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The Politics of Federal Grants: Presidential influence over the Distribution of Federal Funds

John Hudak

Abstract

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Between October 8, and October 14, 2004, presidential appointees in the US Department of Energy including Secretary Spencer Abraham scheduled and attended ceremonies announcing nearly $300 million in alternative energy grants. While such a disbursement of grants may seem like a routine part of the bureaucratic process, these grants were not evenly distributed across the states. Instead, hundreds of millions of dollars in grants were announced in five of the most competitive states in recent electoral history: Michigan, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Florida.[1] Moreover, these grants were announced only weeks prior to a highly competitive presidential election. These announcement ceremonies occurred as President Bush campaigned heavily throughout these states.

How does the president's drive for electoral success influence the distribution of federal grants? Each year, the agencies of the federal bureaucracy, headed by presidential appointees, distribute billions of tax dollars to the states through grants. Despite the prominent role of the executive branch in this process, research often ignores the influence of the president and other executive branch officials, instead focusing on the role of Congress. In order to understand how federal money is distributed, it is vital to know how presidents influence the grants process.

This paper develops the idea that presidents, like members of Congress, are primarily driven by electoral concerns. This presidential electoral motive informs theoretically much of this work. However, presidential elections offer a different set of rules than do Congressional elections. I address those differences in building my argument. In particular, I develop hypotheses that arise from the structure of the Electoral College, contending, for example that swing states are more likely to be benefactors of federal money than states that the president (or

[1] "DOE Swing State Visits Continue in Fla. As Abraham Unveils $235M Coal Grant." *Inside Energy with Federal Lands*. 15 Oct. 2004:A3; also see Loveless 2004.

his party) has no chance of winning. After developing these hypotheses, I then test them with data I designed and collected for this project. My findings clearly demonstrate that through the strategic use of discretion, presidents influence the distribution of federal funds, essentially using them as a campaign resource. The implications of these findings are assessed at the end of this paper.

Federal Money as a Campaign Tool

In the pursuit of electoral success, political elites use myriad means to gain and secure constituent support. Among these means is the targeted distribution of government funds (Bickers and Stein 2000; Cox and McCubbins 1986; Dixit and Londregan 1998). Mayhew (1974) describes a process by which Members of Congress claim credit for the distribution of particularized benefits, often including federal spending. Political elites are motivated to secure their constituents' fair share (or more) of federal spending, as it is an easily demonstrable example of elected officials' work (Arnold 1979; Fenno 1978; Ferejohn 1974; Fiorina 1977; Lowi 1969). Money that helps expand a hospital, equip a fire department or sustain a military installation all aid a locality while padding a politician's resume.

Research into porkbarrel politics typically focuses on Congress, arguing legislators' electoral drive and control of the government pursestrings encourage such behavior. Scholars have noted that Congress strategically allocates funds to districts and states for several reasons. They include electoral competitiveness (Bickers and Stein 2000; Stein and Bickers 1994, 1995), partisanship (Balla, et al 2002; Hurwitz, Moiles and Rohde 2001; Levitt and Snyder 1995), members' institutional power (Carsey and Rundquist 1999; Lee and Oppenheimer 1999; Rundquist and Carsey 2002; Rundquist, Rhee, and Lee 1996), and as a means of legislative coalition building (Stein and Bickers 1994; Lee 2000, 2003; Lee and Oppenheimer 1999). This

behavior is considered a pervasive and accepted (even expected) practice among members of the legislative branch.

However, other research examines the role of the executive branch in this process. Specifically, scholarship of late has essentially asked whether and to what extent the presidential porkbarrel exists. Examining aggregate federal spending programs, research demonstrates that congressional and gubernatorial partisan alignment with the president translates into greater distributive benefits (Berry, Burden, and Howell 2010; Gasper and Reeves 2011; Larcinese, Rizzo, and Testa 2006). In fact, Berry, et al (2010) suggests that this effect of partisan alignment serves as a dominant influence in distribution, trumping even traditional Congressional effects. Similarly, Bertelli and Grose (2009), in an examination of contracts from the Departments of Defense and Labor, finds that the ideological position of select cabinet secretaries influences federal grant distribution.

These works demonstrate that the president's political interests drive the allocation of funds. More clearly, presidents actively seek to create a friendlier policy making space by supporting copartisans in Congress and in governors' mansions with a stream of federal dollars. Underlying these claims is an understanding that presidents seek to use federal funds in an effort to influence (copartisans') electoral fates.

In a related way, other research considers how presidents use pork to advance their own electoral interests. Shor (2006) tests whether electoral considerations such as number of Electoral College votes and state competitiveness influence which states receive more grants. More recent work engages the constituent connection more precisely. Chen (2009) in an examination of FEMA disaster grants finds that local Florida neighborhoods that supported President Bush's 2004 reelection fared better than similarly affected Democratic localities. Here, Chen suggests

that disaster aid was associated with political support and the distribution served, in part, to reward core voters for their electoral support. Mebane and Wawro (2002) explores how different types of funds during Reagan's second term can be effectively targeted to constituencies in order for the president to claim credit for such spending.

Additional work argues presidents introduce an electoral strategy not in geographic terms, but through timing. Specifically, presidents strategically time grant allocation announcements in order to reap the maximum benefits in terms of credit claiming (Anagnoson 1982; Hamman 1993). This research speaks to an important aspect of presidential electoral strategy that is often overlooked in scholarship on the presidential porkbarrel. While it is important to examine the geographic nature of electoral strategy, so too is strategic timing.

Although several scholars examine the role of the president in porkbarrel politics, many of these studies are limited in a variety of ways. First, much research focuses on a small number of grant programs and agencies or examine a narrow time period. Second, systematic studies of presidential influence often fail to consider the effect of a presidential electoral strategy in the distribution of federal funds. Finally, those studies that do consider presidential electoral strategic consider *either* the geographic or temporal nature of such strategy.

This paper contributes to the literature by offering a broad examination of presidential influence over federal grants that relies on a more complete view of presidential electoral strategy. By considering federal grants as a campaign tool, this paper examines not just where, but when grants are allocated to maximize their effectiveness. Finally, this work examines all federal discretionary grants allocated over a 13 year period, contributing a systematic, time-varying analysis of presidential influence of the distribution of funds.

DISCRETION AND THE DISBURSEMENT OF DOLLARS

Federal spending comes in several forms. Some types of spending are strictly controlled by legislation and offer Congress substantial control over distribution. For example, formula grants are allocated according to an often complex statutory equation. These formulas factor population, capacity and need into their allocation schemes. However, political considerations such as legislative seniority and coalition building also influence these formulas (Lee and Oppenheimer 1999). Other types of spending offer presidents more discretion to control outcomes. Executive agencies allocate discretionary federal grants totaling about 100 billion dollars yearly.

Congress often delegates power to the executive branch because it both increases the time members can spend on other issues. Moreover, presidents are not passive recipients of delegated power, but they and their copartisans in Congress often have a preference for greater discretion. Through the president's role in the legislative process, he can gain discretionary concessions in exchange for his signature (Cameron 2000; Krehbiel 1999 McCarty 2000; Volden 2002). When presidents are given discretion, they have a direct impact on policy areas, with little if any Congressional control (Epstein and O'Halloran 1999; Huber and Shipan 2002).

Beyond simply having the discretionary authority to influence distributive politics, the president may be well-positioned and equipped to deal with these micro-level allocation decisions. In fact, presidents have both active and indirect means of influencing distributive outcomes in a manner consistent with his electoral preferences. First, the president oversees a bureaucracy that is large and filled with experts on every policy issue. The expertise and ability of the bureaucracy to handle micro-level policy decisions is one reason Congress delegates certain powers to the executive branch. These individuals serving beneath a web of political appointees are charged with administering the government. Presidential appointees are agency

executives who serve at the pleasure of the president and in many institutions wield final decision making authority over fund distribution. These actors are more easily motivated toward producing policy that reflects presidential preferences. In the context of this project, presidential electoral interests are easily understood based on the competitiveness of states in previous elections, and appointees will be astute to such sensitivities.

Second, presidents have a host of tools to control the bureaucracy, including presidential directives, executive orders, and signing statements. Further, presidential preferences are easily communicated and carried out through pressure from the White House, the Office of Management and Budget and political appointees (see Gordon n.d.; Lewis 2008; Wood and Waterman 1991). In fact, Gordon demonstrates that White House staff can effectively convey the preferences of the president to political appointees regarding the allocation of federal funds and that such pressure can have an impact on distributive outcomes.[2] Moreover, OMB or its subsidiary branches within federal agencies require approval of many discretionary grant criteria and the language used in requests for proposals, adding an addition layer of influence the grants process.

