

**PRESIDENTIAL-BUREAUCRATIC MANAGEMENT AND POLICY MAKING**  
**SUCCESS IN CONGRESS**

A Dissertation

by

JOSÉ D. VILLALOBOS

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of  
Texas A&M University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

December 2008

Major Subject: Political Science

**PRESIDENTIAL-BUREAUCRATIC MANAGEMENT AND POLICY MAKING  
SUCCESS IN CONGRESS**

A Dissertation

by

**JOSÉ D. VILLALOBOS**

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of  
Texas A&M University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

Approved by:

Chair of Committee,	George C. Edwards III
Committee Members,	Kenneth J. Meier
	Jon R. Bond
	Kurt Ritter
Head of Department,	James R. Rogers

December 2008

Major Subject: Political Science

**ABSTRACT**

Presidential-Bureaucratic Management and Policy Making Success in Congress.

(December 2008)

José D. Villalobos, B.A., The University of Texas at San Antonio

Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. George C. Edwards III

Presidential policy making in Congress is a lengthy, difficult process that involves developing a policy initiative, proposing it to Congress, and winning the legislature's support. Recent empirical findings indicate that, although centralizing the policy making process eases a president's managerial burdens, it may also decrease the likelihood of presidential policy success in Congress. Alternatively, decentralizing the process increases the likelihood of policy success, but constrains the president's discretion over policy substance and incurs greater administrative burdens in the form of managing differing viewpoints, contradictory interests, and increased information flow. Such findings present an intriguing puzzle: *how can presidents balance their managerial and information needs and costs to maximize their policy success in Congress?* Solving this presidential dilemma can have substantial payoffs for the White House.

I argue that agency input provides presidents with a degree of bureaucratic expertise and objectivity, process transparency, and agency support, which imbues presidential proposals with bureaucratic legitimacy and aids their passage into law. To test my hypotheses, I conduct a series of empirical analyses of pooled cross-sectional

logistic regression models using a dataset on presidential legislative proposals over the period of 1949-2007. I find that agency input and presidential signaling are key components to increased presidential policy success in Congress. I also find that the employment of agency input for policy development decreases the number of changes made to the substance of a presidential initiative from its proposal stage to its passage into law.

Because the substance of a proposal matters, sending a stronger signal for a proposal developed with agency input should have a stronger, positive influence on legislative success. To explore this possibility, I also incorporate the role that voluminous presidential signaling plays at high levels of agency input and find that it has a particularly potent, positive influence on legislative success and on lowering the extent of change to policy substance in the Senate.

In light of these findings, I prescribe a new policy making strategy with agency input at its core. My conclusions should also provide an impetus for scholars to reconsider conventional wisdom regarding presidential-bureaucratic management and legislative policy making.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to thank my committee chair, Dr. George C. Edwards III, and my committee members, Dr. Kenneth J. Meier, Dr. Jon R. Bond, and Dr. Kurt Ritter, for their invaluable guidance, encouragement, and support throughout the course of this project and my graduate school education. Thanks also to Dr. Andrew Rudalevige for generously providing his data on centralization, which proved a vital resource for making the analyses of this dissertation possible. Finally, thanks to my family and friends for their support and to my wife, Cigdem, for her patience and love.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT .....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES .....	viii
LIST OF TABLES .....	ix
 CHAPTER	
I INTRODUCTION - PRESIDENTIAL POLICY MAKING	
LEADERSHIP IN THE LEGISLATIVE ARENA .....	1
Presidential Leadership of Congress .....	2
New Focus on the Policy Development Stage .....	5
Summary .....	9
II THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK .....	10
Agency Input as a Policy Making Tool.....	12
Summary .....	26
III METHODOLOGY AND DATA .....	27
Data Overview.....	28
Summary .....	41
IV MEASURING THE INFLUENCE OF AGENCY INPUT ON PRESIDENTIAL POLICY SUCCESS IN CONGRESS.....	42
Examining Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the Senate .....	43
Examining Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the House.....	52

CHAPTER	Page
Summary.....	58
V MEASURING THE INFLUENCE OF AGENCY INPUT ON CHANGE IN PRESIDENTIAL POLICY SUBSTANCE IN CONGRESS.....	61
The Potential of Agency Input to Influence Changes in Policy Substance.....	62
Examining Agency Input Influence on Changes in Policy Substance in the Senate.....	63
Examining Agency Input Influence on Changes in Policy Substance in the House .....	73
Summary .....	79
VI EXAMINING THE INTERACTION BETWEEN AGENCY INPUT AND PRESIDENTIAL SIGNALING .....	81
Signaling with Agency Input: Testing for an Interactive Effect on Policy Success .....	83
Signaling with Agency Input: Testing for an Interactive Effect on Changes in Policy Substance.....	108
Summary .....	131
VII CONCLUSION .....	133
Future Studies.....	136
REFERENCES .....	142
APPENDIX.....	153
VITA .....	161

**LIST OF FIGURES**

	Page
Figure 1 Signaling Influence at Each Level of Agency Input (Presidential Policy Success in Congress).....	87
Figure 2 Signaling Influence at Each Level of Agency Input (Change in Policy Substance) .....	112



## LIST OF TABLES

		Page
Table 1	Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the Senate, 1949-2007.....	45
Table 2	Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the House, 1949-2007.....	53
Table 3	Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the Senate, 1949-2007.....	65
Table 4	Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the House, 1949-2007 .....	74
Table 5	Overall Agency Input-Presidential Signaling Interactive Influence on Presidential Success in the Senate, 1949-2007 .....	85
Table 6	Level “1” Highly Centralized Inner Staff Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the Senate, 1949-2007 .....	89
Table 7	Level “2” Highly Centralized Outer Staff Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the Senate, 1949-2007 .....	90
Table 8	Level “3” Mixed-Centralized Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the Senate, 1949-2007 .....	91
Table 9	Level “4” Mixed-Decentralized Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the Senate, 1949-2007 .....	92

	Page
Table 10	Level “5” Highly Decentralized Agency Input Influence on ..... Presidential Success in the Senate, 1949-2007 ..... 93
Table 11	Overall Agency Input-Presidential Signaling Interactive Influence on Presidential Success in the House, 1949-2007 ..... 99
Table 12	Level “1” Highly Centralized Inner Staff Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the House, 1949-2007 ..... 100
Table 13	Level “2” Highly Centralized Outer Staff Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the House, 1949-2007 ..... 101
Table 14	Level “3” Mixed-Centralized Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the House, 1949-2007 ..... 102
Table 15	Level “4” Mixed-Decentralized Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the House, 1949-2007 ..... 103
Table 16	Level “5” Highly Decentralized Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the House, 1949-2007 ..... 104
Table 17	Overall Agency Input-Presidential Signaling Interactive Influence on Change in Policy Substance in the Senate, 1949-2007 ..... 110
Table 18	Overall Agency Input-Presidential Signaling Interactive Influence on Change in Policy Substance in the House, 1949-2007 ..... 111
Table 19	Level “1” Highly Centralized Inner Staff Agency Input Influence on Changes in Policy Substance in the Senate, 1949-2007 ..... 115

	Page
Table 20 Level “2” Highly Centralized Outer Staff Agency Input Influence on Changes in Policy Substance in the Senate, 1949-2007.....	116
Table 21 Level “3” Mixed-Centralized Agency Input Influence on Changes in Policy Substance in the Senate, 1949-2007.....	117
Table 22 Level “4” Mixed-Decentralized Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the Senate, 1949- 2007.....	118
Table 23 Level “5” Highly Decentralized Agency Input Influence on Changes in Policy Substance in the Senate, 1949-2007.....	119
Table 24 Level “1” Highly Centralized Inner Staff Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the House, 1949- 2007.....	126
Table 25 Level “2” Highly Centralized Outer Staff Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the House, 1949- 2007.....	127
Table 26 Level “3” Mixed-Centralized Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the House, 1949-2007.....	128
Table 27 Level “4” Mixed-Decentralized Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the House, 1949- 2007.....	129

	Page
Table 28 Level “5” Highly Decentralized Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the House, 1949- 2007 .....	130
Table A-1 Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the Senate, 1949-2007.....	153
Table A-2 Agency Input Influence on Presidential Policy Making Success in the Senate, 1949-2007 .....	154
Table A-3 Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the House, 1949-2007.....	155
Table A-4 Agency Input Influence on Presidential Policy Making Success in the House, 1949-2007 .....	156
Table A-5 Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the Senate, 1949-2007 .....	157
Table A-6 Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the Senate, 1949-2007 (Predicted Probability Scores).....	158
Table A-7 Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the House, 1949-2007 .....	159
Table A-8 Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the House, 1949-2007 (Predicted Probability Scores).....	160

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION - PRESIDENTIAL POLICY MAKING LEADERSHIP IN THE LEGISLATIVE ARENA

Scholars of the presidency have long devoted considerable attention to the president's leadership of the policy making process in the legislative arena (Neustadt 1955, 1960, 1990; Edwards 1980, 1989; Bond and Fleisher 1990; Canes-Wrone and de Marchi 2002). These studies assert that the president's ability to move legislation through Congress is an important measure of presidential success. Scholars argue that the conditions under which the president can succeed or fail are linked to the political environment inherited by presidents and their ability to bargain with members of Congress over policy initiatives (see Edwards 1989, 2003; Bond and Fleisher 1990). Due to the Constitution's division of power, presidents must deal with Congress in the legislative process because they need legislative cooperation to enact their policy goals. Accordingly, presidents face a significant challenge as they attempt to convince legislators to pass their policy proposals into law.

When presidents take the lead in the policy making process, they hold the potential to influence three stages: policy development, agenda setting (i.e. the policy proposal stage), and the legislative outcome stage. Although scholars have considered the success of presidential policy initiatives at the agenda setting and legislative outcome stages and have examined the factors that determine legislative outcomes, they have

given very little attention to the policy development stage and its factors that may also influence presidential policy success in Congress. Specifically, scholars have dedicated relatively very little work to explaining what kind of presidential policy initiatives are more likely to succeed in Congress and what factors of the executive branch may lead presidents to develop such initiatives.

Understanding this issue is important because the ability for presidents to achieve their policy goals largely depends on their ability to convince Congress to enact them. This is the nature of policy making in our system of separation of powers, and exploring presidential influence in leading the Congress is important for understanding the dynamics of presidential policy making and assessing presidential policy performance.

### **Presidential Leadership of Congress**

The literature on presidential leadership of Congress indicates that presidents are limited in their ability to lead in the legislative arena. Richard Neustadt's renowned work, *Presidential Power* (1960, 1990), portrays the president as an inherently weak actor. He asserts that presidents are constrained by the nature of "separated institutions sharing powers," which denies them the ability to lead legislators through command (Neustadt 1990, 29). He argues that presidents must rely on their reputation, prestige, and skill to successfully persuade members of Congress to act on his accord. His main argument—that presidential power is the power to persuade—rests partly on the notion that presidents depend on legislative support for enacting their policy initiatives.

In response to Neustadt's work, presidential scholars have looked for ways to better assess and understand the president's leadership of Congress. Specifically,

scholars have looked at the factors that affect presidential policy success in the legislative arena (Edwards 1989; Bond and Fleisher 1990). They cite many of these factors as constraints derived from the separation of powers, such as the bicameral structure of Congress, veto power, and agenda setting procedures (see Krehbiel 1998; Cameron 2000; Edwards and Barrett 2000). Scholars also find that factors related to the ideological makeup and majority control of Congress are particularly influential in determining presidential policy success or failure (see Edwards 1989; Bond and Fleisher 1990; Conley 2003). Last, scholars find that public approval of the president also plays a role in determining whether legislators are likely to support a president's policy initiative and that presidents are more likely to succeed when they adopt policy initiatives that the public supports (see Edwards 1989, 2003; Canes-Wrone 2001, 2006).

Presidency scholars have considered the factors that influence presidential leadership of Congress at the agenda setting proposal stage and the legislative outcome stage. Regarding the agenda setting stage, scholars find that presidents play an important role in influencing the legislative agenda, but also that they are limited in their ability to influence whether an initiative will pass into law. Edwards and Barrett (2000, 120) find that, although 97.6 percent of all presidential initiatives succeeded in obtaining agenda status from 1935 to 1996, a majority were ultimately defeated.

Such findings have led scholars to research whether presidents can be strategic in the manner in which they propose their initiatives. Since legislators decide final roll call vote outcomes, presidents must take into consideration what the Congress wants when considering policy options (see Edwards 1989; Bond and Fleisher 1990, 2000; Conley

2003). In addition to the manner that presidents propose their initiatives, they may also work to build coalitions, perhaps by courting cross-over members in the legislature (see Edwards 1989).

Edwards (1989) argues that leadership through coalition building helps the president function as a “facilitator” of change, “influencing a few critical actors and taking advantage of the opportunities for change already present in his environment” (Edwards 1989, 5). He demonstrates how member predispositions and party loyalties determine roll call outcomes, leaving presidential influence largely limited to the cross-pressured, centrist members of Congress on close vote counts (see also Bond and Fleisher 1990).

Scholars find that another important factor determining presidential policy success in Congress is whether the president attempts to influence legislative behavior by going to the public for legislative support. Early on, Richard Neustadt (1960, 1990) recognized that a president’s standing with the public is a key factor in his ability to persuade the Congress to act in accordance with his policy preferences. Indeed, many scholars argue that attaining public support endows presidents with a “political resource,” a degree of justification for pursuing the presidential agenda in Congress, achieving reelection, and leaving behind a favorable legacy (Brody 1991, 3; Cornwell 1965; Neustadt 1990; Ostrom and Simon 1985). Scholars point out that policy initiatives are more likely to pass into law if popular (Canes-Wrone 2001, 2006; Edwards 1989, 2003) and that public support is particularly crucial when a president lacks cohesive majorities in Congress (Edwards 1989; see also Bond and Fleisher 1990).



