM)	5.0
Rural Business-Cooperative Service (USDA)	5.0

Note: Politicization score is the ratio of appointees to career SES managers (Lewis 2008). IND indicates that the agency is independent.

Table 3.3. The Effects of State Competitiveness and Agency Ideology on Discretionary Grant Allocations, 1996-2008

	OLS w/ Fixed Effects		Tobit	
	1	2	3	4
State Competitiveness				
Swing	0.075*	0.042**	0.100*	0.054**
	(0.033)	(0.013)	(0.050)	(0.017)
Timing				
First Term	-0.090**	-0.001	-0.106**	-0.009
	(0.030)	(0.011)	(0.043)	(0.015)
Election Proximity	0.086**	0.049**	0.125**	0.071**
	(0.027)	(0.010)	(0.038)	(0.014)
Agency Characteristics				
Ideol. Congruence	-0.109**	-0.048**	-0.110**	-0.052**
	(0.030)	(0.011)	(0.042)	(0.015)
Ideol. X Swing	-0.026	-0.014	-0.045	-0.020
	(0.042)	(0.015)	(0.061)	(0.021)
Congressional Controls				
Sen. Approps. Member	0.110**	0.033**	0.161**	0.051**
	(0.034)	(0.013)	(0.050)	(0.018)
Sen. Maj. Party Mem.	-0.003	-0.004	-0.010	-0.008
	(0.014)	(0.005)	(0.020)	(0.007)
Incumbent Sen. Elect. Yr.	-0.039	0.002	-0.050	0.002
	(0.025)	(0.009)	(0.035)	(0.012)
Senate Leader	0.018	-0.003	0.019	-0.007
	(0.047)	(0.018)	(0.067)	(0.023)
House Oversight	0.068**	0.028**	0.094**	0.041**
	(0.023)	(0.009)	(0.034)	(0.012)
Senate Oversight	0.235**	0.061**	0.310**	0.091**
	(0.029)	(0.011)	(0.041)	(0.014)
Divided Gov't	-0.139**	-0.024*	-0.147**	-0.031*
	(0.032)	(0.012)	(0.046)	(0.017)
Intergovernmental Controls				
Governor Elect. Yr.	-0.022	-0.006	-0.038	-0.014
	(0.036)	(0.013)	(0.052)	(0.018)
Gov.-Prez. Align	-0.043	-0.001	-0.066	-0.009
	(0.028)	(0.010)	(0.041)	(0.014)
Gov. Elect. X Align	0.011	-0.020	0.030	-0.014
	(0.050)	(0.018)	(0.071)	(0.025)
Controls and Constant				
GSP (millions)	0.042*	0.033*	0.080*	0.025

	(0.025)	(0.018)	(0.039)	(0.021)
Roads (logged mi.)	0.070**	0.088**	0.132**	0.139**
	(0.028)	(0.009)	(0.040)	(0.014)
Research Institutions	-0.0004	0.001**	-0.0001	0.001**
	(0.0005)	(0.0003)	(0.001)	(0.0004)
Percent Elderly	-0.020*	-0.017**	-0.031*	-0.026**
	(0.010)	(0.004)	(0.015)	(0.006)
Disaster	0.261**	0.035	0.359**	0.071
	(0.089)	(0.036)	(0.137)	(0.048)
Population (millions)		0.022*		0.036**
		(0.010)		(0.013)
Constant	4.129**	0.260*	2.872**	-0.515**
	(0.364)	(0.122)	(0.498)	(0.177)
Obs.	59050	59050	59050	59050
Adj. R^2	0.669	0.755	0.203	0.344

Note: The dependent variable in models 1 and 3 is the logged real grant dollars per 100,000 people per agency-state-year. **p<.01 (one-tailed test) *p<.05 (one-tailed test). Robust Standard Errors are reported. All models are estimated using fixed effects for state and agency.