In addition to more active and direct means by which presidential preferences can influence policy outcomes, indirect mechanisms in the process can also have an impact. First, agencies understand the value of presidential support in terms of maintenance of funding levels, protection from reorganization or closure, and attention to priorities. Responsiveness to presidential electoral interests could function as means of continuing, gaining or rehabilitating

[2] Gordon argues in the context of the 2006 GSA scandal that GSA appointees had not "internalized the administration's political goals" and instead needed them spelled out (3). The political goals in that study involved a puzzlingly patterned set of Congressional districts labeled "marginal." The precise reasoning for inclusion/exclusion from this group was not entirely clear, making such goal internalization nearly impossible. However, I argue even an observer with mild political interest—no matter the interest of appointees—can easily identify which states are competitive in presidential elections.

presidential support. Next, shared ideological or policy goals between a president and agency can also motivate enhanced agency responsiveness. This ideological alignment means a conservative agency such as the International Trade Administration (ITA) would prefer to work with a Republican president rather than a Democratic one. As such, ITA decision makers may be more willing to use the levers of policy making to support a friendly president's electoral goals.

For these reasons, presidents are well positioned to engage in the micro-level policy decisions involved in the distribution of federal funds. Further, legislative discretion offers presidents the power to influence distributive outcomes in order to pursue their goals. Finally, the electoral pressures that presidents face provide the incentive to rely on the powers of their office and access to resources in order to enhance their electoral prospects.

FEDERAL GRANTS AND THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

Presidents pursue a series of goals during and after their tenure in office including good public policy, expanded institutional power, and enhanced presidential legacy (Cooper 2002; Moe and Howell 1999; Neustadt 1960). However, before any of those goals can be secured or even pursued, presidents need electoral success. Like all political elites, presidents are electorally-driven individuals who seek election, reelection, and ultimately, the election of their same party successor (Brams 1978; Rottinghaus 2006; Shaw 2006).

Beyond the obvious benefits of an individual's initial election to the office of president, reelection allows the president the most immediate and continued influence over public policy. His will and preferences continue to be a pivotal part of the policy process. Moreover, sitting presidents are the only individuals able to exercise unilateral, institutional power and are best positioned to expand those powers. Finally, while a second presidential term does not guarantee an enhanced presidential legacy, one term presidents are almost always guaranteed a reduced

legacy. The reelection goal is a primary force in presidential behavior, and this claim is evidenced, in a very basic way, by observing that presidents almost always seek reelection.

Although the electoral motive of presidents is strong and personal during the first term, it remains active in the second term as well. Presidents are motivated to see their party's standard bearer succeed to the White House for both personal and partisan reasons (Rottinghaus 2006). The same-party successor ensures policy making by a president with similar preferences. While presidents of the same party may not be ideological clones, they are certainly ideologically proximate. For example, Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush did not have identical policy preferences, but Bush's policy impact was more consistent with Reagan's preferences than Michael Dukakis' would have been. Moreover, even during the 2000 presidential election where Vice President Gore sought to distance himself from President Clinton, the sitting president went as far as giving the Gore campaign final approval of his travel schedule in an attempt to enhance Gore's chances.[3] Thus, while self-interest may motivate a stronger electoral motivation during a president's first term, institutional and ideological forces ensure that this incentive endures throughout a president's tenure.

Presidents employ active strategies to seek electoral support. Shaw and Roberts (2000) offers an examination of presidents harnessing the power of local media in order to conduct a messaging campaign and to cover campaign events. Their work shows that candidates' active use of press coverage of the campaign and debates in the months leading up to an election influenced a measure of the likelihood of candidate electoral success. Moreover, Shaw and Roberts detail the way in which campaign events, rallies, and public announcements influenced a campaign's electoral prospects (2000). Further, Shaw (2006) demonstrates how campaign resources in the form of advertising, campaign stops, and events are predominantly funneled to key

[3] Lacey, Marc. "Gore Puts Limit On Politicking By the President." *The New York Times*. 28 October 2000.

constituencies at the expense of others. Specifically, Shaw explains that the academic- and media-driven idea that campaigns are rational allocators of resources "leads one to (correctly) presume that candidates seek to identify those states most at risk and most critical to amassing 270 electoral votes when they decide where to campaign" (2006, 52).

Federal grants serve presidents in a similar way. Given the large sum of grants appropriated each year and the level of discretion granted to the executive branch, they are an ideal electoral tool. Like campaign funds, federal grants can be allocated in strategic ways to appeal to key constituencies for their support. While the goal of much campaign spending is to get a candidate's message, qualifications, and accomplishments into the consciousness of voters, the benefits of grants is two-fold. First, grants provide advertising as their announcement and disbursement are covered by local media, providing free publicity for a presidential candidate. Second, grants serve as a direct transfer from the federal largesse to a state's economy. Grants can provide a host of improvements, services, or aid. Further, grants offer short term support to a community in a way that provides little additional cost to a local constituency. Chubb (1985) describes grants as ideal for localities because they provide a good (or service or both) without raising local taxes. This low cost-high benefit spending is particularly true for grants that have few conditions or expectations for local government matching (Chubb 1985). Presidents are able to claim credit for these grants among the state's voters, while relieving constituents of the prospect of local tax increases.[4]

Typically, the scope of a president's national constituency makes porkbarrel politics appear to be an ineffective electoral strategy. However, because of the institutional design of the Electoral College, presidents do not face a national electorate, but instead a series of sub-national, state-level electorates. Moreover, only a handful of states is competitive in presidential

[4] Unlike formula and block grants, discretionary grants often come with few conditions or contingencies.

elections, reducing a huge national electoral to a much smaller set of competitive races (Shaw 2006). The small size of the truly competitive presidential electorate makes an electoral strategy that utilizes the distribution of government funds a feasible and appealing tactic.

Thus, presidents will use their discretion within the federal grants process to enhance their electoral chances. In practice, this means targeting the distribution of federal grants to key constituencies at key times in order to gain and secure support. Because there is a fixed sum of grant funds to be distributed each year, the president must target funds in an electorally strategic manner. In this way, he has the strongest incentive to send funds to states where victory is not certain for either political party. These states are often referred to as swing states, toss-up states, or battleground states. In a swing state, the population is typically politically divided and the infusion of resources, including federal grants, into these states may affect electoral outcomes.[5] Research on the presidency demonstrates that presidents and presidential candidates spend disproportionate levels of their campaign resources in swing states (Shaw 2006).

For the purpose of this paper, I divide states into three categories: swing states, core states, and lost cause states. Core states are those almost certain to support the incumbent presidential candidate. Lost cause states are those almost certain to support the non-incumbent party's candidate. Shaw explains that "states in the battleground (swing) category received the most resources"(2006, 46).[6] In modern presidential politics, Vermont is a core state and Mississippi is a lost cause state for Democrats. Presidents will direct the most funds to swing states, where the ultimate electoral payoff will be its highest.

[5] This research strictly engages presidential strategy without commenting on the success of that strategy. The distribution of government funds as a means of advertising and credit claiming serves as a strategy utilized by many elected officials. An additional and interesting question, that cannot be addressed in the confines of this paper would consider the impact of grant allocations on presidential electoral outcomes in the states.

[6] Shaw explains that "base states"(core states) receive less. Discussion of the opposing party's "base states" (lost cause states) suggests that they are largely reserved for the lowest level of resource allocation.

H1: Swing states will receive more in grants than core states or lost cause states.

Swing states are key because their electoral fate is not just unknown, but may be malleable. Presidents will concentrate resources in order to influence the outcome. Engaging in advertising, making campaign stops, and directing federal grants may have an impact on a sufficient number of voters to allow the president to win a given state. Additionally, grants allow presidents to connect with and gain support from local officials who will publicly support, endorse, and work for him. In this way, presidents recognize that elections are won or lost in these key states and seek to utilize resources in a way to maximize their chance of winning.

Beyond a geographic understanding of the electoral nature of grant allocation, it is important to evaluate presidential strategy in terms of time. An electorally strategic distribution of federal grants should not be uniform throughout presidential tenure. Instead, time should affect grant distribution in two important ways. Grants are more appealing as an electoral tool as an election nears. Because voters tend to use more recent events in their judgment of elected officials (Zaller 1992), effective credit claiming and advertising should occur in the period preceding an election (Fiorina 1981; Shaw 2006; Shaw and Roberts 2000).