In recent years, scholars have found that contemporary presidents are particularly predisposed to lead the public by engaging in a permanent campaign, a practice that amounts to a strategy of governing by campaigning, otherwise known as the “going public” model.<sup>1</sup> The going public model is, at its core, an attempt to intimidate congressional opponents with their own constituencies. Because the aim of going public is to defeat opposition in a zero-sum game, it discourages presidents from seeking to build coalitions across party and ideological lines (Edwards 2006, 287). Pointing out that presidents have a low likelihood for success in going public, however, Edwards (2003, 246) concludes that presidents “should not base their strategies for governing on the premise of substantially increasing the size of their public support.”

### **New Focus on the Policy Development Stage**

Scholars of the presidency have learned much about the influence presidents have in proposing their policy initiatives to Congress and on when they are most likely to succeed in getting their policy initiatives passed into law. What remains is for scholars to develop a clearer understanding of the process of policy development that occurs prior to the proposal of presidential policy initiatives and how that development process can affect the likelihood of presidential legislative success. Indeed, how presidents choose to develop their policy initiatives and present their proposals to Congress may have important implications regarding the legislative outcome of a policy initiative.

---

<sup>1</sup> The development of the “going public” model (Kernell 1997) is in concert with studies on the “permanent campaign” (Ornstein and Mann 2000), and the practice of “governing by campaigning” (Edwards 2006). Accordingly, I use these terms interchangeably.

In their managerial role, presidents may look to White House staffers or the vast resource of executive agencies for assistance to help develop their policy proposals. Carrying out this process requires presidents to collect, organize, and sort out information because, as Neustadt (1990, 128-9) puts it, “a president is helped by what he gets into his mind. His first essential need is information.” Specifically, presidents have at their disposal two primary resources for policy making: the “responsive competence” of White House personnel and the expertise of agency civil servants (see Hecl 1999; Moe 1985; Rourke 1992; Rudalevige 2002; Wolf 1999). To manage the process, presidents may centralize policy development within the Executive Office, delegate its formation to the wider bureaucracy (i.e. decentralize), or employ a combination of the two (Rudalevige 2002, 29).<sup>2</sup>

When presidents seek information for policy development, they may experience a measure of friction, which scholars commonly refer to as a “transaction cost” (Coase 1937, 1990; Milgrom and Roberts 1990; North 1990; Williamson 1979, 1996, 1998; Williamson and Masten 1995; see also Hall and Taylor 1996, 951; Epstein and O’Halloran 1994, 1999). In particular, friction may occur when presidents, in seeking information to develop their policy proposals, encounter opposite viewpoints and contradictory interests from the input of their executive branch staff.

To minimize transaction costs, presidents seek the cheapest source of trusted information that will get them from policy proposal to legislative passage (Rudalevige

---

<sup>2</sup> In doing so, presidents make institutional choices comparable to a firm’s decision to “make” (i.e. centralize) or “buy” (i.e. decentralize) (see Coase 1937, 1990; Milgrom and Roberts 1990; Williamson 1979, 1996, 1998).

2002). In doing so, presidents often seek to maximize the value of a proposal in terms of their personal policy preferences. Faced with the option of centralizing policy proposal development within the White House staff or delegating its development to executive agency actors, presidents prefer to centralize the process whenever possible because it lowers the front-end managerial transaction costs of policy development and maximizes their personal preferences (see Moe 1985; Moe and Wilson 1994; Nathan 1983).

Previous scholarship identifies a general preference among presidents for centralization amid the growth of the executive branch (Burke 2000; Moe 1985; Ragsdale and Theis 1997; Walcott and Hult 1995, 2005). However, such works are dominated by case studies that are not systemically generalizable and not quantitative. More recently, Rudalevige (2002) provides the first quantitative analysis of a representative sample of cases that identifies when presidents are most likely to centralize, the implications and risks of centralization, and the trade-offs between presidential management of the policy development stage and policy success in Congress. He finds that centralized policy making decreases the likelihood of presidential policy success in Congress (see Rudalevige 2002).

Although much of the previous scholarship on centralization presumes that presidents prefer to centralize the policy making process (Moe 1985; Moe and Wilson 1994; Nathan 1983), Rudalevige (2002) finds little evidence that centralization dominates presidential policy making and no evidence of an increase in the overall level of centralization over time. Moreover, he finds that, although centralizing the policy making process eases a president's managerial burdens by reducing the amount of input

to a small circle of White House staff (Burke 2000; Hecl 1999; Moe 1985; Ragsdale and Theis 1997; Walcott and Hult 1995, 2005), it can also result in greater levels of congressional opposition that impedes legislative success (see Rudalevige 2002).

The problem with centralizing policy development is that, in doing so, presidents often disregard the potential adverse affect that such strategy may have on the likelihood of proposal passage (Rudalevige 2002). Indeed, presidents may not realize the pitfalls of centralization for policy making in much the way they misperceive the strategy of “going public” as a formidable means to move public opinion (see Edwards 2003). Presidents may also attribute past failures to inexperience or miscommunication and continue their efforts to centralize rather than seek a new path. In this manner, “ignorance combines with arrogance” so that presidents stubbornly continue their attempts to centralize despite a lower likelihood of legislative success (Rudalevige 2002, 156; Neustadt 1990, Ch. 11).

Alternatively, decentralizing the process may increase the likelihood of policy success, but constrains the president’s discretion over policy substance and incurs higher costs in the form of competing viewpoints and conflicting objectives between staff members, and an overall larger amount of informational input (i.e. advice) that the president must consider (Rudalevige 2002). Thus, despite his assessment that presidents “might be better off decentralizing policy more generally,” Rudalevige (2002, 150-1) maintains that, “the burdens of management are often sufficient incentive to shift the process the other way.”

Although Rudalevige (2002) examines the general effects of decentralization, he

does not extend his study to formulate a theoretical argument of the role and value of agency input for influencing the likelihood of policy success in Congress. Indeed, almost no research tests empirically the merits of decentralized policy making or any other alternative strategies for increasing policy success in Congress. Instead, Rudalevige and others discount the potential of agency input on presidential policy making as a costly, inefficient information resource (Moe 1985; Moe and Wilson 1994; Nathan 1983; but see Hecl 1999; Wolf 1999). To help fill this gap in the literature, I address the development phase of the policy making process by considering how presidents can best manage and develop their policy initiatives in order to maximize their ability to succeed in the legislative arena.

### **Summary**

A major challenge that presidents face is persuading legislators to pass their policy proposals into law. Because the Constitution bounds presidents to share their power with the legislative branch, presidents depend heavily on Congress to enact their policy goals. Currently, most of the literature considers the second and third stages of the policy making process— agenda setting (i.e. the policy proposal stage) and legislative outcomes. Unfortunately, scholars have paid very little attention to the first phase—the development stage of a policy initiative. As a result, scholars are missing a key piece of the puzzle that explains why, when, and how presidents are more likely to succeed in achieving their policy goals by passing their initiatives through the Congress. In the next chapter, I formulate a theoretical argument for the role and value of agency input in more decentralized presidential legislative policy making.

## CHAPTER II

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Presiding at the helm of a complex structural hierarchy that begins at the Oval Office and winds its way down through the numerous agencies in the executive branch, presidents have at their disposal vast resources of information for leading the policy making process. Due to the constitutional constraint of the separation of powers, the main obstacle that presidents face in policy making is that they must convince legislators to pass their policy proposals into law. In developing their policy initiatives, presidents regularly seek the advice of executive branch staff. The kind of advice presidents seek and who they seek it from may greatly influence whether legislators will perceive a given policy proposal as a viable policy solution.

Although scholars have considered how presidents can influence the policy making process at the proposal and legislative outcome stages and have identified important factors that affect presidential policy making performance, there has been relatively little research regarding the development stage of the process. To fill this gap in the literature, I formulate a new theoretical framework on the role and value that agency input may have in influencing presidential policy making success in Congress.

I posit that agency input affords presidential policy development agency expertise and objectivity, process transparency and cooperative consultation with Congress, and agency support, which should markedly increase presidential policy making success in Congress. The involvement of agency actors in the policy

development phase provides presidents with a degree of bureaucratic expertise<sup>3</sup> that is more objective than the advice of the president's inner circle and which legislators—particularly partisan opponents of the president—are therefore less likely to oppose. Agency actors are more objective than White House staffers because they are less likely to view policy options primarily through an ideological lens and instead base much of their preferences on bureaucratic expertise grounded in years of policy learning and institutional memory, which provides them with an authoritative knowledge of government procedures and folkways (Weko 1995; Wolf 1999).

Agency involvement at the policy development stage also allows members of Congress to more openly observe and take part in the policy making process, which helps to legitimize a policy initiative in the eyes of legislators prior to its proposal. Indeed, according to Rudalevige (2002, 150), “members of Congress know less about an item being crafted in the White House than they do about a departmental production, and have less reason to believe that the information they do receive from EOP sources is reliable.” Given that congressional committees often hold hearings to ascertain whether a policy initiative represents a valid policy solution, presidential policy proposals with agency support are therefore less likely to generate skepticism among legislators. Consequently, by attaining the input of agency actors, the president thus signals to members of Congress that a given policy proposal has endured the scrutiny and earned the support of the very people responsible for its eventual implementation.

---

<sup>3</sup> Friedrich (1940) defines bureaucratic expertise as advice that consists largely of technical knowledge regarding a certain public policy sphere (see also Long 1952; Lipsky 1980; Gruber 1987; Balla 1998; Balla and Wright 2001; Meier and O'Toole 2006).

### **Agency Input as a Policy Making Tool**

The potential utility of agency input to the president as a policy making tool depends partly on whether it can effectively increase presidential policy success in Congress. Specifically, employing agency input during the policy development phase is of greater benefit to the president if it markedly decreases the subsequent costs of moving a proposal through Congress and thus increases its overall likelihood of passage into law. Initial empirical testing by Rudalevige (2002) indicates that decentralized proposal development involving the wider executive bureaucracy is generally more likely to succeed than centralized development occurring exclusively within the Executive Office of the President. Such findings provide an impetus for formulating a theoretical argument on the role and value of agency input for presidential policy development and for exploring the extent to which agency input may increase the likelihood of presidential policy success in Congress.

Some scholars argue that presidents can more effectively develop policy proposals that satisfy their personal preferences by seeking the “responsive competence” of their loyal inner circle of advisers rather than seeking the advice of agency actors (Moe 1985, 1989; Moe and Wilson 1994; Nathan 1983). In particular, Moe (1985) argues that agency bureaucrats have their own personal preferences tied to the mission of the agencies they serve and thus lack incentive to be responsive to the president’s policy preferences (Moe 1985, 1989; Moe and Wilson 1994; Nathan 1983).

Instead, Moe (1989, 280) posits that, “most all agencies impinge in one way or another on larger presidential responsibilities—for the budget, for the economy, for



national defense—and presidents must have the capacity to direct and constrain agency behavior in basic respects if these larger responsibilities are to be handled successfully.” In other words, Moe (1985, 1989) suggests that presidents are better off seeking control over bureaucratic processes and outcomes by centralizing (as well as politicizing) the policy making process whenever possible. Concerning presidential policy development, Moe (1985, 1989) contends that the employment of centralized EOP staff is more likely to provide the kind of responsiveness to policy preferences that presidents need in preparing their policy initiatives for proposal to Congress.

Challenging Moe’s (1985) main premise, Wolf (1999) conducts a thorough examination of the history of the Bureau of Budget (BoB) and finds that the BoB was remarkably responsive to Roosevelt and Truman’s administrative and policy needs. Wolf (1999, 143) further finds that both presidents regularly sought the advice of BoB agency staff “not out of necessity but as a matter of choice because the agency was highly responsive to their needs.” He concludes that the BoB’s high level of responsiveness is largely a product of its mission and institutional status as a budgetary agency, which are closely linked to presidential needs in a way that does not diminish the agency’s objectivity and expertise (Wolf 1999, 158).

Rourke (1981, 219) similarly finds that bureaucratic challenges to presidential authority in the policy making process are rare and that civil servants tend to view and respect the president as a representative of the public. Although there is evidence that bureaucrats do sometimes show resistance to certain presidential policy initiatives, they are more often inclined aid presidents in seeking their policy goals (Campbell and Naulls

1991, 85-118; see also Edwards 2001). Indeed, Wilson (1989, 275) points out that, “what is surprising is not that bureaucrats sometimes can defy the president but that they support his programs as much as they do.” Concerning the eventual implementation of presidential policy initiatives, many scholars (including Moe) have found ample evidence that bureaucracies tend to follow the president’s policy implementation plans (see Moe 1982; Ringquist 1995; Golden 2000).