Table 3.4. The Effects of State Competitiveness, Agency Ideology, and Politicization on Discretionary Grant Allocations, 1996-2008

	OLS w/ Fixed Effects		Tobit	
	1	2	3	4
State Competitiveness				
Swing	0.104**	0.046**	0.136**	0.062**
	(0.036)	(0.013)	(0.052)	(0.018)
Timing				
First Term	-0.086**	0.001	-0.101**	-0.006
	(0.030)	(0.011)	(0.043)	(0.015)
Election Proximity	0.089**	0.051**	0.129**	0.074**
	(0.027)	(0.010)	(0.038)	(0.014)
Agency Characteristics				
Ideol. Congruence	-0.106**	-0.047**	-0.105**	-0.051**
	(0.030)	(0.011)	(0.042)	(0.015)
Ideol. X Swing	-0.031	-0.015	-0.053	-0.022
	(0.042)	(0.015)	(0.061)	(0.021)
Politicization	-0.060**	-0.041**	-0.070**	-0.046**
	(0.009)	(0.004)	(0.014)	(0.005)
Politiciz. X Swing	-0.017*	-0.002	-0.021*	-0.004
	(0.008)	(0.002)	(0.010)	(0.003)
Congressional Controls				
Sen. Approps. Member	0.109**	0.033**	0.159**	0.051**
	(0.034)	(0.012)	(0.050)	(0.018)
Sen. Maj. Party Mem.	-0.003	-0.004	-0.010	-0.008
	(0.014)	(0.005)	(0.020)	(0.007)
Incumbent Sen. Elect. Yr.	-0.041*	0.001	-0.053	0.000
	(0.025)	(0.009)	(0.035)	(0.012)
Senate Leader	0.019	-0.003	0.021	-0.006
	(0.047)	(0.018)	(0.067)	(0.023)
House Oversight	0.068**	0.028**	0.093**	0.041**
	(0.023)	(0.009)	(0.034)	(0.012)
Senate Oversight	0.235**	0.061**	0.309**	0.091**
	(0.029)	(0.011)	(0.041)	(0.014)
Divided Gov't	-0.124**	-0.016	-0.131**	-0.023
	(0.033)	(0.012)	(0.046)	(0.017)
Intergovernmental Controls				
Governor Elect. Yr.	-0.018	-0.004	-0.033	-0.011
	(0.036)	(0.013)	(0.052)	(0.018)
Gov.-Prez. Align	-0.045	-0.003	-0.068*	-0.010
	(0.028)	(0.010)	(0.041)	(0.014)

Gov. Elect. X Align	0.013	-0.018	0.033	-0.013
	(0.050)	(0.018)	(0.071)	(0.025)
Controls and Constant				
GSP (millions)	0.037	0.023	0.072*	0.015
	(0.025)	(0.018)	(0.039)	(0.021)
Roads (logged mi.)	0.069**	0.088**	0.131**	0.139**
	(0.028)	(0.009)	(0.040)	(0.014)
Research Institutions	-0.0003	0.001**	0.0000	0.001**
	(0.0005)	(0.0003)	(0.001)	(0.0004)
Percent Elderly	-0.020*	-0.018**	-0.031*	-0.028**
	(0.010)	(0.004)	(0.015)	(0.006)
Disaster	0.256**	0.034	0.353**	0.069
	(0.089)	(0.035)	(0.137)	(0.048)
Population (millions)		0.026**		0.040**
		(0.010)		(0.013)
Constant	4.121**	0.270*	2.864**	-0.505**
	(0.364)	(0.122)	(0.498)	(0.177)
Obs.	59050	59050	59050	59050
Adj. R^2	0.67	0.756	0.203	0.344

Note: The dependent variable in models 1 and 3 is the logged real grant dollars per 100,000 people per agency-state-year. **p<.01 (one-tailed test) *p<.05 (one-tailed test). Robust Standard Errors are reported. All models are estimated using fixed effects for state and agency.