Moreover, Alesina and Rosenthal (1989) in a discussion of macroeconomic policy distinguish between policies that have long and short term impacts. They argue that long term policy should be utilized in the first two years of a presidential administration as their effectiveness should coincide with the presidential election. Meanwhile, other policies that have short term impact should be used in the final two years of the administration as the immediacy of their impact will enhance electoral chances. Although grants are more immediate, their economic impact can take time to have an effect on a local economy. Alesina and Rosenthal effectively argue that the final two years serve as a window for which short term economic tools take effect.

Although Alesina and Rosenthal rely on a formal model in which completely informed voters reward presidents for observed economic growth and success, Hetherington (1996) demonstrates that the mere perception of economic conditions may motivate voters to punish or reward presidential candidates. Because the grants being analyzed in this project are typically short term in nature, they are more likely to be used as a presidential election draws near. These grants either provide immediate impact or at least provide the perception of positive impact in voters' recent memory.

H2: *Swing states will receive more grants in the two years prior to a presidential election than in the two years after.*

Finally, while presidents are motivated not only by their own reelection, but the electoral success of their same party successor, self-interest should trump partisan interest. Rottinghaus argues that presidential electoral interest can extend to the second term, as a president seeks a partisan hold on the Oval Office (2006). In this way, the two term limit does not deconstruct the electoral drive, as presidents still maintain electoral preferences regarding the next occupant of the White House.

Despite a continued electoral interest for presidents, other research suggests the salience of personal electoral considerations can influence behavior. Broadly, research has found that the salience of personal electoral motivation will influence the behavior of US Senators (Kuklinksi 1978). Moreover, Canes-Wrone and Shotts (2004) finds that while presidents are responsive to the public across presidential terms, the effect is enhanced during the first term when personal electoral preferences inform behavior. This argument emerges from a view in which a president's personal electoral interest serves as a salient force in guiding behavior. Although interest in the success of their party's standard bearer will influence presidential behavior across

terms, this concern may not influence behavior as strongly as would one's own electoral interest. While a president's commitment to the electorally-motivated distribution of grants should exist across presidential terms, it should be stronger in his first term than in his second.

H3: Swing states will receive a larger benefit in grant allocations in a president's first term than in his second.

These hypotheses help explore more clearly presidential influence in the aggregate distribution of federal grants. By examining both the geographic and temporal influences on the distribution of these federal funds, this project paints a clearer picture of the motives behind their allocation. An allocation strategy that significantly increases funding to swing states, particularly as a presidential election approaches and in a president's first term, suggests that a president's electoral preferences are a consideration in the distribution of these funds. Like Members of Congress, election-driven presidents use their power over the federal purse to advance their goals.

MEASURING INFLUENCE

The central argument in this paper is that presidents influence the distribution of federal grants in order to enhance their electoral prospects. The dependent variable for this project is the allocation of grants and is measured in two distinct ways. First, I measure the grant dollars received by a state in a given year. Specifically, this dependent variable is measured as logged real grant dollars per 100,000 people per state-year. For this variable, real dollars use a base year of 1996. These data are drawn from an aggregation of state-year-level discretionary grant allocations from the Federal Assistance Award Data System (FAADS) from 1996-2008. Measuring grant dollars is important because it serves as an easily comparable quantity across states and over time. Larger grants can have a larger impact and, in some sense, will offer the

president greater substance for which he can claim credit. However, grant dollars do not tell the whole story. In addition, I measure the number of grants allocated per state-year. Specifically, this dependent variable is measured as the logged number of grants per 100,000 people per state-year. These data are also drawn from FAADS. This measure is an aggregation of the number of grant allocations to a given state in a single year. Measuring the number of grants offers a more complete accounting of this concept and may tell a different story from that of grant dollars. [7]

Because grant allocations are often covered by state and local media, are publicized by the administration, and at times, come with officially attended ceremonies, each allocation offers the president the opportunity to credit claim. Thus, independent of the dollars allocated to a state, a higher number of grants can effectively translate to a credit claiming barrage for the president and serve as an equally useful campaign tool. The data on grant allocations include every discretionary federal grant distributed to the 50 states from 1996-2008. During this period of time, the bureaucracy doled out more than $962,000,000,000 in grants. This money was allocated through 3,692,084 grant disbursements.

FAADS maintains detailed data on most types of federal spending, including different types of grants, contracts and other federal disbursements. The appeal of FAADS is that the researcher can efficiently isolate different types of spending. The grants analyzed in this project are discretionary, competitive grants. The executive branch has allocation authority over these grants. In this way, these allocations differ from other types of federal spending like formula grants, block grants, and entitlements that are subject to substantial legislative control. Through discretion, these grants allow presidents a prime opportunity to engage in porkbarrel politics.

Key Independent Variables

Electoral Competitiveness

[7] Appendix 1 includes a table describing all dependent and independent variables.

The key independent variables in this analysis involve measures of state competitiveness and timing. In understanding which type of state is receiving grants, it is important to know how presidents view the competitiveness of a state. This project examines the allocation of grants between presidential elections and of presidential behavior during this period. As a result, it is necessary to use a measure that reflects the state-level competitiveness as well as an indicator that is available to inform presidential decision making. To satisfy these demands, I rely on the state-level, incumbent party share of the two-party presidential vote in the previous election. While this measure is not a perfect reflection of electoral competitiveness, it is one that informs presidential electoral decision making and is effectively available the day after the previous election. I use this measure of presidential electoral competitiveness to divide states into three types: swing state, core state and lost cause state.[8] Core states are those in which the incumbent party received more than 55% of the vote in the previous election. Lost cause states are those in which the incumbent party received less than 45% of the vote. Swing states are those which were decided by 10% or less in the previous election.[9]

[8] One many consider the importance of electoral votes in a consideration of presidential electoral competitiveness. However, both dependent variables already control for population in the distribution of votes. While the population measure is, of course, not a perfect substitute for the number of electoral votes in a state, the two overlap substantially and population serves as an important control for state need in the distribution of grants. In separate estimations of the data, I have considered whether electoral vote share has an impact on presidential strategy and it does not. Such an electoral strategy affects swing states generally, regardless of the number of electoral votes. The standard competitiveness of presidential elections also suggests that state size should not necessarily motivate a campaign to pay less attention to it.

[9] An alternative measure of state electoral competitiveness, where a state is considered "swing" if the previous presidential election was decided by eight or fewer percentage points, yields substantively and statistically similar results. For the purpose of this paper, I will use the 10 percentage point as "swing state" technique, as is a common measure of marginality in the Congress literature (see Abramowitz, Alexander, and Gunning 2006; Ansolabehere, Brady, and Fiorina 1992).

Another alternative measure of competitiveness comes from Shaw (2006). In this book, Shaw uses campaign-generated swing state lists and has led to excellent research. However, two issues make those data less useful for this project. First, such lists are created as an election nears and is updated over short periods of time. The focus of this paper is on fund distribution across all four years of a presidential term. The measure used in this project is available immediately after an election. Second, such swing state lists are not available for all presidential election years examined in this project. This issue could introduce reliability problems if other sources are used to supplement Shaw's data. Thus, while Shaw's data are definitely valuable for understanding campaigns, it is not optimal for evaluating the specific research question in this project.

Table 1a shows the average number of grants and grant dollars allocated to each type of state. The results appear inconsistent with the theoretical predictions of the project. Lost cause and core states receive far more in grants than do swing states. However, a deeper look at the data shows that a few data points are driving these results. First, California and New York are extreme outliers and in every year in the data set are coded as either a core state or a lost cause state. These states' grant allocations far exceed all other states. In fact, in some years, their grant allocations are more than six standard deviations above the mean of all allocations. Additionally, during the period under analysis two exogenous shocks affected certain states that should be expected to drive up grant receipts to those areas. The first is New York in the few years after the September 11th terrorist attacks. The second comes with Louisiana and Mississippi in the years following Hurricane Katrina. Examining the data show that grant receipts increase dramatically in these years. In fact, California, New York and these disaster years drive almost a fifth of the variation in the grant allocation means, despite making up less than five percent of the data points.[10] While these data are not irrelevant, their exclusion provides a different view of the remaining 95.1% of the data.