Campbell (1986, 19) argues that presidents can employ agency input to achieve “policy competence” while maintaining their ability to manage the executive branch without forfeiting staff responsiveness. He and others assert that a trade-off between “neutral” (i.e. objective) and “responsive” competence is not necessary so long as presidents do not lose sight of their institutional interests in pursuit of their partisan political ones (see Campbell 1986, 161-5; Wolf 1999; Weko 1995; Heclo 1975). Specifically, by seeking policy competent solutions to aid their political goals, presidents can create powerful organizational incentives for agency actors to be responsive to their needs while also providing politically satisfying and bureaucratically effective policy advice (Wolf 1999; see also Wilson 1989, 275).<sup>4</sup>

Other studies find that centralized advice may hinder the president’s policy making success in Congress because legislators may view such advice as more partisan than the advice of agency actors (Rudalevige 2002; see also Heclo 1975; Seidman 1998, 156-7). Because White House staff members are primarily loyal to the president’s policy preferences, legislators often view highly centralized policy proposals as highly

---

<sup>4</sup> Similar studies find that whenever politicians heed the advice of agency actors, the result is effective and representative policymaking (Gruber 1987; Meier and O’Toole 2006).

politicized ones (indeed, they often can be), which makes partisan opposition (and support) to a given proposal more likely (see Hecllo 1975; Dickinson 1997; Rudalevige 2002). Partisan opposition can be detrimental to a president's ability to pass policy proposals into law, particularly for presidents who govern under conditions of divided government.<sup>5</sup>

Presidential policy making success also depends on the president's ability to acquire reliable information concerning the likely policy outcomes of their initiatives. Dickinson (1997, 104-5) finds that a lack of substantive expertise among White House staffers can lead to misleading policy advice, which may result in failed policy making attempts or impractical policy solutions that undermine the president's policy and administrative goals (see also Campbell 1986; Light 1995; Wolf 1999). Legislators are aware that highly centralized policy initiatives may be unreliable, or at least less reliable, compared with those that benefit from bureaucratic expertise, and are thus less likely to support their passage (see Rudalevige 2002).

To help overcome partisan opposition in Congress and to compensate for the lack of expertise and bureaucratic legitimacy of White House staff, presidents may employ alternative informational resources to help convince legislators that a policy proposal merits their approval. Outside of their inner circle of advisors, presidents have at their disposal the vast informational resources of executive branch agencies, which can

---

<sup>5</sup> Presidents are also likely to face some measure of opposition in Congress under conditions of unified government and, in some cases, may also face opposition from their own party members if their proposals follow a new or different path that contradicts past party preferences. Even when presidents enjoy a majority in the Senate, for example, they often need a number of opposition party members to cross over in support of a bill in order to achieve the passage of their policy initiatives (see Brady and Volden 2006; see also Jones 2005; Fisher 1998).

provide advice that is more objective and grounded in years of policy learning and institutional memory (Weko 1995; Wolf 1999). Scholars posit that bureaucratic objectivity and expertise endows agency actors with an authoritative knowledge of government procedures and folkways, which elected officials can employ to gain “useful and disinterested advice in designing national policy” (Rourke 1992, 539; see also Weko 1995; West 2004, 2005; Wolf 1999).

When presidents seek agency input for developing policy initiatives, their proposals benefit from an informational advantage that agency actors hold over legislators (Epstein and O’Halloran 1999; West 1999; see also Cameron and Park 2006). Epstein and O’Halloran (1999) argue that because legislators lack the knowledge and experience required to solve a difficult policy problem marked by a high level of uncertainty, they are likely to defer the authority to an agency to implement a more nuanced policy solution, perhaps with a range of possible outcomes despite their preference for a particular alternative (see also Fiorina 1986). Scholars find that legislators themselves are open to delegating authority to bureaucrats to develop policies that require a high level of expertise, particularly when trying to avoid taking responsibility for difficult policy decisions that are complex, unpopular, or when Congress lacks a clear-cut majority for a particular alternative (see Fiorina 1982; McCubbins 1985; Arnold 1990).

Agency input also adds a measure of transparency that encourages members of Congress to view a proposal as a legitimate policy solution. Unlike the development of centralized policy initiatives among the president’s inner circle that occurs primarily

behind closed doors within the Executive Office, decentralized policy development employing agency input allows a more open dialogue between the president and agency actors, which legislators are able to follow and observe. According to Rudalevige (2002, 150), “members of Congress know less about an item being crafted in the White House than they do about a departmental production, and have less reason to believe that the information they do receive from EOP sources is reliable.” By choosing a more transparent route for developing a policy proposal, presidents are thus less likely to raise suspicions among legislators about the circumstances surrounding the development of their policy proposals.

The inclusion of agencies in the policy development phase also encourages consultative networking and cooperation between the president, Congress, and bureaucratic actors (see Rudalevige 2002, 116-8). Consultative networking allows presidents to better assess the political landscape, gather intelligence, and act on the feedback, particularly from key legislators serving on legislative committees (Rudalevige 2002, 117). Consultation also provides legislators an opportunity to voice their concerns about an initiative during its development and, in response, leads agency actors to help the president develop sound policy solutions to such concerns. Goodwin (1991, 222), for example, documents President Lyndon B. Johnson’s claim that consultation proved so helpful to his policy agenda that he advocated it not just during the policy development stage, but at “every single stage” of the policy making process (see also Peterson 1984, 21-4). Rudalevige (2002, Ch. 3) similarly finds that a large part of FDR’s presidency benefited from open consultation with legislators regarding

instances of decentralized policy development, which in turn led to responsive and effective bureaucratic implementation of FDR's policy agenda.

Despite the fact consultation increases the potential for legislative cooperation and agency responsiveness, historical evidence shows that presidents generally do not consult with members of Congress (Peterson 1984, 1990). As Rudalevige (2002, 156) points out, "consultative connections are poorly developed between the White House and the committees that shape congressional consideration, in sharp contrast to the networks that link the legislature and bureaucracy. Further, centralized staffers (with the president's political needs firmly in mind) often give short shrift to the competing incentives facing legislators. The result is an institutional disconnect."

According to Peterson (1984, 1990), presidents do not consult for a number of reasons. Given the fractured and fragmented nature of the legislative branch, presidents are generally hesitant to consult with legislators (see Peterson 1990). Indeed, presidents tend to view Congress as "parochial, sievelike, and prone to transforming important matters of state into pork-barrel issues" (see Edwards 1989, 201; Peterson 1984, 10). Often, presidents have strong policy preferences and avoid consultation because they are simply uninterested in finding compromises to satisfy the concerns of legislators who oppose them (Peterson 1984, 10). Other times, presidents are simply unable to consult because of time constraints regarding policy proposal deadlines and the limited amount of time that administration officials have to deal with the total number of presidential proposals submitted to Congress (see Edwards 1989, 201).

When presidents do consult with Congress, scholars find that it has traditionally

played a “considerably less prominent role in presidential-congressional relations” than one might expect (Edwards 1989, 199). For instance, presidents may use consultation as merely a public relations effort in which presidents and their staff ceremonially listen to the advice of opposition party legislators only to completely disregard it (see Peterson 1984, 13; Edwards 1989, 199-200). Presidents may also consult primarily for tactical reasons to obtain the legislative votes necessary for passage, rather than to have full, open cooperation with the legislative branch (see Edwards 1989, 186-7). Although legislators are sure to prefer full cooperation over symbolic or tactical approaches to consultation, they are nevertheless likely to view any form of consultation in a relatively more positive light than having no consultation at all.

Despite the evidence that presidents have been adverse to legislative consultation, the general lack of consultation “does not in itself constitute a compelling argument that [presidents] should not do so to increase their legislative support” (Edwards 1989, 200). In other words, because modern presidents have mostly avoided consultative approaches, it is difficult to know the full potential of consultation beyond the relatively modest evidence we do have, which indicates that it can help improve presidential-legislative relations. Peterson (1984, 21-4) himself points out that presidents are well-advised to consult with members of Congress because it helps to create an atmosphere of consensus rather than one of polarization and miscommunication. As Edwards (1989, 199) puts it, “observers often consider [consultation] crucial to good relations with Congress, and failure to consult is taken as a sign of a lack of leadership skill.”

Although presidents may not incorporate all the feedback they receive from legislators, consultation nevertheless provides legislators with a participatory role that allows for more open communication between the branches and reduces the likelihood of congressional opposition and gridlock during the proposal phase (see Rudalevige 2002, 117; Peterson 1990, 51; Goodwin 1991, 222). Because the use of agency input affords presidents the opportunity to consult with legislators in a way that centralized policy making does not, I posit that the inclusion of agency input in the policy development phase will encourage better presidential-congressional relations, which in turn will benefit presidential policy making efforts in Congress.<sup>6</sup>

Although not all policy initiatives require policy expertise for their development or passage through Congress, most policy initiatives require the compliance of agency bureaucrats for their eventual implementation. For the president, seeking the input of agency actors in developing a policy initiative is important for increasing the likelihood that the implementation phase will succeed in accordance with their policy agenda objectives. Otherwise, the exclusion of agencies from the policy making process may constrain the president's ability to implement policy and govern effectively. Specifically, presidents (and legislators) cannot be sure that civil servants will be willing or able to effectively implement their policy directives if presidents do not consult with

---

<sup>6</sup> One might also argue that the president can consult with the legislative branch without including agency input, but such an approach is likely to work only in cases where the policy preferences of the president and the majority of legislators are highly compatible. By the same token, it is in cases where executive and legislative branch policy preferences are least compatible that including agency input (assuming it serves the president's policy agenda) may be most beneficial for helping to achieve the president's policymaking goals.



them and gain their support during the policy development phase.<sup>7</sup>

For the reasons described above, the inclusion of agency input in the policy development phase is useful for convincing legislators—especially partisan opponents—that a given presidential policy proposal presents a legitimate policy solution that merits passage into law. Specifically, agency input provides presidential policy proposals with a degree of bureaucratic expertise that is more objective than the advice of White House staff because agency actors are less likely to view policy options primarily through an ideological lens and instead base their preferences primarily on bureaucratic expertise grounded in years of policy learning and institutional memory (Weko 1995; Wolf 1999). Agency input at the policy development stage also allows members of Congress to more openly observe the policy making process and signals to members of Congress that a given policy proposal has earned the support of the very people responsible for its eventual implementation. Presidential employment of agency input should therefore aid presidents in achieving their policy making goals in Congress. Thus, I hypothesize that *a president's use of agency input in the development of a policy proposal increases its likelihood of passage in Congress (H1).*

### **Agency Input Influence on Changes in Policy Substance**

When presidents set out to lead as policy makers, they begin at the policy development stage by collecting information and advice from their staff to help turn their

---

<sup>7</sup> Although agency personnel tend to follow legislative directives regardless of their level of involvement in the policy development stage, their exclusion from the development process to circumvent agency opposition may damage agency morale and lead to ineffective policy implementation outcomes (Wolf 1999, 145; see also Hecla 1975; Seidman 1998, 156-7). In some cases, the exclusion of agency actors has even encouraged organizational deviation, resulting in the circumvention of legislative directives by civil servants who believe that their implementation would result in failed or negative policy outcomes (see O'Leary 1994).

general policy preferences and initiative ideas into viable policy solutions. At this stage of policy making, presidents have free reign over the process and can therefore seek advice and continue the development process until a policy initiative meets their expectations and is ready to be formally proposed to the Congress. However, presidents must be strategic about how they present a proposal to Congress because a proposal that meets all their needs may not be seen as acceptable by legislators, particularly partisan opponents. As managers of the executive branch, presidents must therefore make important choices as to whom they will delegate the task of policy development and to what extent they will give discretion to certain staff over the substance and direction a policy proposal takes.

If presidents seek information from staff wisely, policy development should result in a proposal that the president finds satisfactory and that also takes into account any potential opposition that legislators may raise. Otherwise, legislators may seek to change or defeat a presidential proposal. As such, if presidents look to their inner circle of loyal staff for their policy develop needs, it is likely that they will produce policy proposals that closely mirror their general policy preferences. However, in centralizing the process, presidents risk creating opposition to their proposals if legislators view such proposals as partisan or lacking the substance needed to produce effective policy outcomes. In such cases, presidents can lose legislative support for their policy proposals due to a general lack (or at least a perceived lack) of bureaucratic legitimacy. On the other hand, if presidents seek information from agency actors, they may be better able to find a balance between their personal preferences, expert bureaucratic advice,

and the expectations of legislators. Given the expectation that agency input leads to increased policy success in Congress, it may be that lower costs incurred during the legislative process also decreases the extent of changes in a policy's substance from proposal to passage.

As previously discussed, because agency involvement at the policy development stage allows members of Congress and the public to more openly observe the policy making process, it likewise provides opportunities for cooperation that allow for deliberation and revision of policy nuances before the president formally proposes a policy initiative to Congress (see Rudalevige 2002, 116-8; Peterson 1990, 51; Goodwin 1991, 222). Thus, if presidents employ agency input for the development of a policy proposal, it is more likely that the expert advice provided during the development phase will lead to congressional support during the legislative phase and thus decrease the need for changes in the substance of the policy proposal (see Rudalevige 2002, 117).

Accordingly, I hypothesize that *agency input decreases the extent of changes in a policy proposal's substance from the proposal stage to its legislative outcome (H2)*.

### **Signaling with Agency Input**

Just as presidents may employ varying centralization to help develop policy initiatives, they may also employ a variety of signaling strategies in proposing their policy initiatives. How and under what conditions presidents propose their policies denotes the type of signal they send to Congress. In a previous study, Esbaugh-Soha (2006) finds that when presidents deliver increased (i.e. more voluminous) public signals to certain political actors through speeches, they improve their policy making

performance (see also Esbaugh-Soha 2008). Building on Esbaugh-Soha's (2006) general expectation regarding more voluminous signaling, I posit that presidential policy initiatives developed with a high level of agency input are likely to provide a clearer, more substantive signal to legislators as to why their policy proposals merit legislative passage.