Table 3.5. The Effects of State Competitiveness, Agency Ideology, Politicization, and Insulated Independence on Discretionary Grant Allocations, 1996-2008

	OLS w/ Fixed Effects		Tobit	
	1	2	3	4
State Competitiveness				
Swing	-0.187	-0.086	-0.254	-0.114
	(0.152)	(0.071)	(0.222)	(0.089)
Timing				
First Term	-0.400**	-0.112**	-0.591**	-0.198**
	(0.050)	(0.021)	(0.072)	(0.030)
Election Proximity	0.158**	0.081**	0.253**	0.128**
	(0.046)	(0.019)	(0.065)	(0.027)
Agency Characteristics				
Ideol. Congruence	-0.751**	-0.318**	-1.020**	-0.443**
	(0.049)	(0.020)	(0.070)	(0.028)
Ideol. X Swing	0.088	0.035	0.117	0.052
	(0.073)	(0.031)	(0.107)	(0.043)
Politicization	0.059**	0.008**	0.106**	0.027**
	(0.006)	(0.003)	(0.012)	(0.005)
Politiciz. X Swing	-0.009	0.002	-0.011	0.001
	(0.010)	(0.004)	(0.018)	(0.007)
Cabinet	-0.118	-0.539**	-0.104	-0.577**
	(0.096)	(0.044)	(0.141)	(0.057)
Cabinet X Swing	0.224	0.098	0.300	0.128
	(0.143)	(0.067)	(0.213)	(0.086)
Ind. Agency	-0.246*	-0.441**	-0.257	-0.478**
	(0.130)	(0.057)	(0.187)	(0.075)
Ind. Agency X Swing	0.327*	0.170*	0.462	0.227*
	(0.196)	(0.088)	(0.284)	(0.114)
Congressional Controls				
Sen. Approps. Member	0.131*	0.061**	0.197*	0.092**
	(0.060)	(0.025)	(0.087)	(0.035)
Sen. Maj. Party Mem.	-0.0002	-0.003	-0.005	-0.005
	(0.023)	(0.009)	(0.034)	(0.014)
Incumbent Sen. Elect. Yr.	-0.016	0.012	-0.015	0.016
	(0.042)	(0.018)	(0.061)	(0.025)
Senate Leader	0.011	-0.001	0.011	-0.003
	(0.078)	(0.033)	(0.116)	(0.047)
House Oversight	0.120**	0.015	0.148**	0.026
	(0.039)	(0.018)	(0.060)	(0.024)
Senate Oversight	0.176**	0.001	0.215**	0.014

	(0.050)	(0.020)	(0.072)	(0.029)
Divided Gov't	-0.446**	-0.154**	-0.599**	-0.225**
	(0.054)	(0.023)	(0.078)	(0.032)
Intergovernmental Controls				
Governor Elect. Yr.	0.026	0.011	0.033	0.012
	(0.062)	(0.025)	(0.090)	(0.036)
Gov.-Prez. Align	-0.043	0.004	-0.066	-0.006
	(0.049)	(0.020)	(0.071)	(0.029)
Gov. Elect. X Align	-0.014	-0.037	-0.015	-0.039
	(0.085)	(0.035)	(0.123)	(0.050)
Controls and Constant				
GSP (millions)	0.013	0.026	0.058	0.027
	(0.044)	(0.035)	(0.069)	(0.043)
Roads (logged mi.)	0.062	0.090**	0.162**	0.148**
	(0.049)	(0.018)	(0.068)	(0.028)
Research Institutions	-0.0000	0.001	0.0004	0.001
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Percent Elderly	-0.021	-0.016*	-0.032	-0.024*
	(0.018)	(0.009)	(0.027)	(0.012)
Disaster	0.256	0.040	0.371	0.089
	(0.159)	(0.073)	(0.239)	(0.097)
Population (millions)		0.025		0.038
		(0.020)		(0.027)
Constant	5.796**	1.418**	3.637**	0.389
	(0.592)	(0.229)	(0.840)	(0.343)
Obs.	59050	59050	59050	59050
Adj. R^2	0.016	0.062	0.04	0.016

Note: The dependent variable in models 1 and 3 is the logged real grant dollars per 100,000 people per agency-state-year. **p<.01 (one-tailed test) *p<.05 (one-tailed test). Robust Standard Errors are reported. All models are estimated using fixed effects for state and agency.