[Table 1 about here]

Table 1b shows the means when the California, New York and disaster year data are excluded. These data show greater consistency with the theoretical expectations of this project. Both in terms of the number of grants and grant dollars, swing states receive more than other states and substantially more than average. In fact, on average, swing states receive $240 million more in grants per year than core states and nearly 900 more grants annually. This examination of means suggests that a more comprehensive examination of the relationship between state

[10] In this description of the data, New York is coded as a disaster for 2002, 2003 and 2004. In these years, the states are even greater outliers than New York is typically. However, the non-disaster years for New York are outliers in their own right.

competitiveness and grant allocations is warranted. On its face, this bivariate relationship offers the first systematic evidence of grants being allocated according to presidential electoral calculations.

Timing

In order to examine strategic timing, I rely on two measures to test hypotheses two and three. First, I use a measure of electoral proximity. This dichotomous variable reflects whether the data point lies in the two years preceding a presidential election or the two years after an election. The second timing variable indicates whether it is a president's first term. This variable allows me to distinguish different interests facing a president before and after he is term limited.

Controls

State-Level Congressional Controls

In light of a substantial literature that argues that Congress is the solo player in distributive politics, it is of great import that Congressional effects be controlled. Although the aggregate state-year-level dataset can complicate the isolation of precise Congressional effects, I include a series of measures that seek to capture the influence of Congress in the distribution of grants. First, I use a dichotomous measure of state membership on the Senate Appropriations Committee as a measure. Because all funding bills pass through this committee, this measure will serve as an effective proxy for Congressional influence. It is likely that membership on this committee will allow a direct influence in the area of grant allocations.[11]

Moreover, I control for whether it is an election year for a member of the Appropriations Committee, whether it is an election year for an incumbent Senator, whether there is a

[11] Different measures of Congressional influence were considered. This measure seemed theoretically and empirically sound. Membership on both Appropriations committees, offered almost no variation, as almost every state has a congressman or senator on the committeee. Even membership on the House Appropriations Committee offers little variation, as most states maintain membership. Failure to seat a member on that committee in the House is biased against small population states.

competitive Senate election in a state, whether the state is represented by a member of the Senate leadership, the number of majority party Senators representing a state, US House delegation partisan alignment with the president, and the Appropriations subcommittee power of states. To control further for the role of Congress, all models in this paper are estimated using fixed effects for state. These fixed effects will control for the influence that individual Senators may have on fund allocations.[12] Because previous literature demonstrates Congressional influence, these variables will subject the presidential influence hypothesis to rigorous testing. In the end, this paper seeks not to argue that Congress is powerless to influence the distribution of federal grants, but instead to argue that presidents act as powerful players in a complex allocation system.

Intergovernmental Controls

Other research suggests that federalism is an alternative explanation for the distribution of federal funds (Berry, Burden and Howell 2010; Larcinese, Rizzo, and Testa 2006). This work often argues that the political environment that governors face influences how grants are distributed. As such, I include controls for whether it is an election year for a state's governor, whether there is partisan alignment between the president and a state's governor, and an interaction of gubernatorial election year and partisan alignment with the president. These measures will control for gubernatorial electoral concerns and their effects.

State Capacity/Demand

Measures of state capacity or demand likely also influence grant distribution. As such, I control for yearly real gross state product and the miles of roads within a state. These data offer stable and comparable measures of the economic capacity for each state. Next, because many federal grants fund research and development particularly in areas of education and health care,

[12] For example, Senators Ted Stevens (AK) and Robert Byrd (WV) were notorious for benefitting from the appropriation of government funds, using their unique individual influence to secure substantial money for their states.

it is important to control for the amount of research conducted in each state. I control for the number of colleges, universities and hospitals. I further consider a measure of the elderly population as a proxy for demographic demands on government. Additionally, there is a theoretical reason to believe *a priori* that a few cases will be profound outliers due to disaster circumstance and are controlled as a result. This variable, labeled "disaster," accounts for New York in the three years following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and Louisiana and Mississippi after Hurricane Katrina.

METHODS

In this paper, I estimate a series of models using ordinary least squares with fixed effects for state and year. The fixed effects for individual influences that states and time may have on the data is part of a larger effort to ensure that the results are robust even when controlling for a multitude of alternative hypotheses. The use of fixed effects offers a more conservative estimation by adding additional layers of controls beyond those used for Congressional influence, intergovernmental effects, and measures of state-level need and demand. Further all estimates are reported with corresponding robust standard errors.

Throughout the paper, I estimate models using two dependent variables. One measures the number of federal grants allocated per state-year, while the other measures grant dollar allocations. However, the measurement of dependent variables accounts for important characteristics of the data. I rely on real grant dollar allocations in order to account for the effects of inflation over the 13 years being analyzed in this study. Additionally, for both dependent variables, I control for differences in state population that can dramatically affect grant allocations. Finally, because both dependent variables include extreme data points, I use the logarithmic value of each to diminish the impact of such outliers. Because of the use of the

logged values of the dependent variables, the interpretation of estimates throughout the analysis takes the form of percentage changes in the dependent variable.

EVALUATING INFLUENCE

The results of this study generally lend support to the hypotheses presented above. Presidents use their discretion over federal grants to institute an electorally-strategic process of distribution. This presidential strategy reflects both the geographic significance of constituencies as well as the salience of elections with respect to time.

Table 2 shows the estimates of the number of grants regressed on state competitiveness and timing and a set of controls. In this table, both models are estimated in identical fashion except that model 1 uses a three-part measure of state competitiveness, while model 2 employs a dichotomy. The analysis indicates that swing states receive between 7.3% and 7.6% more grants than do other states. Additionally, using this measure of competitiveness, core and lost cause states are statistically indistinguishable, suggesting the executive branch focus in the distribution of grants is on electorally competitive states. This swing state benefit translates to substantial gains for a state. For example, Tennessee in 2007 was a core state and received 4110 federal grants. These results suggest that if Tennessee were a swing state it would see more than 300 additional grants in that year alone.

[Table 2 about here]

The proximity of an election is associated with an increase in grant allocations. The estimates suggest that states will receive 10% more grants in the two years prior to an election than the two years following one. This finding offers additional evidence that the electoral interests of the executive branch influence the federal grant allocation strategy. An approaching presidential election initiates a change in the way the executive branch allocates federal grants.

This finding lends support to a theory of presidential influence in another way. If the grant distribution process were Congressionally-dominated, one would expect the inability to reject the null hypotheses because of the frequency of Congressional elections. Instead, the two years approaching a presidential election see higher grant allocations than the two year approaching a midterm.

[Table 3 about here]

Beyond the analysis of the number of federal grants, I also examine the allocation of federal dollars. Table 3 presents the results of this analysis. In this table, the models are identical to those found in Table 2, except that they are estimated using the logged real grant dollars per 100,000 people as the dependent variable. The results of the grant dollars models echo the findings of the grants models. Swing states see a benefit of 5.7% more grant dollars than other states. These findings provide further evidence that federal grant allocations reflect presidential electoral preferences over geographic distribution. Once again, Tennessee in 2007 received about $1.06 billion in grants. However, the results suggest that as a swing state, Tennessee would have reaped an additional $60 million in grants in that year.

More to the point and similar to the grants models, states receive about 6.6% more grant dollars when a presidential election is approaching compared to when one is distant. In the dollars models, states receive more in a president's first. This is consistent with hypothesis 3 and offers a distinct finding from the grants model. In both the grants and grant dollars models, the estimates for term are imprecise and preclude rejection of the null hypothesis.

In the grant dollars model, the results show that a senator's membership on the Appropriations Committee is associated with about a 7.6% increase in grant dollars. This finding is generally consistent with previous research that indicates a legislative influence in the

distribution of federal dollars (Carsey and Rundquist 1999; Rundquist and Carsey 2002; Rundquist, Rhee and Lee 1996). The results, taken as a whole suggest that there exist both executive and legislative pressures on the allocation of federal grants. However, these results cannot detail whether this effect is driven by Congress or presidents seeking to placate Senate appropriators.

The models presented in Tables 2 and 3 offer evidence that there exists a presidential electoral influence in the geographic distribution of federal grants. Swing states receive more grants and grant dollars than do core states and non-swing states. Further, the proximity of a presidential election changes the way in which grants are allocated, increasing both the number of grants and grant dollars allocated to the states.

However, the timing variables as specified in both models only describe the effect of time on allocations to *all* states. While the evidence suggests that federal grant allocations are strategically timed, it does not provide a comprehensive understanding of that strategy. To understand allocation strategy more completely, it is important to evaluate the intersection of timing and geographic distribution. To do this, I re-estimate the grants and grant dollars models using variables that interact the timing and swing state variables. Table 4 presents the results of the estimation. In all four models, state electoral competitiveness is a dichotomous measure of whether a state is a swing state. The first and third models are specified with variables that interact swing state with first term. The second and fourth models interact swing state with election proximity. These interaction variables provide insight into how timing affects swing and non-swing states differently. Their introduction into the models will offer a more nuanced evaluation of strategic timing and geographic allocation.