I expect signaling and agency input to be *indirectly* related such that an interactive effect between substantive agency input and voluminous signaling should further increase the overall likelihood of policy success in Congress. In other words, because agency input provides presidents with sound expert advice, and because Congress views such advice as more legitimate, then more voluminous signaling of a proposal that includes agency input should likewise increase the overall clarity of the proposal and thereby further aid its passage into law. Thus, I hypothesize that *more voluminous signaling at each level of agency input increases the likelihood of proposal passage (H3)*.

Similarly, because agency involvement at the policy development stage provides opportunities for cooperation between the president, legislators, and agency actors, it is more likely that more voluminous signaling in conjunction with agency input will lower the likelihood that legislators will look to significantly alter the substance of a given presidential policy initiative once the president formally proposes it. Thus, if presidents employ agency input for the development of a policy proposal, it is more likely that the consultation occurring during the development phase has already taken into account the preferences and suggestions of legislators (particularly key committee members) and

thus decreased the need for further changes in the substance of the policy proposal (see Rudalevige 2002, 117). Thus, I hypothesize that *more voluminous signaling at each level of agency input decreases the extent of changes in a policy proposal's substance from the proposal stage to its passage (H4)*.

### **New Issues and Issue Complexity**

Presidents at times address new policy issues for which there exists little or no previous institutional knowledge or learning. In these cases, presidents may find that there exists no corresponding bureaucratic entity to address such issues and are thus unable to institute agency input for developing policy proposals. Gathering information on how to address new issues is laborious and time consuming because there are likely to be multiple ideas and preferences to consider (see Kingdon 1995, Ch. 6). Without the availability of agency input, presidents are more likely to find opposition and skepticism among legislators, particularly those of the opposition party. Because new issues present a situation where agency input is less likely, I hypothesize that *issue novelty decreases the likelihood of proposal passage and increases the amount of changes in policy substance from proposal to passage (H5)*.

For issues that are complex in nature, presidents may not have the information they need to develop a proposal from within the confines of the White House and are thus more likely to seek outside advice from an executive agency. However, as Rudalevige (2002, 129) points out, complex proposals are harder for the president to pass through Congress because they are likely to fall into agency and congressional committee turf wars. Because issue complexity is likely to lead to competing sources of

bureaucratic advice, I hypothesize that *increased issue complexity decreases the likelihood of proposal passage and increases the amount of changes in policy substance from proposal to passage (H6)*.

### **Summary**

In this chapter, I introduced my theoretical framework for addressing the role and value of agency input in presidential legislative policy making. Specifically, I argue that the involvement of agency actors in the policy development phase provides presidential policy initiatives a measure of agency expertise, objectivity, process transparency, cooperative consultation with legislators, and agency support that may markedly increase presidential policy making success in Congress. In addition to my core theoretical expectations, I also point out a number of factors related to agency input that may influence policy outcomes. Namely, I posit that the use of voluminous signaling at each level of agency input will further increase the likelihood of legislative success and decrease the likelihood of changes in policy proposal's substance. Having outlined my theoretical framework, I now move to develop an empirically model for testing my hypotheses.

### **CHAPTER III**

#### **METHODOLOGY AND DATA**

In my critical review of the literature on presidential policy making strategies, I call into question the assertions made by Moe (1985) and other scholars that centralized policy development aids presidential policy making. Indeed, although some scholars have argued that centralized policy development lowers managerial costs and provides presidents with a measure of responsive competence, other scholars posit that the inclusion of agency input in policy development provides presidents with valuable information, which allows them to develop policy competent solutions to aid their political goals.

For the most part, it has been difficult for scholars to determine what kind of policy making strategy works best because much of the past literature has been dominated by case studies, which lack the kind of systemic quantitative analysis needed to draw generalizable conclusions. Consequently, a dearth of systemic empirical evidence in past research has been a major obstacle to developing a broader, more definitive understanding of which type of strategy presidents should employ to help maximize their policy making efforts in the legislative arena.

To overcome the limitations of previous studies, I conduct a systematic quantitative examination of the relationship between the level of agency input (i.e. decentralization) and presidential policy making success in Congress. More specifically, I employ pooled cross-sectional logit regression analyses across eleven presidential administrations to determine whether increased agency input increases the likelihood of

presidential policy success in Congress. I contend that presidential policy making success in Congress is a function of a president's utilization of agency input in the development of a policy proposal, presidential signaling, the ideological makeup and majority control of Congress, presidential popularity, and a number of other control variables. For each of my analyses, I report predicted probability scores to provide substantive conclusions about how certain factors influence the likelihood of legislative success.

To control for the differences in the makeup and legislative procedures inherent in each legislative body, I use separate models for each chamber in my analyses—one for success in the Senate and the other for success in the House of Representatives. I also apply a number of alternative measures for crosscutting jurisdictions, presidential support in Congress, House and Senate liberalism, presidential approval, and the budgetary situation. Last, I include administration controls to account for the idiosyncratic effects of individual presidents and their administrations.

Once I determine whether agency input matters for determining presidential policy success in Congress, I then move to explore which level of agency input holds the most potential for helping presidents to move their policy agendas through the legislative arena. Specifically, I rerun my main analyses for each subgroup of my agency input ordinal measure to determine whether the influence of more voluminous signaling increases at each level of agency input.

### **Data Overview**

To test my hypotheses regarding the influence of agency input on presidential



policy making success in Congress, I employ a dataset on presidential legislative proposals that covers the years 1949-2007. The data provide an N of 466 presidential initiatives randomly sampled from archival data of the *Public Papers of the President (PPP)*, comprising 4,239 messages.<sup>8</sup> For each observation, the unit of analysis is the presidential initiative proposed within a presidential message. Each observation serves as a starting point for determining the substance and volume of a presidential initiative proposed to Congress, the level of agency input used to develop the initiative, the political circumstances that the president faced at the time of its proposal, and the legislative outputs and outcomes.

The data I use build on Rudalevige's (2002) previous work in a number of ways. To begin with, I update Rudalevige's (2002) dataset to include Bill Clinton's second term in office and seven years of the George W. Bush presidency. The universe of messages I sample combines the previous work of Rudalevige (2002) that sampled 384 presidential initiative observations from a universe of 2,796 messages with my updated universe of observations that adds 1,443 messages. Consequently, the 466 presidential initiative messages that I sample to conduct my analyses constitute 10.99% of a universe of 4,239 total messages.

I also use my sample of observations in a different way. Rudalevige (2002) traced the legislative prehistory of each presidential initiative. He specifically focused on the extent to which centralizing policy development lowered managerial costs and

---

<sup>8</sup> To generate a universe of presidential proposal messages from the Public Papers of the President, I build on previous work by Rudalevige (2002) who used State of the Union messages, presidential legislative Boxscores compiled by Congressional Quarterly, and a replication of Light's (1999) collection of the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) central clearance data and internal reports of the Legislative Reference Division to help identify the elements of each president's legislative program.

influenced legislative success. However, I apply the technique to measure the level of agency input that the president employed and to test whether and how such input influences both legislative success and the substance of an initiative from the proposal stage to passage.

I add other new variables to compliment my theoretical framework and employ enhanced measures of previously adopted control measures that relate to policy success in the legislative arena. I provide two new measures of presidential signaling to determine whether more voluminous signaling of a presidential proposal also helps to increase the likelihood of presidential legislative success. I also derive improved measures to control for the ideological makeup of Congress, crosscutting jurisdictions, and the influence of presidential approval at both the time of proposal and passage. Below I describe in full detail each of the variables I employ for my main analyses of agency input influence on presidential policy success in Congress.

### **Dependent Variables**

The main dependent variable is presidential legislative success for each presidential initiative proposed to the Congress. I measure presidential policy making success in Congress as a dichotomous variable where “1” represents successful passage of a presidential initiative through one or both chambers of Congress and “0” otherwise. Although most of the observations for my data sample consist of proposals that both chambers of Congress considered, there are some proposals for which only one chamber is applicable. In cases where one chamber of the legislature does not take up a measure, I code the outcome as “0” to indicate a failure on the part of the president to have the

proposal taken seriously by that chamber.<sup>9</sup> The level of success may thus range from those initiatives that were at the very least submitted for consideration in a chamber to those that passed through both chambers and that the president signed into law.

The other main dependent variable is change in policy substance of a presidential initiative from the proposal stage to passage. More specifically, it measures the extent of changes that legislators make to the substance of a presidential policy initiative once the president proposes it to Congress to undergo legislative scrutiny. To code changes in policy substance of a presidential initiative from the proposal stage to passage, I look at the Public Papers of the President and the THOMAS legislative resource webpage to compare the text of the president's formal proposal to the text of the legislative bill that passes into law.

Specifically, I code policy proposals that have little to no change in substance from proposal to passage as a level "0" change, ones that have changes but maintain the core of the president's proposed policy preferences as a level "1" change, ones that contain less than half of the president's proposed policy preferences as a level "2" change, and proposal that either completely change in substance from proposal to passage or that simply fail to pass into law as a level "3" change. In cases where only one chamber takes up a policy proposal, I code the other chamber's observation as a level "3" change if the policy fails and as a level "0" change if it passes into law. As with my measure for agency input, this measure, although not exact, is a relative

---

<sup>9</sup> Out of the total sample of 466 observations, there are 72 observations of proposals that only the House considered, 29 observations that only the Senate considered, and 361 observations that went through both chambers.

approximation placed on an ordinal scale and thus allows the comparison of hundreds of observations across the eleven administrations under study.

### **Agency Input**

In accordance with my main theoretical framework, I expect that a president's utilization of agency input in the development of a policy proposal will increase its likelihood of passage through Congress. To identify presidential initiatives and measure agency input, I utilize an array of primary and secondary source archival records that include the Public Papers of the President, the THOMAS legislative archival information resource of the U.S. Library of Congress, the GovTrack information archive on congressional data, and the LexisNexis academic, congressional, and government periodical indexes.

I measure agency input on an ordinal scale (1-5) ranging from highly centralized policy initiatives that presidents develop with the aid of only their closest advisors to highly decentralized policy initiatives for which presidents defer most of their development to civil servant agency actors. More specifically, I code the ordinal scale for agency input as follows: "1" represents a policy that is a product of staffers within the White House Office, "2" represents a product of centralized staff outside the White House Office, such as in the Budget Bureau/Office of Management and Budget (OMB) or the Council of Economic Advisors (CEA), "3" represents a product of mixed origin, with the White House in the lead, "4" represents a product of mixed White House and agency/departmental origin, with the agency/department taking the lead role, and "5" represents a product of executive branch agencies and/or departments.

### **Presidential Signaling**

Signaling is a policy making tool that presidents employ to alert legislators of their priorities and propose specific policy initiatives for them to consider (Esbaugh-Soha 2006). The measure of presidential signaling I apply follows the work of Esbaugh-Soha (2006) to capture the overall volume of a signal. Specifically, I measure the number of paragraphs dedicated to a presidential policy initiative in a presidential message, which helps to gauge whether the volume of a given proposal within a message influences the likelihood that legislators will consider a policy initiative seriously and more positively.

### **New Issues and Issue Complexity**

In accordance with my theoretical framework, I expect that new issues and issue complexity each decrease the likelihood of proposal passage. A new issue is one that that presents a societal problem for which no president or legislator has previously offered a policy solution. Examples include the earliest initiative put forth to deal with terrorism, the first Medicaid bill proposed, the proposal for the do not call registry bill, and the first legislative initiative put forth to prohibit the cloning of humans. Old issues are those that represent refinements, alterations, or reauthorizations of existing laws. I measure new issues as a dichotomous variable where “1” represents issues that are new to the policy agenda and “0” otherwise (see Rudalevige 2002, 89-90).

To measure issue complexity, I use a three-point index (see Light 1999, 119; Rudalevige 2002). Initially applied by Light (1999) as a “large/small” dichotomy between small requests not intended to alter existing laws and those that are, Rudalevige

(2002, 91) expanded the “large” category measure between proposals requiring technical expertise in limited areas and those large in scope that require expertise across a multitude of policy areas, thereby creating the three-point index.

### **Crosscutting Jurisdictions**

Presidents at times address policy issues that cut across multiple congressional committees. If multiple committees are involved, legislators may engage in turf wars on who holds jurisdiction over the substance and transfer of a given proposal, which makes it difficult for presidents to gauge how best to develop an initiative for proposal to avoid congressional opposition (Oleszek 1996, 17; see also Shepsle 1989; King 1997; Groseclose and King 1998). I therefore expect that initiatives representing crosscutting jurisdictions will decrease the likelihood of proposal passage.

To track the number of legislative committees that have jurisdiction over a given initiative, I use the THOMAS and GovTrack legislative archival information resources. I measure crosscutting jurisdictions in two ways and apply measures for the House and Senate in separate models. In order to control for overall committee jurisdictional influence, I created an alternate measure that codes “1” for cases where only a single committee takes up an initiative, “2” for a case where two committees are involved, and “3” for cases where three or more committees are involved.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Prior to employing this variable, I applied a more straightforward measure that included the total number of legislative committees in each chamber that have jurisdiction over the substance of a given policy initiative. However, measuring the total number of committees may overstate the true extent to which crosscutting jurisdictions may obstruct the passage of a bill. Indeed, it is sometimes the case that three major committees hold the most influence over the outcome of a given initiative even though a number of additional subcommittees may also be involved. That said, a comparison of both measures across different models indicates no significant changes for the variable coefficients. Consequently, I apply the latter, more parsimonious ordinal measure.