Table 3.6. The Effects of State Competitiveness, Agency Ideology, and Politicization on Discretionary Grant Allocations for Cabinet Agencies, 1996-2008

	OLS w/ Fixed Effects		Tobit	
	1	2	3	4
State Competitiveness				
Swing	0.132**	0.053**	0.180**	0.073**
	(0.041)	(0.015)	(0.059)	(0.021)
Timing				
First Term	-0.074*	0.005	-0.088*	-0.001
	(0.034)	(0.013)	(0.048)	(0.017)
Election Proximity	0.101**	0.061**	0.150**	0.088**
	(0.030)	(0.011)	(0.043)	(0.015)
Agency Characteristics				
Ideol. Congruence	-0.128**	-0.055**	-0.122**	-0.056**
	(0.033)	(0.012)	(0.048)	(0.017)
Ideol. X Swing	-0.039	-0.015	-0.062	-0.021
	(0.047)	(0.017)	(0.068)	(0.024)
Politicization	-0.069**	-0.047**	-0.083**	-0.055**
	(0.011)	(0.004)	(0.017)	(0.006)
Politiciz. X Swing	-0.021*	-0.002	-0.026*	-0.005
	(0.011)	(0.003)	(0.013)	(0.004)
Congressional Controls				
Sen. Approps. Member	0.116**	0.032*	0.176**	0.055**
	(0.039)	(0.014)	(0.056)	(0.020)
Sen. Maj. Party Mem.	-0.0002	-0.004	-0.004	-0.006
	(0.015)	(0.005)	(0.022)	(0.008)
Incumbent Sen. Elect. Yr.	-0.055*	-0.003	-0.076*	-0.008
	(0.028)	(0.010)	(0.039)	(0.014)
Senate Leader	0.000	-0.012	-0.009	-0.018
	(0.052)	(0.020)	(0.074)	(0.026)
House Oversight	0.068**	0.037**	0.093**	0.051**
	(0.025)	(0.010)	(0.038)	(0.013)
Senate Oversight	0.265**	0.077**	0.352**	0.111**
	(0.033)	(0.012)	(0.046)	(0.016)
Divided Gov't	-0.148**	-0.016	-0.176**	-0.030
	(0.036)	(0.014)	(0.052)	(0.019)
Intergovernmental Controls				
Governor Elect. Yr.	-0.031	-0.006	-0.052	-0.016
	(0.040)	(0.014)	(0.058)	(0.020)
Gov.-Prez. Align	-0.048	-0.007	-0.074	-0.016
	(0.031)	(0.011)	(0.046)	(0.016)

Gov. Elect. X Align	0.016	-0.020	0.042	-0.013
	(0.055)	(0.020)	(0.079)	(0.028)
Controls and Constant				
GSP (millions)	0.026	0.016	0.053	0.005
	(0.027)	(0.020)	(0.044)	(0.024)
Roads (logged mi.)	0.073**	0.095**	0.136**	0.146**
	(0.031)	(0.011)	(0.044)	(0.016)
Research Institutions	-0.0001	0.001*	0.0004	0.001*
	(0.001)	(0.0003)	(0.001)	0.000
Percent Elderly	-0.018*	-0.017**	-0.028	-0.026**
	(0.011)	(0.005)	(0.017)	(0.007)
Disaster	0.275**	0.046	0.377**	0.081
	(0.097)	(0.038)	(0.152)	(0.053)
Population (millions)		0.028**		0.041**
		(0.012)		(0.015)
Constant	4.042**	0.192	2.726**	-0.615**
	(0.401)	(0.136)	(0.552)	(0.197)
Obs.	50550	50550	50550	50550
Adj. R^2	0.653	0.734	0.197	0.329

Note: Data are isolated for Cabinet-Level Agencies The dependent variable in models 1 and 3 is the logged real grant dollars per 100,000 people per agency-state-year. **p<.01 (one-tailed test) *p<.05 (one-tailed test). Robust Standard Errors are reported. All models are estimated using fixed effects for state and agency.