[Table 4 about here]

In these models, the proximity of a presidential election continues to play an important role in the distribution of funds. Although the interaction terms fail to reach statistical significance, the parameter estimates suggest that swing states receive more grants and grant dollars when an election is proximate compared to when it is distant. Moreover, the estimates suggest that swing states receive more grants and grant dollars in a president's *second* term compared to the first.

The analysis of the marginal effects of the interactions illustrates that the two timing variables influence grant allocations in unique ways.[13] Appendix 2 presents tables reporting the results of this analysis.[14] First, the differences in allocations between a president's first and second term are statistically indistinguishable from zero for both swing and non-swing states. This finding is inconsistent with the expectation of the theory. It suggests that presidential electoral self-interest and presidential electoral partisan-interest affect grant allocations in similar ways. The marginal effects analysis indicates that swing states receive more in grants than non-swing states across presidential terms. Swing states receive over 8% more grants than non-swing states in a president's second term and 6.7% more grants than non-swing states in a president's first term.[15] However, the differences across terms are statistically indistinguishable. These findings show that while presidential term does not play a significant role in influencing grant allocations, swing states continue to receive more grants than non-swing states.

Hypothesis three suggests that presidential self-interest should lead to increased grant allocations in the first term. A contrary finding could be attributable to executive branch and

[13] Further, F tests on the impact of the interaction variables for each model shows that the interaction variables have a significant impact on model fit for both models analyzing grant dollars. For the election proximity interaction, $F = 79.95$, $p < .0001$; for the term interaction, $F = 54.99$, $p < .0001$.

[14] Appendix 2 offers fours tables displaying the marginal effects of the elements of the interactions. For this analysis I use the method outlined in Kam and Franzese (2007).

[15] These estimates are all significant at the $p < .05$ level. The marginal effect of a swing state in a president's first term for grant dollars is not statistically significant

presidential learning curves. Because new presidents and appointees rapidly find themselves in new decision making settings for which they were not necessarily prepared, it may take time before they can fully realize and execute a grant allocation strategy. As such, the influence during the first term may be artificially low as new members of the executive branch face a type of on-the-job training.[16]

The proximity of a presidential election influences grant allocations in a more striking way. The analysis of the marginal effects of the interaction shows that presidential electoral strategy is its strongest in the two years prior to a presidential election. As mentioned previously, all states see an increase in grants when an election is proximate compared to an election being distant. Swing states will see an 11.5% increase in grants and an 8.2% increase in grant dollars in the two years before a presidential election compared to the two years after an election.

This analysis also shows that swing states receive about 9% more grants and almost 7% more grant dollars than non-swing states when an election is proximate. The findings suggest that while grant allocations increase to all states when an election is proximate, swing states receive a higher increase in grants than do non-swing states. Moreover, the marginal analysis of the interaction terms indicates that even when a presidential election is distant, swing states receive more grants than non-swing states.[17]

These findings suggest that the proximity of a presidential election motivates a change in executive branch allocations of federal grants. During the two years prior to a presidential election, the executive branch allocates more grants, but a significantly higher percentage of those grants and grant dollars are concentrated in swing states. The evidence indicates not only

[16] The ideal test of this proposition would require a modern three term presidency, in which the first term there exits acclimation effects, the second term provides the president with electoral self-interest, and a president is term limited after his third term. However, the requirements of the 22nd Amendment to the US Constitution bar this test.
[17] In the same analysis of dollars, the estimates approach statistical significance in the hypothesized direction.

that presidents think about states in terms of electoral competitiveness, but that the urgency of electoral demands motivates an increasingly strategic allocation of grants and grant dollars.[18]

ANAYLZING INFLUENCE

Research into executive branch politics has sought to understand how the presidency has changed over time. Among these changes, researchers have considered how the president has become more responsive to political or electoral considerations. The dawning of the politicization (or perhaps hyper-politicization) of the American presidency has been pegged at numerous points in time. They include Nixon's second term, the fallout of Carter-era bureaucratic reforms, the Reagan presidency, and the Clinton years. What is clear is that the office of president is now a more politically- and electorally-motivated than in previous periods.

Because of this institutional transformation, the findings presented here may not extend to earlier eras of the presidency, and it is unclear from previous research what would be an acceptable historical starting point. However, it is quite likely that the findings of this project will inform our understanding of the presidency into the future. Politicization of the presidency and the strategic use of appointees that was observable in the Reagan era and that accelerated during the Clinton and George W. Bush administrations will, at the very least, ensure the presidency remains a highly political institution. Accepting the institutionalization of political and electoral concerns, it is important to evaluate how politics influences presidential behavior. This paper has taken such a consideration of an evolving presidency and tested its effects on distributive policy.

[18] As a final test on the robustness of the findings regarding the interaction terms, Appendix 3 reports the results of re-estimation of the data by splitting the sample, according to the elements of the interactions. Appendix 3.1 separately examines Swing and Non-Swing state data, testing the effect of timing variables on both dependent variables. Similarly, Appendix 3.2 separately examines proximate and distant elections data, testing the effect of the swing state variable on both dependent variables. These analyses offer additional support for the theoretical claims in the central analysis in this project.

Several implications emerge from the results of this study. In a very straightforward way, presidents care about their own electoral interests and use their influence over the federal largesse to further these goals. These findings add to a growing voice in the literature that argues that presidents, like members of Congress, are motivated by elections and behave in a manner that reflects electoral concerns (Shaw 2006; Shaw and Roberts 2000; Canes-Wrone and Shotts 2004). Specifically, presidents engage in a targeted and electorally-strategic allocation of government funds to crucial constituencies (states). This finding echoes recent work that suggests electoral considerations motivate and inform presidential influence over the distribution of funds (Berry, Burden and Howell 2010; Berry and Gersen 2010). However, rather than showing that presidents use funds to aid copartisans in reelection, this paper shows that concerns over presidential elections drive influence.

In short, this research demonstrates that presidents' electoral motives influence the distribution of federal funds. The literature in this area often (and accurately) argues that Congress plays an important role in distributive politics, and this paper offers support for this claim, as well. However, the findings presented here effectively demonstrate that presidents also wield substantial influence. Rather than a system of fund distribution that a single branch of government dominates, the allocation of federal dollars is a shared power in which the oft-overlooked executive branch plays an important and influential role.

In evaluating presidential power, an important distinction in this research emerges from the type of spending being analyzed. The project uses federal discretionary grants for an important reason; the executive branch has discretionary authority over the distribution of those funds. Unlike some other types of funds (or federal outlays generally), these federal grants offer presidents a clear path to participate in porkbarrel politics. In any study of the strategic

distribution of government funds by elites, it is important to consider both the motive and opportunity to influence allocations. Discretionary authority offers presidents the opportunity to influence the process, and as a result, the findings presented here have broader implications. In addition to federal grants, the executive branch maintains authority over the allocation of spending in other areas such as contracts and procurement. Thus, this research question can be extended into any of the areas of spending in which presidents and the executive branch have the opportunity to influence outcomes directly.

This paper details the manner in which presidential electoral concerns, presidential power and the characteristics of presidential elections inform federal fund distribution. Given the institutional design of the Electoral College and the nature of competition in presidential elections, swing states serve as the key constituencies in the race for the White House. Presidents use their discretionary control over huge sums of federal grant dollars to target funds to swing states. By delivering funds to these states, presidents seek to perform a basic and strategic task in distributive politics to target constituencies with a "relatively high willingness to abandon their ideological preferences in exchange for particularistic benefits" (Dixit and Londregan 1996, 1133). In this way, federal grants function as an incumbent-controlled pool of campaign funds that presidents are able to allocate strategically.

Specifically, swing states receive higher levels of grant funding than do non-swing states. Even after controlling for congressional influence; aid to copartisans in the states; measure of state size, need, and capacity; as well as individual state and year effects, swing states receive a disproportionate number of grants and grant dollars than do other states. Additionally, such strategic allocation behavior is enhanced by the salience (proximity) of presidential elections.

Thus, this project offers evidence that presidential electoral motives influence executive branch policy decisions.