## **Reorganization Impact**

Proposals that constitute reorganization of one or more agencies may result in congressional opposition and a lower likelihood of proposal passage for a number of reasons (Wilson 1989, 268; Rudalevige 2002, 126-7; see also Arnold 1998, 18-20). Perhaps most the most fundamental cause of opposition is “a proprietary sense of the departments and agencies as they stand, since they were created by Congress in the first place” (Rudalevige 2002, 126). Agency reorganization may also constitute a shift in congressional committee oversight responsibilities and those who hold jurisdiction at the time of proposal are unlikely want to cede that authority to another committee (see Wilson 1989, 268).

Last, the prospect of agency actors providing advice for the reorganization of their own agency makes it less likely that legislators will view the advice of agency actors as objective and reliable, particularly if the proposed reforms threaten an agency’s hierarchical stability or remove jurisdictional authority over a certain policy sphere. This lack of trust in agency input increases the likelihood that presidents will centralize the development of reorganization proposals and thus further reduce the likelihood of proposal passage (see Rudalevige 2002, 126). Taken together, I expect that departmental and congressional opposition as well as a higher likelihood of centralized policy development each decrease the likelihood of proposal passage. I measure reorganization initiatives as a dichotomous variable that equals “1” if a policy initiative calls for a reorganization effort for a given department or agency and “0” otherwise.

## **Ideology and Majority Control of Congress**

Presidents have a much better chance of getting their policy proposals passed into law when they have a high level of ideological and party support in Congress (see Edwards 1989; Bond and Fleisher 1990). Although closely linked, each of these factors also has an independent and significant effect on presidential legislative success (Poole and Rosenthal 1997). I therefore expect that increased ideological and party support in Congress increases the likelihood of proposal passage. To control for the president's general level of party support in Congress, I employ the standard dichotomous variable for divided government where "1" equals a state of divided government control and "0" otherwise.<sup>11</sup>

Another important measure concerning the makeup of Congress concerns the ideological distance between the president and each chamber pivot. Specifically, I measure the president's ideological proximity to (a) the Senate cloture pivot and (a) the House median pivot using separate models for each chamber in order to avoid problems of multicollinearity.<sup>12</sup> Specifically, I use Poole and Rosenthal's (1997) common space coordinates to measure the distance from the Senate to the president, using the cloture pivot common space coordinates for the Senate posited by Krehbiel (1998), which

---

<sup>11</sup> I also apply an alternative measure of the percentage of seats the president holds in each chamber. Although this measure provides a more approximate measure of the level of party support the president holds in a given chamber, it does not capture the core dynamics of whether the president has majority control over a chamber in the way that the divided government variable does. In any case, a comparison of the measures across different models indicates no significant changes for the variable coefficients.

<sup>12</sup> As alternative measures, I also calculate the absolute value of the difference between the Senate majority party leader and the president and do the same for Speaker of the House and the president (see also Rudalevige 2002, 93-5). Note that, although the Speaker of the House does not participate in roll call voting (except in special circumstances) during his or her tenure, the common space coordinate scores provide lifetime liberalism measures that are applicable to control for the distance between the president and the speaker's ideology. As expected, a comparison of the measures across different models indicates no significant changes for the variable coefficients.



involve the 66<sup>th</sup> vote pivot ideological score for all the years preceding 1974 and the 60<sup>th</sup> vote pivot ideological score for the years thereafter. In a separate model, I employ the House median pivot to capture the ideological distance between the president and the House of Representatives.

### **Presidential Approval**

As with previous studies on the presidency, I expect that high public approval of the president is likely to aid the president in achieving one's policy agenda goals. Regarding legislative behavior, presidential approval allows member of Congress to gauge whether they should support a certain presidential policy proposal. In other words, how strongly the public approves of the president should influence congressional behavior with respect to the passage of presidential policy initiatives (see Edwards 1989, 2003). This means that when approval ratings are high, members of Congress are more likely to support a president's legislative proposals (Edwards 1980, 1983; Edwards 1991; Brace and Hinckley 1992, 1993). I therefore expect that increased approval of the president increases the likelihood of proposal passage. I measure presidential approval as the percentage approval of the president according to the most recent Gallup poll prior to the proposal of a presidential initiative.

An additional measure of presidential approval concerns the change in approval from proposal to the time of passage or legislative defeat. Controlling for the change in presidential approval is also important because, as Bond, Fleisher, and Wood (2003, 97) find, "Not only does the president's public approval rise and fall over time, the interpretation that members of Congress place on a given level or change in approval

also is likely to vary over time.” I measure change in presidential approval by subtracting the percentage approval of the president according to the most recent Gallup poll prior to the proposal of a presidential initiative from the percentage approval of the president once a decision is made on a proposal in each chamber of Congress.

Typically, a final decision is the roll call vote for a given bill, but can also constitute the date that Congress adjourns for cases where a bill simply dies and does not come to a vote. As with the measures for ideological congressional makeup, I use separate measures for each chamber decision in separate models for the House and Senate.

### **“First Mover” Chamber**

A major premise of my theoretical framework is that the ability of presidents to develop and propose their policy initiatives determines whether Congress will pass their initiatives into law. However, in deciding whether to consider and/or approve a given presidential proposal, one chamber of Congress may also take into consideration the actions of the other chamber. For instance, if one chamber is the “first mover” and overwhelmingly rejects the proposal of a given presidential initiative, the other chamber may decide not to consider the measure at all. If, on the other hand, the “first mover” overwhelmingly passes a given initiative into law, the other chamber may be more likely to follow suit. In cases of a close outcome and/or certain compromise on the part of the first mover, the other chamber may react strategically to either pass a similar bill or pass a bill that would require further compromise from the first mover before reaching the president’s desk. To control for the influence of the “first mover” chamber, I include a dummy variable for each model where “1” signifies an observation for which the

chamber under investigation is the “first mover” and “0” otherwise.

### **Time in Term**

An important environmental factor to consider is time in term. Time generally constrains the ability for Congress to get through appropriations bills, reauthorizations, and their general workload. I therefore expect that an increase of the amount of a president’s time in term decreases the likelihood of proposal passage. I measure time in term as the number of months a president has served in office (reset after re-election; see Rudalevige 2002, 141-2). Because initiatives proposed introduced in the second year of a Congress are just inherently less likely to pass because there is less time to work on them, I also add a second measure for time in term that accounts for the year of each Congress, where “0” is the first year and “1” is the second.

### **Deficit (Budget Situation)**

With regards to the budgetary situation, one may expect that proposal success decreases as the deficit grows, since spending cuts are more likely and may prevent the availability of funding for institution a particular presidential initiative. Alternatively, the advent of a budgetary surplus is likely to increase the number of proposals passed in a year because greater funding for more government programs and other spending opportunities. I thus expect that an increasing deficit decreases the likelihood of proposal passage. I calculate the deficit variable using the standard measure for the fiscal year deficit (or surplus) divided by the total federal outlays (see Rudalevige 2002,

141-3).<sup>13</sup>

### **Administration Dummy Variables**

Another additional factor to consider in explaining presidential leadership of Congress is how the idiosyncratic effects of individual presidents and their administrations may influence legislative success. To address this influence, I employ separate dummy administration controls for each empirical model of my analyses.

### **Priority**

Last, if the president designates a high priority for a particular proposal, the Congress may be more likely to take the proposal seriously. Rudalevige (2002, 140) employs a “priority” dichotomous independent variable measured as whether the president includes an item in a State of the Union address. He uses the variable as a means to address any potential endogeneity between centralization and policy controversy or the “ex ante level of divisiveness” in a proposal. However, Rudalevige’s measure is problematic theoretically and empirically. Theoretically, the inclusion of a proposal in a State of the Union address should not serve solely as a proxy measure for the level of controversy associated with a presidential initiative. Indeed, presidents have included a vast array of presidential proposals in their State of the Union messages, which may range from being highly controversial to being highly bipartisan in nature. Instead, a dichotomous measure of whether presidents include items in their State of the Union messages may better capture the level of priority in terms of the likelihood that

---

<sup>13</sup> An alternative control I employ measures the percentage of the fiscal year deficit (or surplus) divided by the overall gross domestic product (GDP). The results for this alternate measure did not change the coefficient outcomes for any of the various models employed and, because the measure is not a major independent variable, I have simply dropped it from my analyses.

presidents will place them at the forefront of their policy agendas. Conversely, although all initiatives in a State of the Union address have, to some degree, a higher level of priority given the high saliency of the speech itself, only a handful of all the initiatives in such a speech may be of particularly high priority to the president.

A close look at Rudalevige's sampled items indicates that many of the observations of initiatives that presidents included in State of the Union messages are not of top priority and thus do not provide a strong enough measure of a given initiative's level of priority (see Rudalevige 2002; Appendix A.2). For these reasons, I have dropped the measure from my own analyses. I instead focus on the variable for presidential signaling to help capture the level of importance or priority for a given initiative that the president wishes to convey to the Congress.

### **Summary**

In this chapter, I have described the methodology I employ for collecting and measuring the data for my analyses. I have also provided detailed explanations of all the variables that are relevant for assessing the influence of agency input on presidential policy making success in the legislative arena. For the next chapter, I will test my main hypotheses by employing the data and methodology described above. I will then move to assess how agency input may also influence the content of a presidential initiative from proposal stage to passage.

**CHAPTER IV**

**MEASURING THE INFLUENCE OF AGENCY INPUT ON PRESIDENTIAL  
POLICY SUCCESS IN CONGRESS**

Despite the large amount of attention scholars have placed on presidential leadership in the legislative arena, very little research has considered how the management of information at the presidential policy development stage influences legislative policy making outcomes. In response to this dearth of knowledge, I have developed a theoretical framework that prescribes a new policy making strategy with agency input at its core. In particular, I have argued that agency input may afford presidential policy development with a measure of agency expertise and objectivity, process transparency, and agency support, each of which can markedly decrease the costs of moving a policy proposal through Congress.

In this chapter, I test my theoretical framework through a series of empirical analyses. As I outlined in Chapter III, my main empirical analyses consist of logit pooled cross-sectional regression models that measure the influence of agency input on presidential policy making success in Congress. I have also outlined a number of other variables to control for any additional factors that may influence presidential policy success in Congress. In sum, I have argued that presidential policy making success in Congress is a function of a president's utilization of agency input in the development of a policy proposal, presidential signaling, the ideology and majority control of Congress, presidential popularity, and a number of other control variables. The various components of my theoretical framework under empirical examination are expressed in

mathematical form as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Legislative Success} = & BI + \text{Agency Input} + \text{Presidential Signaling} + \text{Issue Dynamics} + \\ & \text{Majority Control of Congress} + \text{Legislative Ideology} + \text{Public Opinion} + \text{Temporal Factors} + \\ & \text{Budgetary Situation} + \epsilon_i \end{aligned}$$

Because of the bicameral structure of Congress, I conduct separate analyses for each chamber to control for the differences in the makeup and legislative procedures inherent in each legislative body. Specifically, each analysis includes chamber-specific control variables for the number of crosscutting jurisdictions, the chamber pivot, and a dummy variable measuring instances where a given chamber is the “first mover” in considering a policy proposal. Accordingly, I first look to the empirical examination and findings of the model for the Senate and then follow with an empirical examination and review of the findings of the model for the House of Representatives.

### **Examining Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the Senate**

Presidents can benefit from the employment of agency input in policy development if it markedly decreases the costs of moving a proposal through Congress and thus increases the overall likelihood of legislative success. As I explained in Chapter II, the potential of agency input as a policy making tool lies in its key elements of expertise, objectivity, process transparency, cooperative consultation with Congress, and bureaucratic support, which are valuable for convincing legislators that a presidential initiative presents a legitimate policy solution that merits passage into law. At the core of my theoretical framework, I have hypothesized (H1) that a president’s use of agency input in the development of a policy proposal increases its likelihood of

legislative passage.

I first test my main hypothesis in the Senate. In accordance with my expectations, I find that a president's utilization of agency input does indeed increase the likelihood of success (see Table 1). Specifically, the predicted probability scores indicate that when level of agency input changes from its minimum to maximum value (i.e. from the most centralized "1" to the most decentralized "5" level of agency input), the likelihood of presidential policy success increases by 39.52% in the Senate. Regarding a change from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half standard deviation above it, I find that the likelihood of policy success can increase by up to 13.73%. Given that the mean value for these observations is approximately 3.13 (i.e. level "3") and that a half standard deviation represents a change of 1.32, a full-standard deviation shift represents a move from employing a level "2" centralized policy development approach to employing a level "4" mixed approach with an agency taking the lead role and also represents an increase of nearly 14% in likelihood of legislative success.



**Table 1 Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the Senate, 1949-2007  
(Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Success in the Senate			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	++sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Policy Development</i></b>				
Level of Agency Input	.422***	4.67	.3952	.1373
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	.006**	1.65	.3278	.0499
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	.207	.78	-	-
Issue Complexity	.094	.61	-	-
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	.098	.71	-	-
Reorganization Impact	-.018	-.12	-	-
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
Senate Cloture Pivot	-8.671**	-2.27	-.7850	.2879
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	.216	.36	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	.032**	2.50	.4621	.1056
Change in Approval	.021*	1.53	.3929	.0451
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	-.14	-.61	-	-
Time in Term	.003	-.52	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	-.285	-.15	-	-
N	466			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	95.60			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0000			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1491			

Dependent Variable: 1 = Success, 0 = No Success

Note: Presidential style administrative dummy variables also used but not shown above

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

The evidence shown here that decentralized policy proposals based largely on agency input are more likely to pass through the Senate than highly centralized ones contradicts long-held assertions made by Moe (1985) and others promoting the benefits of centralized presidential policy making strategies. Indeed, although scholars have pointed out that centralized policy development can help presidents to lower their front-end managerial costs and maximize their personal preferences, the notion that such benefits translate into higher levels of policy making success is, according to my findings, inaccurate. Assuming that presidents do not give up too much in terms of substantive preferences, the results here demonstrate that presidents stand to benefit more in the long run by seeking the input of agency actors to help them obtain the support of legislators for passing their policy proposals into law.