Table 3.7. The Effects of State Competitiveness, Agency Ideology, and Politicization on Discretionary Grant Allocations for Independent Agencies, 1996-2008

	OLS w/ Fixed Effects		Tobit	
	1	2	3	4
State Competitiveness				
Swing	-0.153	-0.020	-0.220	-0.038
	(0.111)	(0.035)	(0.167)	(0.048)
Timing				
First Term	-0.160*	-0.014	-0.107	0.003
	(0.095)	(0.030)	(0.137)	(0.040)
Election Proximity	0.199**	0.020	0.202*	0.016
	(0.084)	(0.025)	(0.121)	(0.035)
Agency Characteristics				
Ideol. Congruence	-0.028	0.049	-0.083	0.028
	(0.108)	(0.033)	(0.142)	(0.041)
Ideol. X Swing	-0.202	0.002	-0.329	-0.032
	(0.141)	(0.045)	(0.204)	(0.059)
Politicization	0.853**	0.172**	1.448**	0.372**
	(0.176)	(0.052)	(0.265)	(0.078)
Politiciz. X Swing	0.500**	0.080*	0.707**	0.139**
	(0.147)	(0.044)	(0.207)	(0.060)
Congressional Controls				
Sen. Approps. Member	0.108	0.064*	0.104	0.063
	(0.103)	(0.032)	(0.154)	(0.045)
Sen. Maj. Party Mem.	-0.028	0.003	-0.062	-0.006
	(0.044)	(0.014)	(0.061)	(0.018)
Incumbent Sen. Elect. Yr.	0.204**	0.057**	0.307**	0.098**
	(0.077)	(0.023)	(0.110)	(0.032)
Senate Leader	0.014	0.012	0.004	0.003
	(0.136)	(0.046)	(0.212)	(0.061)
House Oversight	0.235**	-0.035	0.392**	0.018
	(0.078)	(0.025)	(0.115)	(0.033)
Senate Oversight	0.021	-0.015	0.004	-0.015
	(0.092)	(0.027)	(0.135)	(0.039)
Divided Gov't	-0.031	-0.043	0.155	0.020
	(0.110)	(0.034)	(0.155)	(0.046)
Intergovernmental Controls				
Governor Elect. Yr.	0.125	0.020	0.137	0.016
	(0.112)	(0.034)	(0.160)	(0.046)
Gov.-Prez. Align	-0.161*	-0.016	-0.233*	-0.038
	(0.090)	(0.028)	(0.128)	(0.037)

Gov. Elect. X Align	0.132	0.041	0.196	0.069
	(0.151)	(0.046)	(0.219)	(0.063)
Controls and Constant				
GSP (millions)	0.298**	0.047	0.451**	0.076
	(0.083)	(0.049)	(0.122)	(0.053)
Roads (logged mi.)	0.195*	0.066**	0.318**	0.131**
	(0.087)	(0.023)	(0.124)	(0.037)
Research Institutions	-0.005**	-0.0004	-0.007**	-0.001
	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.001)
Percent Elderly	0.002	-0.021*	-0.007	-0.030*
	(0.031)	(0.012)	(0.048)	(0.015)
Disaster	0.514	-0.077	0.753*	-0.020
	(0.319)	(0.091)	(0.438)	(0.127)
Population (millions)		0.052*		0.071*
		(0.027)		(0.034)
Constant	-0.807	-0.624*	-7.602**	-2.797**
	(1.079)	(0.277)	(1.689)	(0.502)
Obs.	4350	4350	4350	4350
Adj. R^2	0.774	0.886	0.246	0.483

Note: Data are isolated for Independent Agencies. The dependent variable in models 1 and 3 is the logged real grant dollars per 100,000 people per agency-state-year. **p<.01 (one-tailed test) *p<.05 (one-tailed test). Robust Standard Errors are reported. All models are estimated using fixed effects for state and agency.