This research also engages the distributive politics literature that focuses on the recipient constituency. Scholars debate whether core constituencies (e.g., Levitt and Snyder 1995) or swing constituencies (e.g., Dixit and Londregan 1996) benefit most in the allocation of funds. The core hypothesis is often posed in the context of legislative elections and reflects a strategy that is particularly effective in popular elections. This paper lends support to the theory that swing constituencies receive a positive bias in the presidentially-influenced allocation of federal government funds.

However, I also suggest that presidents may make more nuanced calculations regarding the distribution of grants within states. While this research suggests an interstate swing state bias in distribution, it does not preclude a differently-motivated distribution bias at the intra-state level. For example, Chen (2009) argues that within the swing state of Florida, FEMA grants are delivered to core constituencies in the state's Eastern counties. Such a finding can be entirely consistent with the results of this paper. This research simply suggests which states will receive more grants. Research that examines intrastate grant funding may well find that presidents target core constituencies within swing states in an attempt to enhance their electoral prospects. Conversely, research may demonstrate that the swing state bias is true at both the inter- and intrastate levels. This paper cannot comment on the latter. Instead, the research presented in this paper offers support for the swing hypothesis in presidential elections specifically at the interstate level, as is consistent with the institutional design of the Electoral College.

Finally, this paper speaks strictly to presidential influence and behavior, and offers evidence that the distribution of federal grants reflects a strategy consistent with presidential

electoral preferences. This paper does not necessarily speak to the effectiveness of this strategy on voting behavior. Instead, I argue that a president's administration has an annual duty to distribute federal grants. The executive branch's allocation of grants is relatively low cost, as the bureaucracy is charged by Congress to perform the action with distributive discretion. Because grants offer a yearly porkbarrel opportunity for presidents, serve as an opportunity for media advertising and can be targeted in strategic ways, grants will be allocated to states that are electorally important to a president. Presidential elections can be decided by a few hundred popular votes in a single state or set of states. As such, the allocation of grants is a nearly costless action that may have the ultimate payoff.

CONCLUSION

A federal agency that directs grants to a host of states including Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, Washington, Colorado, Florida and Wisconsin may not seem particularly interesting or noteworthy. However, when the agency's stated goal is to "increase job opportunities and per capita income in Appalachia…"[19] such behavior seems at odds with expectations. Between 1996 and 2008, the Appalachian Regional Commission did just this. While distributing money to swing states in the Appalachian region like West Virginia and Pennsylvania, other swing states, hundreds and thousands of miles from the region, benefitted as well. This project helps explain such grant allocations and public policy outcomes.

Like Members of Congress who indulge in the attachment of earmarks and fiddle with funding formulas, presidents use executive branch discretion over federal grants to advance their own electoral interests. Federal grants provide presidents credit claiming opportunities in key constituencies. This paper demonstrates that presidents are concerned with their own electoral interests and direct federal grants to swing states, particularly in advance of a presidential

[19] http://www.arc.gov/about/index.asp

election. The findings suggest a commitment to presidential credit claiming in the arena of distributive politics. It appears that all else equal, applying for a grant from a swing states, rather than a non-swing state may be a more fruitful endeavor. Moreover, the bureaucracy's generosity is greatest in advance of a presidential election.

This research also engages a debate in distributive politics about the beneficiaries of government funds. While this paper offers support for the research that posits that swing constituencies receive more government funds, it offers a more nuanced understanding of this research. First, it is crucial to understand and consider the institutional structure of elections when evaluating the beneficiaries of government fund distribution. Such consideration can produce unique and dynamic theories of fund distribution. For example, this study suggests that interstate fund distribution is consistent with the swing hypothesis, but intrastate distribution may not be. The institutional structure of the Electoral College can allow (and may encourage) different distribution strategies at inter- and intrastate levels.

Moreover, this study suggests the importance of incorporating presidential power and executive branch influence into studies of distributive politics. As a major player in all stages of the public policy process, the president must be incorporated into studies of distributive politics. However, what this paper suggests is that the extent of presidential influence in the realm of federal spending depends in large part on the type of spending. As the literature on delegation suggests, presidential power is most effective in areas with the greatest executive discretion. However, several distributive politics studies fail to consider the role of discretion in federal spending allocations. Future research must shift away from an examination of aggregate federal outlays and focus more clearly on the independent effects associated with specific types of spending.

Finally, this research suggests that students of the American presidency consider that executive behavior may be less unique than is often argued in the literature. Although presidential powers and duties are certainly distinct in the American system, presidential behavior is likely driven by the same basic forces that motivate Members of Congress and other elected officials. In a fundamental way, presidents are election-minded individuals who depend on electoral success to influence outcomes, accomplish secondary goals, and advance their political agenda.

Table 1a. Mean Yearly Grant Allocations by State Competitiveness

	Grant Dollars (Millions)	Number of Grants
All States	148	5680
Swing States	131	5486
Core States	135	5286
Lost Cause States	226	7177

Note: Swing states are those decided by 10 percentage points or fewer in the previous presidential election. Core states are those in which the party of the incumbent president receives more than 55% of the vote. Lost Cause States are those in which the party of the incumbent president receives less than 45% of the vote. Source: The Federal Assistance Award Data System.

Table 1b. Mean Yearly Grant Allocations by State Competitiveness excluding Outlier States

	Grant Dollars (Millions)	Number of Grants
All States	120	4994
Swing States	131	5486
Core States	107	4618
Lost Cause States	121	4523

Note: The data exclude New York and California, as well as Mississippi and Louisiana from 2005-2007, as they are extreme outliers. Swing states are those decided by 10 percentage points or fewer in the previous presidential election. Core states are those in which the party of the incumbent president receives more than 55% of the vote. Lost Cause States are those in which the party of the incumbent president receives less than 45% of the vote. Source: The Federal Assistance Award Data System.

Table 2. Models of the Number of Federal Discretionary Grants by State-Year 1996-2008

	(1)	(2)
State Competitiveness		
Swing State (0,1)	0.073**	0.076**
	(0.029)	(0.029)
Lost Cause State (0,1)	-0.024	----
	(0.032)	
Timing		
First Term (0,1)	-0.006	-0.009
	(0.011)	(0.011)
Election Proximity (0,1)	0.100**	0.101**
	(0.008)	(0.008)
State-Level Congressional Controls		
Senate Appropriations Committee (0,1)	0.045	0.046
	(0.031)	(0.032)
Appropriations Committee Election Year (0,1)	0.007	0.006
	(0.018)	(0.018)
Incumbent Senator Election Year (0,1)	-0.007	-0.007
	(0.014)	(0.013)
Competitive Senate Election (0,1)	-0.012	-0.011
	(0.023)	(0.023)
Senate Leadership (0,1)	-0.043	-0.045
	(0.031)	(0.031)
Majority Party Membership (0,1,2)	-0.001	-0.002
	(0.009)	(0.009)
House Delegation with President (0,1)	-0.012	-0.005
	(0.021)	(0.022)
Cardinals (0,1)	0.001	0.004
	(0.030)	(0.030)
Intergovernmental Controls		
Governor's Election Year (0,1)	0.007	0.007
	(0.017)	(0.017)
Governor-President Party Align (0,1)	-0.001	-0.0001
	(0.020)	(0.020)
Gov. Election Yr. X Alignment (0,1)	-0.044*	-0.044*
	(0.022)	(0.022)
Controls and Constant		
Real Gross State Product	-0.940**	-0.949**
	(0.115)	(0.115)
Roads (miles)	-0.065	-0.082
	(0.228)	(0.224)
Research Institutions	-0.002	-0.002
	(0.001)	(0.001)
Percent Elderly	-0.131**	-0.126**
	(0.039)	0.039
Disaster (0,1)	0.023	0.019
	(0.037)	(0.037)
Constant	6.783**	7.000**
	(3.089)	(3.052)
R^2	0.44	0.44
Obs.	650	650

Note: The dependent variable is the logged number of grants per 100,000 people per state-year. **p<.01 (one-tailed test) *p<.05 (one-tailed test). Both models are estimated using ordinary least squares with fixed effects for state and year. Robust standard errors are reported. In model 1, the reference case for state competitiveness is Core State. In model 2, the reference case for state competitiveness is Non-Swing State.