### **Presidential Signaling in the Senate**

In addition to exploring how differences in policy substance can help determine legislative success, I also test to see whether the voluminous signaling influences the level of legislative support that a president can obtain for his policy initiatives. In accordance with previous research, I hypothesize that more voluminous signaling increases the likelihood that presidents will succeed in alerting legislators to their priorities.

The results indicate that increased voluminous signaling does indeed have a positive influence a president's ability to pass an initiative through the Senate (see Table 1). Specifically, the predicted probability results show that when the volume of presidential signaling changes from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half

standard deviation above it, the likelihood of presidential policy success in the Senate increases by 4.99%. To put these numbers in substantive terms, the mean volume for a given policy proposal is approximately 22.6 paragraphs and a half standard deviation is equal to about 15.5 paragraphs. Accordingly, a policy proposal that is 37 or so paragraphs long is about 5% more likely to pass into law than one that is about 8 paragraphs in length. Thus, I conclude that members of the Senate are more likely to support presidential policy initiatives if the president places a greater emphasis on them.

Although some past studies have included a measure for the influence of presidential signaling on legislative outcomes, none has tested the variable in conjunction with a measure for the level of agency input. Given that the substance of an initiative matters and that the volume of that substance also matters in the form that a president proposes said initiative, it stands to reason that an interactive relationship may exist between the two concepts. Specifically, it may be that initiatives developed from high levels of agency input are particularly potent when proposed by the president in highly voluminous messages. In Chapter VI, I will consider whether an interactive relationship between agency input and signaling exists and, if so, explore further how presidents can benefit from such a relationship.

### **Issue Dynamics in the Senate**

Given my focus on policy substance, it stands to reason that the type of issue at hand has an important influence on the dynamics that fall into play between the president, executive branch staff, and members of Congress. However, I do not find any significant relationships for issue novelty, issue complexity, crosscutting jurisdictions, or

reorganization impact for the Senate model. Thus, although scholars have observed an influence of issue dynamics in certain salient case studies, it appears here that issue dynamics in the Senate are largely inconsequential when examined across decades of presidential legislative proposal observations and that other factors are more dominant in determining legislative success.

### **Ideology in the Senate**

Scholars find presidents have only a marginal ability to overcome ideological barriers in Congress and get legislators to follow their lead (see Edwards 1989; Bond and Fleisher 1990). In this sense, presidential leadership of the legislative arena is largely depends on the Congress a president inherits. In accordance with the past literature, I find that the ideology of the Senate plays a major role in determining presidential legislative success.

The results demonstrate that an increase in the ideological distance between the executive and the Senate decreases the likelihood that a presidential proposal will pass into law (see Table 1). Regarding a change in a half standard deviation above and below the mean, I find that an increase in the ideological distance between the president and the Senate cloture pivot can decrease the likelihood of presidential legislative success by up to 28.79%. Given that a half standard deviation represents an increase in ideological distance of about .07 in the Senate (on a -1 to 1 scale), this means that a total ideological distance of about .14 between the Senate cloture pivot and the president can decrease the likelihood of legislative success by nearly one-third.

### **Majority Control in the Senate**

Regarding the majority control of Congress, the results in Table 1 show an insignificant relationship between divided government and legislative success in the Senate. The reason for this outcome is due mainly to the presence of autocorrelation between the divided government and the Senate cloture pivot measure. Specifically, although the pair-wise correlation between divided government and the Senate cloture pivot ( $\text{corr} = .5175$ ) is relatively low, the autocorrelation between the variables when included together in the model for the Senate is notable. Indeed, a test for Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values indicates that the divided government and Senate cloture pivot variables surpass the accepted levels of autocorrelation when both are included in the full model (i.e., the values are  $> 10$ ). Nevertheless, I have included both of these variables in my main model for the Senate because they are individually and theoretically important, with each one capturing distinct measures of the makeup of Congress.

Also, as I noted in Chapter III, an alternative measure of majority control is the percentage of seats the president's party holds in the Senate. This variable provides a more approximate measure of the level of party support the president holds in a given chamber than the divided government variable, but does not capture the core dynamics of whether the president has majority control over a chamber. In any case, substituting this measure for divided government does not eliminate the autocorrelation issue between the ideological and partisan control measures.

For sensitivity analyses, I test three additional empirical models, each of which

includes only one of three congressional control variables—divided government, the Senate cloture pivot, and the percentage of seats the president’s party holds in the Senate—and provide the results in the Appendix (see Tables A-1 and A-2). Each of these models demonstrates that all three of the variables have significant coefficient outcomes when applied in separate models. More importantly, the results demonstrate that the correlation values and levels of significance for my main independent variables—namely agency input and presidential signaling—remain essentially unchanged across all of the alternative models. I thus conclude that, despite the autocorrelation issue, my main model for the Senate, which includes both the ideological and majority control measures, provides a valid and reliable measure of the relationships under study.

### **Presidential Approval and Senate Success**

Public opinion of the president is also a major factor in determining whether Congress will pass a given presidential proposal into law (Edwards 1989, 2003; see also Brace and Hinckley 1992). Members of Congress are more likely to support a president’s legislative proposals when approval ratings of the president are high and if the level of approval increases from the time a president proposes an initiative until the time legislators make a final decision on it (see Bond, Fleisher, and Wood 2003).

In accordance past studies, the predicted probability results for the Senate indicate that a change from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half standard deviation above it may increase the likelihood of presidential policy success by 10.56% (see Table 1). Given that a half standard deviation represents about a 6.5 percentage

point change in approval, this means that a total shift of 13 percentage points can increase or decrease the president's likelihood of legislative success by nearly 11%.

In addition, I find that the change in public approval from proposal of an initiative to its outcome also has a significant influence on the president's ability to move policy initiatives through Congress. Specifically, the predicted probability results for the Senate demonstrate that a half standard deviation above and below the mean increases in approval from the time a president proposes an initiative to its final outcome may increase the likelihood of presidential policy success by 4.51%. In substantive terms, a change of about 8 percentage points in approval from the time the president proposes an initiative to the time Congress makes a final decision can increase or decrease the likelihood of success by about 4.5% in the Senate.

### **Temporal Factors and the Budgetary Situation**

As with most political phenomena, timing can be a crucial component that influences outcomes. A president that proposes an initiative at the right time under the most ideal conditions is generally more likely to succeed than otherwise. The two factors I consider with respect to timing are whether the Senate is the "first mover" in taking action on a given proposal before the House does and the president's time in term when proposing a given initiative. Despite my theoretical expectations, I do not find any significant results for either of the time control factors. In addition, I test to see if the budgetary situation plays a role in determining whether a presidential policy proposal will pass into law. However, I find that the budgetary situation is also not a major factor in determining the legislative outcomes of presidential policy making efforts in the

Senate.

### **Examining Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the House**

Given the strong empirical support in the Senate model suggesting that the substance of a policy initiative serves as an important influence on legislative outputs, I now look at how agency input influences success in the House of Representatives. Accordingly, I again test my main hypothesis (H1) that a president's use of agency input in the development of a policy proposal increases its likelihood of passage, but this time with respect to the lower chamber. Save for a few slight differences concerning the chamber-specific control variables, the results of my analyses for the House are strikingly similar to those of the Senate, suggesting that nearly identical dynamics fall into play for both chambers of Congress.

As is the case with the model for the Senate, the empirical findings for the House of Representatives provide evidence that the employment of agency input significantly increases a president's likelihood of success in Congress. In particular, the predicted probability scores indicate that when level of agency input changes from its minimum to maximum value (i.e. from the most centralized "1" to the most decentralized "5" level of agency input), the likelihood of presidential policy success in Congress increases by 39.96% in the House (see Table 2).



**Table 2 Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the House, 1949-2007  
(Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Success in the House			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	++sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Policy Development</i></b>				
Level of Agency Input	.427***	4.73	.3996	.1390
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	.007**	1.86	.3519	.0555
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	.206	.78	-	-
Issue Complexity	.077	.51	-	-
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	.172**	1.70	.3522	.0504
Reorganization Impact	-.04	-.25	-	-
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
House Median Pivot	-6.486***	-2.23	-.7269	.2708
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	-.029	-.05	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	.033***	2.59	.4777	.1098
Change in Approval	.026**	1.80	.4663	.0551
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	.147	.64	-	-
Time in Term	-.005	-.82	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	-1.518	-.82	-	-
N	466			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	98.64			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0000			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1539			

Dependent Variable: 1 = Success, 0 = No Success

Note: Presidential style administrative dummy variables also used but not shown above

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

Regarding the change from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half standard deviation above it, the results show that the likelihood of policy success can increase by up to 13.9%. Substantively, this means that presidents are about 14% more likely to succeed in the House if they develop a policy proposal approximating a level “4” amount of agency input than if they employ a level “2” amount. Thus, employing agency input in policy development can play an essential role in helping presidents succeed in obtaining support in both chambers of Congress.

### **Presidential Signaling in the House**

As I mention in the section on the Senate, because the substance of a proposal matters, it stands to reason that a more voluminous signal of a proposal developed with agency input may provide a particularly potent, positive influence on legislative success. As expected, the results indicate that increased voluminous signaling does indeed have a positive influence on legislative success in the House. Specifically, the predicted probability results indicate that a change from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half standard deviation above it increases the likelihood of presidential policy success in the House by 5.55%. Put in perspective with the results of the model for the Senate, I come to the general conclusion that members of Congress are more likely to pass presidential policy initiatives into law if the president places a greater emphasis on their proposal.

As I noted previously for the Senate, given that the substance and the volume of that substance both matter, it may be that an interactive relationship exists between the two concepts. Specifically, I raise the possibility that initiatives developed from high

levels of agency input may be particularly potent when proposed by the president as a highly voluminous message. Given this prospect, I focus in the next chapter on whether an interactive relationship between agency input and signaling exists. If so, I further explore how presidents can capitalize on such a relationship as they seek to maximize their policy making performance in the legislative arena.

### **Issue Dynamics in the House**

With respect to the influence of various issue dynamics, the only one that appears to influence presidential policy success in the House of Representatives is the presence of a high number of crosscutting jurisdictions. The results in Table 2 show that an increase in the number of jurisdictions cutting across multiple executive agencies and congressional committees for a given initiative serves as a positive influence on deliberations that determine proposal outcomes in the House. Specifically, I find that an increase from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half deviation above it increases the likelihood of presidential policy success in the House by up to 5.04%. Substantively, the mean number of crosscutting jurisdictions is about 1.64 with a half standard deviation value of about 1.2 such that a change from approximately no crosscutting jurisdictions to approximately three can increase the likelihood of legislative success by about 5% in the House only.

Although this finding lies in contrast to my theoretical expectations, it stands to reason that crosscutting jurisdictions for a given policy issue may lead to increased presidential success if the multiple agencies and/or congressional committees find a high level of compatibility amongst themselves when communicating their policy preferences

to each other regarding a given issue.

### **Ideology in the House**

As I noted above, scholars have come to the consensus that presidential leadership of the legislative arena is largely a function of the hand one is dealt with respect to the makeup of Congress. As with the model for the Senate, I find that ideology in the House of Representatives plays a major role in determining presidential legislative success.

The results demonstrate that an increase in the ideological distance between the executive and the House decreases the likelihood that a presidential proposal will pass into law (see Table 2). Regarding the ideological distance between the president the House median pivot, I find that a change in a half standard deviation above and below the mean decreases the likelihood of proposal passage by 27.08%. Similar to the Senate results, I thus find that since a half standard deviation represents an increase in ideological distance of about .09 in the Senate (on a -1 to 1 scale), a total ideological distance of about .18 between the House median pivot and the president can therefore decrease the likelihood of legislative success by about 27%.

### **Majority Control of the House**

As with the results for the Senate regarding the majority control of the Congress, the model for the House also shows an insignificant relationship between divided government and legislative success (see Table 2). As I explained previously, the reason for this outcome is due mainly to the presence of autocorrelation between the divided government and the cloture pivot measures. Again, despite the presence of

autocorrelation, I nevertheless include both variables in the model because their pairwise correlation outcomes are acceptably low and particularly because they are individually and theoretically important, with each one capturing distinct measures of the makeup of Congress.

As with the Senate results, I test three additional empirical models for sensitivity analyses, each of which includes only one of three congressional control variables—divided government, the House median pivot, and the percentage of seats the president’s party holds in the House—and provide the results in the Appendix (see Tables A-3 and A-4). Each of these models demonstrates that all three of the variables have significant coefficient outcomes when applied in separate models. As with the Senate results, the correlation values and levels of significance for my main independent variables—namely agency input and presidential signaling—remain essentially unchanged across all of the alternative models for the House. I thus conclude that, despite the autocorrelation issue, my main model for the House provides a valid and reliable measure of the relationships under study.