Table 3.8. The Effects of State Competitiveness, Agency Ideology, and Politicization on Discretionary Grant Allocations for Independent Commissions, 1996-2008

	OLS w/ Fixed Effects		Tobit	
	1	2	3	4
State Competitiveness				
Swing	-0.227*	-0.033	-0.333*	-0.054
	(0.103)	(0.043)	(0.153)	(0.059)
Timing				
First Term	-0.168*	-0.038	-0.156	-0.034
	(0.080)	(0.033)	(0.111)	(0.044)
Election Proximity	-0.102	-0.012	-0.174*	-0.045
	(0.074)	(0.030)	(0.101)	(0.040)
Agency Characteristics				
Ideol. Congruence	-0.158*	-0.086**	-0.316**	-0.171**
	(0.085)	(0.035)	(0.134)	(0.054)
Ideol. X Swing	0.281*	0.023	0.379*	0.073
	(0.124)	(0.049)	(0.185)	(0.072)
Politicization	-0.040**	-0.026**	-0.040*	-0.025**
	(0.013)	(0.007)	(0.022)	(0.008)
Politiciz. X Swing	0.000	0.002	0.005	0.000
	(0.008)	(0.004)	(0.014)	(0.005)
Congressional Controls				
Sen. Approps. Member	-0.030	-0.044	-0.035	-0.062
	(0.090)	(0.035)	(0.130)	(0.051)
Sen. Maj. Party Mem.	-0.009	-0.011	-0.014	-0.017
	(0.039)	(0.016)	(0.052)	(0.020)
Incumbent Sen. Elect. Yr.	-0.116*	-0.002	-0.146	-0.009
	(0.070)	(0.029)	(0.094)	(0.036)
Senate Leader	0.245	0.105	0.342*	0.144*
	(0.160)	(0.066)	(0.176)	(0.067)
House Oversight	-0.222**	-0.057*	-0.361**	-0.122**
	(0.075)	(0.032)	(0.094)	(0.036)
Senate Oversight	0.175*	0.044	0.202*	0.070
	(0.086)	(0.035)	(0.117)	(0.046)
Divided Gov't	-0.049	-0.025	0.116	0.052
	(0.087)	(0.036)	(0.142)	(0.057)
Intergovernmental Controls				
Governor Elect. Yr.	-0.026	-0.002	-0.037	-0.010
	(0.102)	(0.041)	(0.134)	(0.052)
Gov.-Prez. Align	0.120	0.061*	0.170	0.077*
	(0.079)	(0.033)	(0.108)	(0.042)

Gov. Elect. X Align	-0.161	-0.059	-0.218	-0.079
	(0.130)	(0.054)	(0.186)	(0.072)
Controls and Constant				
GSP (millions)	-0.100	0.114*	-0.107	0.088
	(0.077)	(0.065)	(0.105)	(0.061)
Roads (logged mi.)	-0.097	0.026	-0.103	0.046
	(0.063)	(0.022)	(0.105)	(0.042)
Research Institutions	0.001	0.003**	0.002	0.004**
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.001)
Percent Elderly	-0.079**	-0.031**	-0.109**	-0.050**
	(0.027)	(0.013)	(0.040)	(0.017)
Disaster	-0.249	-0.006	-0.322	-0.006
	(0.297)	(0.142)	(0.368)	(0.141)
Population (millions)		-0.044		-0.027
		(0.034)		(0.039)
Constant	10.505**	2.516**	-1.648	-2.531**
	(0.806)	(0.302)	(1.477)	(0.605)
Obs.	4150	4150	4150	4150
Adj. R^2	0.8	0.858	0.288	0.455

Note: Data are isolated for Independent Commissions. The dependent variable in models 1 and 3 is the logged real grant dollars per 100,000 people per agency-state-year. **p<.01 (one-tailed test) *p<.05 (one-tailed test). Robust Standard Errors are reported. All models are estimated using fixed effects for state and agency.

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