Table 3. Models of Federal Discretionary Grant Dollars by State-Year, 1996-2008

	(1)	(2)
State Competitiveness		
Swing State (0,1)	0.057*	0.056*
	(0.033)	(0.033)
Lost Cause State (0,1)	0.01	---
	(0.048)	
Timing		
First Term (0,1)	0.024	0.025
	(0.022)	(0.020)
Election Proximity (0,1)	0.066**	0.066**
	(0.014)	(0.014)
State-Level Congressional Controls		
Senate Appropriations Committee (0,1)	0.076*	0.075*
	(0.038)	(0.038)
Appropriations Committee Election Year (0,1)	0.019	0.019
	(0.027)	(0.027)
Incumbent Senator Election Year (0,1)	-0.043*	-0.043*
	(0.019)	(0.019)
Competitive Senate Election (0,1)	0.013	0.013
	(0.025)	(0.025)
Senate Leadership (0,1)	0.045	0.045
	(0.056)	(0.056)
Majority Party Membership (0,1,2)	0.002	0.002
	(0.017)	(0.017)
House Delegation with President (0,1)	0.029	0.026
	(0.028)	(0.025)
Cardinals (0,1)	-0.007	-0.008
	(0.035)	(0.034)
Intergovernmental Controls		
Governor's Election Year (0,1)	0.046*	0.046*
	(0.021)	(0.021)
Governor-President Party Align (0,1)	-0.031	-0.032
	(0.026)	(0.026)
Gov. Election Yr. X Alignment (0,1)	0.008	0.008
	(0.031)	(0.031)
Controls and Constant		
Real Gross State Product	-0.113	0.109
	(0.130)	(0.126)
Roads (miles)	0.164	0.172
	(0.178)	(0.176)
Research Institutions	-0.001	-0.001
	(0.002)	(0.002)
Percent Elderly	-0.092*	-0.094*
	(0.039)	(0.039)
Disaster	0.964**	0.966**
	(0.282)	(0.282)
Constant	17.772**	17.682**
	(2.728)	(2.649)
R^2	0.10	0.10
Obs.	650	650

Note: The dependent variable is the logged real grant dollars per 100,000 people per state-year. **p<.01 (two-tailed test). Both models are estimated using ordinary least squares with fixed effects for state and year. Robust standard errors are reported. In model 1, the reference case for state competitiveness is Core State. In model 2, the reference case for state competitiveness is Non-Swing State.

Table 4. Models of Federal Discretionary Grants including Timing Variables

	Number of Grants		Grant Dollars	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
State Competitiveness				
Swing State (0,1)	0.083*	0.062*	0.067	0.040
	(0.035)	(0.031)	(0.041)	(0.033)
Timing				
First Term (0,1)	-0.001	-0.009	0.038	0.025
	(0.015)	(0.011)	(0.027)	(0.020)
Election Proximity (0,1)	0.101**	0.090**	0.066**	0.054**
	(0.008)	(0.010)	(0.014)	(0.017)
Swing*Term	-0.018	---	-0.030	---
	(0.026)		(0.044)	
Swing*Proximity	---	0.025	---	0.028
		(0.020)		(0.030)
State-Level Congressional Controls				
Senate Appropriations Committee (0,1)	0.046	0.048	0.076	0.077
	(0.032)	(0.032)	(0.038)	(0.038)
Appropriations Committee Election Year (0,1)	0.006	0.006	0.018	0.019
	(0.018)	(0.018)	(0.027)	(0.027)
Incumbent Senator Election Year (0,1)	-0.006	-0.006	-0.043*	-0.043*
	(0.014)	(0.013)	(0.019)	(0.019)
Competitive Senate Election (0,1)	-0.011	-0.011	0.013	0.013
	(0.023)	(0.023)	(0.025)	(0.025)
Senate Leadership (0,1)	-0.045	-0.044	0.045	0.046
	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.055)	(0.056)
Majority Party Membership (0,1)	-0.003	-0.003	0.002	0.001
	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.017)	(0.017)
House Delegation with President (0,1)	-0.005	-0.005	0.027	0.026
	(0.022)	(0.022)	(0.026)	(0.025)
Cardinals (0,1)	0.003	0.005	-0.010	-0.008
	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.033)	(0.034)
Intergovernmental Controls				
Governor's Election Year (0,1)	0.006	0.007	0.046*	0.047*
	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.021)	(0.021)
Governor-President Party Align (0,1)	0.0004	0.001	-0.031	-0.031
	(0.020)	(0.020)	(0.026)	(0.026)
Gov. Election Yr. X Alignment (0,1)	-0.044*	-0.045*	0.008	0.007
	(0.022)	(0.022)	(0.031)	(0.030)
Controls and Constant				
Real Gross State Product	-0.951**	-0.948**	-0.112	-0.108
	(0.114)	(0.114)	(0.127)	(0.127)
Roads (miles)	-0.080	-0.076	-0.175	-0.179
	(0.225)	(0.225)	(0.176)	(0.179)
Research Institutions	-0.002	-0.002	-0.001	-0.001
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Percent Elderly	-0.125**	-0.126**	-0.093*	-0.094*
	(0.038)	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.040)
Disaster	0.017	0.018	0.963**	0.964**
	(0.038)	(0.036)	(0.283)	(0.281)
Constant	6.981*	6.924*	17.656**	17.602**
	(3.049)	(3.054)	(2.637)	(2.706)
R^2	0.44	0.44	0.10	0.10
Obs.	650	650	650	650

Note: The dependent variable in models 1 and 2 is the logged number of grants per 100,000 people per state year. The dependent variable in models 3 and 4 is the logged real grant dollars per 100,000 people per state year. **p<.01 (one-tailed test) *p<.05 (one-tailed test). All models are estimated using ordinary least squares with fixed effects for state and year. Robust standard errors are reported. In all models, the reference case for state competitiveness is Non-Swing State.

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Appendix 1. Description of Variables

Variable	Coding	Source
Dependent Variable		
Number of Grants	logged number of grants per 100,000 people per state-year	FAADS, Census Bureau
Grant Dollars	logged real grant dollars per 100,000 people per state-year	FAADS, Census Bureau
Electoral Competitiveness		
Swing State	dichotomous, based on incumbent two party presidential vote from previous election if share is between 45-55%	CQ Politics in America
Core State	dichotomous, based on incumbent two party presidential vote from previous election if share is greater than 55%	CQ Politics in America
Lost Cause State	dichotomous, based on incumbent two party presidential vote from previous election if share is less than 45%	CQ Politics in America
Timing		
First Term	dichotomous, 1 = First Presidential Term	
Election Proximity	dichotomous, 1 = Presidential Election Yr. and Prior Yr.	
State-Level Congressional Controls		
Senate Appropriations Comm.	dichotomous, 1 = State is represented on the Senate Appropriations Committee	CQ Politics in America
Appropriations Comm. Election Yr.	dichotomous, 1 = State has a Senator on the Appropriations Committee who is up for reelection in a given year	CQ Politics in America
Incumbent Senator Election Year	dichotomous, 1 = State has a Senator seeking reelection in a given year	CQ Politics in America
Competitive Senate Election	dichotomous, 1 = State has a competitive Senate election in a given year as defined by CQ Weekly ranking "leans" or "no clear favorite"	CQ Weekly
Senate Leadership	dichotomous, 1 = State is represented by a Senate who is a floor leader, whip, or caucus chair	CQ Politics in America
Majority Party Membership	Number of Senators from a state from the majority party in the Senate (0,1,2)	CQ Politics in America
House Delegation with President	Dichotomous, 1=state has a majority of the US House delegation from the President's party	CQ Politics in America
Cardinals	Dichotomous, 1=state has a representative who serves as chair of a House Appropriations subcommittee	CQ Politics in America
Intergovernmental Controls		
Governor's Election Year	dichotomous, 1 = Governor is up for reelection in a given year	CQ Politics in America
Governor-President Party Align	dichotomous, 1 = Governor and President come from the same party	CQ Politics in America
Gov. Election Yr. X Alignment	dichotomous, interaction of Governor's Election Year and Governor-President Party Align	
State Controls		
Real Gross State Product	logged real gross state product	Department of Commerce
Roads	logged miles of roads	US DOT
Research Institutions	number of hospitals and universities	Depts of Educ. and HHS
Percent Elderly	percentage of population aged 65 and over	Census Bureau
Disaster	1 = New York in 2001, 2002, 2003; Louisiana and Mississippi in 2005, 2006, 2007	

Appendix 2.1 Marginal Effect of a Swing State on the Allocation of Federal Discretionary Grants

	Number of Grants (Percent Change)	Real Grant Dollars (Percent Change)
Distant Election	6.25*	4.03
Proximate Election	8.78*	6.83*

Note: Each value represents the marginal effect of a state being a "swing state" on grant allocations, given the proximity of a presidential election. **p<.01 (one-tailed test) *p<.05 (one-tailed test). The left column represents the percent change in the number of grants per 100,000 people. The right column represents the percent change in real grant dollars per 100,000 people.