### **Presidential Approval and House Success**

In accordance with past studies and the findings for the Senate model, the predicted probability results of the influence of presidential approval on success in the House indicate a positive and significant relationship (see Table 2). Specifically, I find that a change from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half standard deviation above it may increase the likelihood of presidential policy success by 10.98% (see Table 2). Given that a half standard deviation for each chamber represents about a 6.5

percentage point change in approval, this means that a total shift of 13 points can increase or decrease the president's likelihood of legislative success by nearly 11%, which practically mirrors the results for the Senate.

Just as public approval of the president matters, the change in approval over time from proposal to the final outcome also matters for the House of Representatives. In particular, I find that a change from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half standard deviation above it may increase the likelihood of presidential policy success by 5.51%. In substantive terms, an increase of about 8 percentage points in approval from the time the president proposes an initiative to the time of a final decision can increase or decrease the likelihood of success by about 5.5% in the House.

### **Temporal Factors and the Budgetary Situation**

As with the Senate results, the two factors I consider with respect to timing—the “first mover” dummy variable and the president's time in term—do not show a significant relationship in my main analysis for the House. As well, I again find that the budgetary situation also does not appear to be a major factor in determining the legislative outcomes of presidential policy making efforts in the House.

### **Summary**

The empirical evidence that agency input significantly increases presidential policy success in Congress provides a new window for better understanding how presidents can succeed as policymakers. In accordance with my theoretical framework, it appears that the key component of agency input—bureaucratic expertise—has a strong potential to increase the president's chances of obtaining legislative support for his

policy initiatives. In addition, when presidents seek the advice of agency actors, they are more likely to obtain policy competent solutions that aid their political goals and help to create powerful organizational incentives for agency actors to be responsive to their needs, particularly for the post enactment phase. Contrary to the conventional wisdom of past research, I find that presidents can achieve policy competent solutions *without* forfeiting staff responsiveness so long as they do not lose sight of their institutional interests in pursuit of their partisan political ones. All else equal, agency input imbues presidential proposals with bureaucratic legitimacy and aids their passage into law.

In light of these findings, scholars should reconsider the theoretical framework that explains how presidents can act rationally in their own best interests. Thus, rather than focus on how presidents might lower information costs and maximize their personal preferences, scholars should instead focus on how presidents can overcome legislative obstacles by seeking the expert and relatively more objective input of agency actors regardless of the higher up-front costs. In doing so, scholars should also explore the extent to which presidents might compromise on their personal preferences in order to insure that their policy goals will pass into law. After all, it makes little sense for presidents to try to minimize their managerial costs and maximize their personal preferences if such efforts will be more likely to end in legislative defeat.

To build on the findings of this chapter, it is necessary to subsequently explore at what level of agency input presidents can maximize their chances of success. It is important to determine whether a fully decentralized versus a more mixed approach holds the most potential for markedly increasing a president's likelihood of policy

success in Congress. In doing so, I also expect that more voluminous signaling at each level of agency input may further increase the likelihood of proposal passage.

Accordingly, after testing my other major dependent variable measure in the next chapter, I will then look to determine at which level of agency input do presidents have the greatest potential for obtaining congressional support and to see whether an interactive effect with more voluminous signaling at such level holds the key for presidents to maximize their policy making performance.



**CHAPTER V**

**MEASURING THE INFLUENCE OF AGENCY INPUT ON CHANGE IN  
PRESIDENTIAL POLICY SUBSTANCE IN CONGRESS**

The finding that agency input can increase presidential policy success in Congress suggests broadly that presidents are wise to employ the advice of agency bureaucrats to help develop their policy initiatives. However, although agency input can help the president move legislation through Congress, it does not necessarily mean that the president will be content with the outcome. Up to this point, I have focused on how presidents can increase their success in outputs without addressing the substantive outcomes. To build on my initial findings, I investigate how the president's use of agency input for policy development influences the extent of changes that legislators make to the substance of presidential policy initiatives from the proposal stage to their legislative outcome.

I begin by exploring the notion that agency input can lower the extent of changes that legislators will make to a presidential policy proposal's substance before deciding on whether to pass it into law. I next test my theoretical framework for change with a series of empirical analyses following the same methodological procedures applied in Chapter IV. My empirical analyses consist of logit pooled cross-sectional regression models that measure the influence of agency input on changes in presidential policy substance. As I previously described in Chapter III, I measure change in policy substance from the proposal stage to the legislative outcome as "0" = no change in policy substance, "1" = less than 50% changes made, "2" = greater than 50% changes

made, and “3” = mostly changed or failure. Overall, I argue that changes in a president’s policy proposal substance are a function of a president’s utilization of agency input in the development of a policy proposal, presidential signaling, the ideology and majority control of Congress, presidential popularity, and a number of other control variables. The various components of my theoretical framework under empirical examination are expressed in mathematical form as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Change in Policy Substance} = & BI + \text{Agency Input} + \text{Presidential Signaling} + \text{Issue} \\ & \text{Dynamics} + \text{Majority Control of Congress} + \text{Legislative Ideology} + \text{Public Opinion} + \text{Temporal} \\ & \text{Factors} + \text{Budgetary Situation} + \epsilon_i \end{aligned}$$

As with the previous analyses, I conduct separate analyses for each chamber to control for the differences in the makeup and legislative procedures inherent in each legislative body. Each analysis includes chamber-specific control variables for the number of crosscutting jurisdictions, the chamber pivot, and a dummy variable measuring instances where a given chamber is the “first mover” in considering a policy proposal. Accordingly, I first look to the empirical examination and findings of the model for the Senate and then follow with an empirical examination and review of the findings of the model for the House of Representatives.

### **The Potential of Agency Input to Influence Changes in Policy Substance**

Throughout this study, I have argued that agency involvement at the policy development stage provides presidents with expertise, objectivity, process transparency, cooperative consultation with Congress, and bureaucratic support, which they need to obtain legislative support to pass their initiatives into law. Given the empirical evidence

that agency input helps increase policy success in Congress, it is likely that lower costs incurred during the legislative process also decrease the extent of changes in a policy's substance from proposal to passage. Accordingly, with a specific focus on how agency input lowers the need for changes in policy substance, I argue that by putting forth a greater effort to overcome legislative barriers during the policy development process, presidents are less likely to experience legislative opposition once they formally propose an initiative. More specifically, presidents can benefit in the long-run if they allow legislators to more openly observe the policy making process at the development stage and, in so doing, take advantage of that stage to strategically revise the policy nuances of their initiatives in a way that helps maximize both their personal policy goals *and* their likelihood of legislative success.

Thus, if presidents employ agency input for the development of a policy proposal, it is more likely that the expert advice provided during the development phase will lead to congressional support during the legislative phase and thus decrease the need for changes in the substance of the proposal. Accordingly, I have hypothesized (H2) that a president's use of agency input in the development of a policy proposal decreases the extent of changes in a policy proposal's substance from the proposal stage to its legislative outcome. Having outlined my theoretical expectations, I next define and operationalize my measure for change in policy substance and then test my hypotheses for this chapter by employing a series of empirical analyses.

### **Examining Agency Input Influence on Changes in Policy Substance in the Senate**

Concerning the Senate, I find that a president's utilization of agency input

decreases the amount of changes in policy substance for a presidential proposal (see Table 3). The predicted probability scores indicate that when level of agency input changes from its minimum to maximum value (i.e. from the most centralized “1” to the most decentralized “5” level of agency input), the likelihood of a high level of change in the substance of a policy initiative from its proposal to its legislative outcome decreases by 36.02%. Regarding a change from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half standard deviation above it, I find that the probability of there being a high level of change in policy substance decreases by up to 12.64%. Given that the mean value for these observations is approximately 3.13 (i.e. level “3”) and that a half standard deviation represents a change of 1.32, a full-standard deviation shift represents a move from employing a level “2” centralized policy development approach to employing a level “4” mixed approach with an agency taking the lead role and also represents a decrease in the probability that a high amount of changes in a proposal’s policy substance of nearly 13%.

**Table 3 Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the Senate, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Success in the Senate			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	+sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Policy Development</i></b>				
Level of Agency Input	-.455***	-4.69	-.3602	.1264
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	.003	.91	-	-
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	-.071	-.26	-	-
Issue Complexity	.520***	3.27	.2175	.0835
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	-.117	-.83	-	-
Reorganization Impact	-.282**	-1.68	-.1254	.0408
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
Senate Cloture Pivot	5.701*	1.47	.6721	.1646
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	-.203	-.34	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	-.024**	-1.91	-.3174	.0695
Change in Approval	-.03**	-1.98	-.4982	.0533
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	.55**	2.19	.1099	.0533
Time in Term	.003	.47	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	-.949	-.048	-	-
N	466			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	73.37			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0000			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1250			

Dependent Variable: 0 = no change in policy substance, 1 = < 50% change, 2 = > 50% change, and 3 = mostly changed or failure

Note: Presidential style administrative dummy variables also used but not shown above  
Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

Along with the previous findings concerning how agency input increases the overall likelihood of success, I conclude that presidents can benefit greatly from employing agency input for policy development. By employing agency input during the development phase, the president and his staff have the opportunity to communicate and consulted with legislators (particularly key committee members) prior to the proposal of an initiative and take into account their preferences and suggestions, which decreases the likelihood they will make further changes to the substance of an initiative once the president proposes it formally. Accordingly, agency input has great potential to improve a president's policy making success in both outputs and outcomes. With respect to outputs, presidents are simply more likely to move their policy agenda through the legislative arena. Regarding outcomes, presidents are also more likely to maximize their personal policy preferences by strategically addressing legislative obstacles prior to formally proposing their initiatives to Congress. This notion of the maximizing preferences, of course, assumes that the president does not overly compromise on changes made during the initial development of the proposal.

### **Presidential Signaling in the Senate**

If increased agency input decreases the amount of changes in policy substance from a presidential initiative's the proposal stage to its passage into law, it may also be that a larger volume of agency-advised substance further decrease the amount of changes made by legislators. In particular, it stands to reason that a greater amount of volume for a proposal of a higher quality substance would require a lower amount of revision than otherwise. Accordingly, I have hypothesized that more voluminous signaling at each

level of agency input decreases the extent of changes in a policy proposal's substance from the proposal stage to its passage.

In contrast to my expectations, the results indicate that increased voluminous signaling does not appear to help lower the amount of changes made by legislators to a policy proposal's substance (see Table 3). Given that the substance of an initiative matters but not the volume in this case, I conclude that the core substance of a policy proposal is what determines whether legislators will make changes to a legislative bill and that voluminous messages are more helpful in terms of signaling the president's legislative priorities than in providing the nuanced details of his policy initiatives.

### **Issue Dynamics in the Senate**

With regards to the role that issue dynamics can play in influencing changes in policy substance, I again expect that the type of issue at hand may have an impact on how members of Congress receive a proposal and whether they will decide to revise its substance before passing it into law. Specifically, I have controlled for the factors of issue novelty, issue complexity, crosscutting jurisdictions, and reorganization impact. According to the empirical results, it appears that issue complexity and reorganization impact both influence whether legislators are likely to make substantive changes to a president's policy proposal.

Concerning issue complexity, I find that more complex issues make it more likely that legislators will seek to make changes to the substance of a given proposal (see Table 3). Specifically, the predicted probability results suggest that moving from the least to the most complex types of issues increases the likelihood that legislators will

make a high amount of changes to a presidential proposal by 21.75%. In addition, given an increase from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half standard deviation above it, the likelihood of changes to policy substance can increase by up to 8.35%. Substantively, given that the mean level of complexity is 2.042 on a three-point scale with a half standard deviation value of about .764, a full standard deviation shift increase raises the likelihood of changes being made by about 8% in the Senate. One reason that complex proposals may require more changes prior to their passage into law is that they are more likely to fall into agency and congressional committee turf wars and thus lead legislators to competing sources of bureaucratic advice. To overcome such complexities, legislators may need to make compromises and add certain amendments to the core of a presidential proposal before generating enough legislative support to have the initiative passed into law.

As I mentioned in Chapter III, proposals that constitute reorganization of one or more agencies may result in greater congressional opposition. According to the empirical findings, however, it appears that a proposal that has a reorganization impact may actually decrease the likelihood that legislators will make changes to a presidential proposal. Specifically, the predicted probability results from the minimum to maximum value suggest that an initiative that makes a reorganization impact may decrease the likelihood of a high amount of changes to a proposal by 12.54%. This result is surprising since legislators are unlikely to defer discretion to the president over reorganizing an agency because, although the president presides as the head of the executive branch, the Congress is also responsible for designing the legislation that



creates federal agencies and should therefore be more wary about the jurisdiction over such changes (see Seidman and Gilmore 1986). Nevertheless, the results suggest jurisdictional warfare is less, rather than more, likely when it comes to revising policy initiatives put forth by the president. Accordingly, it may instead be the case that presidents are more likely to consult with legislators prior to proposing such initiatives and that legislators are therefore less likely to make further changes.

### **Ideology in the Senate**

As I mentioned previously, scholars find presidents have only a marginal ability to overcome ideological barriers in Congress and get legislators to follow their lead (see Edwards 1989; Bond and Fleisher 1990). Concerning the measure for change in policy substance, it is likely that an increase ideological distance between the president and the Senate also increases the likelihood that senators will seek to make changes to a president's policy proposal.

The results demonstrate that an increase in the ideological distance between the executive and the Senate does indeed increase the likelihood of substantive policy changes made to a presidential proposal prior to its legislative outcome (see Table 3). Regarding a change from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half standard deviation above it, I find that an increase in the ideological distance between the president and the Senate cloture pivot can increase the likelihood of substantive policy changes by up to 16.46%. Given that a half standard deviation represents an increase in ideological distance of about .07 in the Senate (on a -1 to 1 scale), this means that a total ideological distance of about .14 between the Senate cloture pivot and the president

significantly increases the likelihood of changes to policy substance.