Appendix 2.2 Marginal Effect of a Proximate Election on the Allocation of Federal Discretionary Grants

	Number of Grants (Percent Change)	Real Grant Dollars (Percent Change)
Non-Swing State	8.99**	5.37*
Swing State	11.52**	8.17*

Note: Each value represents the marginal effect of an election being proximate on grant allocations, given state electoral competitiveness. **p<.01 (one-tailed test) *p<.05 (one-tailed test). The left column represents the percent change in the number of grants per 100,000 people. The right column represents the percent change in real grant dollars per 100,000 people.

Appendix 2.3 Marginal Effect of a Swing State on the Allocation of Federal Discretionary Grants

	Number of Grants (Percent Change)	Real Grant Dollars (Percent Change)
2nd Term	8.33*	6.70*
1st Term	6.49*	3.66

Note: Each value represents the marginal effect of a state being a "swing state" on grant allocations, given the presidential term. **p<.01 (one-tailed test) *p<.05 (one-tailed test). The left column represents the percent change in the number of grants per 100,000 people. The right column represents the percent change in real grant dollars per 100,000 people.

Appendix 2.4 Marginal Effect of a President's First Term on the Allocation of Federal Discretionary Grants

	Number of Grants (Percent Change)	Real Grant Dollars (Percent Change)
Non-Swing State	0.001	3.80
Swing State	-0.019	0.08

Note: Each value represents the marginal effect of a president's first term on grant allocations, given state electoral competitiveness. **p<.01 (one-tailed test) *p<.05 (one-tailed test). The left column represents the percent change in the number of grants per 100,000 people. The right column represents the percent change in real grant dollars per 100,000 people.

Appendix 3.1 Models of Federal Discretionary Grants Isolated for Swing and Non-Swing States

	Number of Grants		Grant Dollars	
	Swing	Non-Swing	Swing	Non-Swing
Timing				
First Term (0,1)	0.029*	0.017	0.047	0.050*
	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.032)	(0.029)
Election Proximity (0,1)	0.101**	0.078**	0.080**	0.056**
	(0.019)	(0.012)	(0.030)	(0.022)
State-Level Congressional Controls				
Senate Appropriations Committee (0,1)	0.028	0.058	0.034	0.178**
	(0.044)	(0.039)	(0.047)	(0.061)
Appropriations Committee Election Year (0,1)	-0.029	0.023	0.020	0.025
	(0.028)	(0.026)	(0.043)	(0.042)
Incumbent Senator Election Year (0,1)	-0.002	0.011	-0.033	-0.043
	(0.018)	(0.019)	(0.031)	(0.032)
Competitive Senate Election (0,1)	-0.031	-0.032	0.025	-0.009
	(0.023)	(0.030)	(0.029)	(0.034)
Senate Leadership (0,1)	-0.044	-0.015	0.084*	0.063
	(0.050)	(0.039)	(0.049)	(0.064)
Majority Party Membership (0,1)	-0.004	0.001	0.001	0.027
	(0.013)	(0.009)	(0.029)	(0.022)
House Delegation with President (0,1)	0.003	0.020	-0.023	0.039
	(0.022)	(0.029)	(0.051)	(0.034)
Cardinals (0,1)	-0.016	0.030	-0.033	0.015
	(0.045)	(0.050)	(0.058)	0.049
Intergovernmental Controls				
Governor's Election Year (0,1)	0.004	0.012	0.042	0.050
	(0.029)	(0.024)	(0.038)	(0.031)
Governor-President Party Align (0,1)	-0.046*	-0.014	-0.040	0.021
	(0.027)	(0.027)	(0.045)	(0.026)
Gov. Election Yr. X Alignment (0,1)	-0.035	-0.073*	0.031	-0.009
	(0.036)	(0.028)	(0.046)	(0.045)
Controls and Constant				
Real Gross State Product	-0.653**	-0.831**	0.207	-0.256
	(0.158)	(0.126)	(0.190)	(0.169)
Roads (miles)	0.765*	-0.037	0.845*	0.383*
	(0.324)	0.169	(0.388)	(0.200)
Research Institutions	-0.003	-0.002	-0.003	-0.001
	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.002)
Percent Elderly	-0.111	-0.116**	-0.203**	-0.036
	0.064	(0.043)	(0.071)	(0.040)

Disaster	----	-0.018	----	0.795**
		(0.030)		(0.239)
Constant	-5.770	4.973*	8.086	16.434**
	(3.830)	(2.852)	(5.880)	(3.510)
R^2	0.50	0.42	0.004	0.02
Obs.	278	372	278	372

Note: The dependent variable in models 1 and 2 is the logged number of grants per 100,000 people per state year. The dependent variable in models 3 and 4 is the logged real grant dollars per 100,000 people per state year. **p<.01 (one-tailed test) *p<.05 (one-tailed test). All models are estimated using ordinary least squares with fixed effects for state and year. Robust standard errors are reported. In all models, the reference case for state competitiveness is Non-Swing State.

Appendix 3.2. Model of Federal Discretionary Grants Isolated for Proximate and Distant Elections

	Number of Grants		Grant Dollars	
	Proximate	Distant	Proximate	Distant
State Competitiveness				
Swing State (0,1)	0.091**	0.057*	0.045	0.050
	(0.033)	(0.031)	(0.039)	(0.034)
Timing				
First Term (0,1)	0.090**	-0.115**	0.178**	-0.144**
	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.024)	(0.029)
State-Level Congressional Controls				
Senate Appropriations Committee (0,1)	0.047	0.053	0.069	0.113*
	(0.030)	(0.054)	(0.044)	(0.057)
Appropriations Committee Election Yr. (0,1)	-0.055	0.031	-0.019	0.010
	(0.028)	(0.026)	(0.051)	(0.054)
Incumbent Senator Election Year (0,1)	0.025	-0.029	-0.120**	0.034
	(0.019)	(0.023)	(0.024)	(0.043)
Competitive Senate Election (0,1)	-0.002	-0.011	0.037	-0.017
	(0.027)	(0.019)	(0.027)	(0.023)
Senate Leadership (0,1)	-0.036	-0.046	-0.059	0.044
	(0.031)	(0.047)	(0.048)	(0.078)
Majority Party Membership (0,1)	0.004	-0.015	0.016	-0.020
	(0.013)	(0.010)	(0.021)	(0.014)
House Delegation with President (0,1)	-0.019	-0.005	0.011	0.035
	(0.024)	(0.026)	(0.030)	(0.030)
Cardinals (0,1)	-0.023	0.048	-0.063	0.056
	(0.034)	(0.049)	(0.039)	(0.071)
Intergovernmental Controls				
Governor's Election Year (0,1)	0.061*	-0.045*	-0.002	0.057
	(0.028)	(0.021)	(0.047)	(0.035)
Governor-President Party Align (0,1)	-0.021	-0.032	-0.015	-0.052
	(0.027)	(0.019)	(0.046)	(0.036)
Gov. Election Yr. X Alignment (0,1)	-0.064**	-0.005	-0.093	0.078*
	(0.042)	(0.024)	(0.051)	(0.043)
Controls and Constant				
Real Gross State Product	-0.715**	-1.127**	0.038	-0.178
	(0.124)	(0.119)	(0.144)	(0.155)
Roads (miles)	-0.262	-0.216	-0.464	0.516*
	(0.286)	(0.207)	0.269	(0.287)
Research Institutions	-0.001	0.000	0.001	-0.001
	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Percent Elderly	-0.122**	-0.128**	-0.153**	-0.041

	(0.045)	(0.036)	(0.053)	(0.054)
Disaster	-0.048	0.051	0.835**	1.088**
	(0.051)	(0.033)	(0.106)	(0.379)
Constant	6.046	10.425**	23.448**	13.852**
	(3.517)	(2.931)	(3.512)	(4.055)
R^2	0.43	0.48	0.17	0.003
Obs.	350	300	350	300

Note: The dependent variable in models 1 and 2 is the logged number of grants per 100,000 people per state year. The dependent variable in models 3 and 4 is the logged real grant dollars per 100,000 people per state year. **p<.01 (one-tailed test) *p<.05 (one-tailed test). All models are estimated using ordinary least squares with fixed effects for state and year. Robust standard errors are reported. In all models, the reference case for state competitiveness is Non-Swing State.