### **Majority Control in the Senate**

Regarding the majority control of Congress, the results in Table 3 show an insignificant relationship between divided government and legislative success in the Senate. As with the previous analyses, the reason for this outcome is due mainly to the presence of autocorrelation between the divided government and the Senate cloture pivot measure. Specifically, although the pair-wise correlation between divided government and the Senate cloture pivot ( $\text{corr} = .5175$ ) is relatively low, the autocorrelation between the variables when included together in the model for the Senate is notable. Indeed, a test for Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values indicates that the divided government and Senate cloture pivot variables surpass the accepted levels of autocorrelation when both are included in the full model (i.e., the values are  $> 10$ ). Nevertheless, I have once again included both of these variables in my main model for the Senate because they are individually and theoretically important, with each one capturing distinct measures of the makeup of Congress.

As in Chapter IV, I also apply an alternative measure of majority control—the percentage of seats the president's party holds in the Senate. This variable provides a more approximate measure of the level of party support the president holds in a given chamber than the divided government variable, but does not capture the core dynamics of whether the president has majority control over a chamber. In any case, substituting this measure for divided government does not eliminate the autocorrelation issue between the ideological and partisan control measures.

For sensitivity analyses, I again test three additional empirical models, each of which includes only one of three congressional control variables—divided government, the Senate cloture pivot, and the percentage of seats the president’s party holds in the Senate—and provide the results in the Appendix (see Tables A-5 and A-6). Each of these models demonstrates that all three of the variables have significant coefficient outcomes when applied in separate models. More importantly, the results demonstrate that the correlation values and levels of significance for my main independent variable—agency input—remain essentially unchanged across all of the alternative models. I thus conclude that, despite the autocorrelation issue, my policy change model for the Senate, which includes both the ideological and majority control measures, provides a valid and reliable measure of the relationships under study.

### **Presidential Approval in the Senate**

Public opinion of the president may also influence whether legislators will seek to make substantive policy changes to a presidential proposal. Indeed, legislators should be less likely to seek or demand changes to a president’s policy proposals when a president’s approval ratings are high and if the level of approval increases from the time a president proposes an initiative until the time legislators make a final decision on it (see Bond, Fleisher, and Wood 2003).

In accordance past studies, the predicted probability results for the influence of presidential approval on policy changes in the Senate indicate that a change from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half standard deviation above it may decrease the likelihood of changes to policy substance by 6.95% (see Table 3). Given that a half

standard deviation represents about a 6.5 percentage point change in approval, this means that a total shift of 13 percentage points can increase or decrease the probability of substantive policy changes by nearly 7%.

In addition, I find that the change in public approval from proposal of an initiative to its outcome also has a significant influence on the amount of changes made to a presidential proposal. Specifically, the predicted probability results for the Senate demonstrate that moving from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half standard deviation above it can decrease the likelihood of a high amount of changes by 5.33%. In substantive terms, an increase of about 8 percentage points in approval from the time the president proposes an initiative to the time Congress makes a final decision can increase or decrease the likelihood of substantive policy changes by over 5% in the Senate.

### **Temporal Factors and the Budgetary Situation**

As I previously suggested, timing can be a crucial component that influences outcomes. With respect to changes in policy substance, it may be that the “first mover” chamber to address a proposal will need to make fewer changes than the second chamber because the second chamber will likely be reacting in accordance with the actions of the first. In addition, it may also be that initiatives proposed at the beginning of a president’s term during the honeymoon period may require fewer changes to substance than thereafter when legislators are less likely to give the president some leeway. In contrast to my theoretical expectations, I find that the “first mover” chamber is more likely to make changes than the second rather than the other way around. Specifically,

the minimum to maximum predicted probability results suggest that being the “first mover” chamber increases the likelihood of substantive policy changes by 10.99%. Accordingly, it may be that the “first mover” chamber makes more changes than the second simply because the first chamber takes care of most of the legislative opposition to a bill. Last, I find that the budgetary situation is also not a major factor in determining the amount of changes to policy substance in the Senate.

### **Examining Agency Input Influence on Changes in Policy Substance in the House**

Having found strong empirical support in the Senate model demonstrating that the substance of a policy initiative serves as an important influence on lowering changes in a proposal’s policy substance, I now look at agency input influence on policy change in the House of Representatives. Accordingly, I again test my main hypothesis (H2) that a president’s use of agency input in the development of a policy proposal decreases the extent of changes in a policy proposal’s substance from the proposal stage to its legislative outcome. As with the previous analyses on success, save for a few slight differences concerning the chamber-specific control variables, the results of my analyses for measuring change in policy substance in the House are strikingly similar to those of the Senate, suggesting that nearly identical dynamics fall into play for both chambers of Congress (see Table 4).

**Table 4 Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the House, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Success in the House			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	+sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Policy Development</i></b>				
Level of Agency Input	-.406***	-4.13	-.3081	.1068
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	.005	1.16	-	-
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	-.059	-.22	-	-
Issue Complexity	.717***	4.37	.2835	.1088
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	-.113	-1.18	-	-
Reorganization Impact	-.231*	-1.36	-.0970	.0316
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
House Median Pivot	4.984**	1.79	.5610	.1708
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	.17	.31	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	-.034***	-2.52	-.4070	.0904
Change in Approval	-.029**	-1.86	-.4685	.0489
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	.116	.48	-	-
Time in Term	-.004	-.67	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	2.35	1.14	-	-
N	466			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	74.97			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0000			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1312			

Dependent Variable: 0 = no change in policy substance, 1 = < 50% change, 2 = > 50% change, and 3 = mostly changed or failure

Note: Presidential style administrative dummy variables also used but not shown above  
Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

Similar to the results for the Senate model, the empirical findings for the House of Representatives provide evidence that the employment of agency input significantly decreases the amount of changes legislators make to a presidential initiative under legislative scrutiny. In particular, the predicted probability scores indicate that when level of agency input changes from its minimum to maximum value (i.e. from the most centralized “1” to the most decentralized “5” level of agency input), the likelihood that legislators will make substantive changes to a policy proposal decreases by 30.81% in the House (see Table 4). As for the change from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half standard deviation above it, the results show that the likelihood of policy changes can decrease by up to 10.68%. Substantively, this means that substantive policy changes are about 11% less likely to happen if presidents develop a policy proposal approximating a level “4” amount of agency input than if they employ a level “2” amount. Thus, employing agency input in policy development can play an essential role in helping presidents succeed in maintaining the substance of their policy initiatives from their proposal stage to their legislative outcomes.

### **Presidential Signaling in the House**

As with the results for the Senate, the empirical evidence for the House indicates that increased voluminous signaling does not appear to help lower the likelihood that legislators will make changes to a policy proposal’s substance (see Table 4). Again, given that the substance of an initiative matters but not the volume in this case, I conclude that the core substance of a policy proposal is what determines whether legislators will make changes to a legislative bill and that more detail provided through a

more voluminous message is more helpful in terms of signaling the president's legislative priorities than in providing the nuanced details of his policy initiatives.

### **Issue Dynamics in the House**

Concerning issue dynamics in the House, it again appears that issue complexity and reorganization impact both influence whether legislators are likely to make substantive changes to a president's policy proposal. Regarding issue complexity, I find that more complex issues make it more likely that legislators will seek to make changes to the substance of a given proposal (see Table 4). Specifically, the predicted probability results suggest that moving from the least to the most complex types of issues increases the likelihood that legislators will make a high amount of changes to a presidential proposal by 28.35%. In addition, given an increase from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half standard deviation above it, the likelihood of changes to policy substance can increase by up to 10.88%. Substantively, given that the mean level of complexity is 2.042 on a three-point scale with a half standard deviation value of about .764, a full standard deviation shift increase raises the likelihood of changes being made by about 11% in the House. As for proposals that constitute a reorganization impact, it again appears that they may decrease the likelihood that legislators will make changes to a presidential proposal. Specifically, the predicted probability results from minimum to maximum value suggest that an initiative that makes a reorganization impact on an agency may decrease the likelihood of a high amount of changes to a proposal by 9.7%.

### **Ideology in the House**

As with the results for the Senate model, the House results demonstrate that an



increase in the ideological distance between the president and the House increases the likelihood of that legislators will make substantive policy changes to a presidential proposal from its proposal to its legislative outcome (see Table 4). Regarding a change from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half standard deviation above it, I find that an increase in the ideological distance between the president and the House median pivot can increase the likelihood of substantive policy changes by up to 17.08%. Given that a half standard deviation represents an increase in ideological distance of about .07 in the House (on a -1 to 1 scale), this means that a total ideological distance of about .14 between the House median pivot and the president may lead to significant changes in policy substance.

### **Majority Control in the House**

Regarding the majority control of Congress, the results for the House show an insignificant relationship between divided government and legislative success in the Senate (see Table 4). However, as with the corresponding Senate measures, this outcome is due mainly to the presence of autocorrelation between the divided government and the House median pivot measure. Accordingly, despite the presence of autocorrelation, I again include both variables in the model because their pair-wise correlation outcomes are acceptably low and particularly because they are individually and theoretically important, with each one capturing distinct measures of the makeup of Congress.

As with the Senate results, I test three additional empirical models for sensitivity analyses, each of which includes only one of three congressional control variables—

divided government, the House median pivot, and the percentage of seats the president's party holds in the House—and provide the results in the Appendix (see Tables A-7 and A-8). Each of these models demonstrates that all three of the variables have significant coefficient outcomes when applied in separate models. As with the Senate results, the correlation values and levels of significance for my main independent variable—agency input—remain essentially unchanged across all of the alternative models for the House. I thus conclude that, despite the autocorrelation issue, my main model for the House provides a valid and reliable measure of the relationships under study.

### **Presidential Approval in the House**

In accordance with past studies and the Senate model findings, the predicted probability results for the influence of presidential approval on policy changes in the House indicate that a change from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half standard deviation above it may decrease the likelihood of changes to policy substance by 9.04% (see Table 4). Given that a half standard deviation represents about a 6.5 percentage point change in approval, this means that a total shift of 13 percentage points can increase or decrease the probability of substantive policy changes by about 9%.

In addition, I find that the change in public approval from proposal of an initiative to its outcome has a significant influence on the amount of changes made to a presidential proposal in the House. Specifically, the predicted probability results suggest that moving from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half standard deviation above it can decrease the likelihood of a high amount of changes by 4.89%. In substantive terms, an increase of about 8 percentage points in approval from the time the

president proposes an initiative to the time Congress makes a final decision can increase or decrease the likelihood of substantive policy changes by about 5% in the House.

### **Temporal Factors and the Budgetary Situation**

Unlike the Senate results, the “first mover” dummy variable does not have a significant influence on proposal policy changes in the House. In addition, I find that the president’s time in term and the budgetary situation are not major influences on whether legislators will make substantive policy changes to a presidential proposal.

### **Summary**

The empirical evidence that agency input significantly decreases the likelihood that legislators will make substantive policy changes to presidential bill proposals provides further understanding of how presidents can maximize their policy making performance. Given the findings in this and the previous chapter, it is now evident that agency input can help presidents to improve their policy making performance in the legislative arena in terms of both outputs and outcomes. Thus, rather than risk policy failure by centralizing the policy development process, presidents stand to benefit more in the long-run by putting forth a greater effort on the front-end of the policy making process by taking into account the expert bureaucratic advice of agency actors and thereby strategically positioning their proposals in a manner that balances their personal policy preferences with the advise of agency actors, and the expectations and obstacles awaiting them in the legislative branch.

Regarding the influence of voluminous presidential signaling on changes in policy substance, I was surprised to find no relationship between the two. Generally

speaking, it seems that highly voluminous messages are more helpful for signaling to Congress the president's legislative priorities of his policy agenda than in providing the nuanced details of his policy initiatives. Nevertheless, it may be that signaling matters only for a certain subset group of agency input, which I will explore in the next chapter along with exploring the interactive relationship between agency input and success. More specifically, I will next explore at which level of agency input presidents have the greatest potential for obtaining congressional support and maintaining the policy substance of their proposals and whether an interactive effect with more voluminous signaling at such level for each dependent variable holds the key for presidents to maximize their policy making performance.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **EXAMINING THE INTERACTION BETWEEN AGENCY INPUT AND PRESIDENTIAL SIGNALING**

The previous two chapters demonstrated conclusively that increased agency input in presidential policy development (1) increases the likelihood of policy making success and (2) decreases the amount of change in policy substance from an initiative's formal proposal to Congress to its legislative outcome. In exploring the impact of policy substance on presidential proposal messages, I have further examined whether the volume of a presidential message also influences policy success and changes in policy substance. My empirical analyses confirm that highly voluminous signaling increases the likelihood of policy success, but does not demonstrate an independent effect on changes in policy substance.

What remains is to investigate whether an interactive relationship exists between agency input and presidential signaling for influencing policy success and changes in policy substance. Specifically, I argue that because agency input provides presidents with sound expert advice, and because Congress views such advice as more legitimate than that of the president's inner circle of advisors, more voluminous signaling at higher levels of agency input should increase the likelihood of policy success and lower the amount of changes made to policy substance from the proposal stage to passage.

To test such interactive relationships, I begin by exploring whether agency input and presidential signaling have an overall interactive influence on presidential policy making success. I then conduct further tests to verify whether and to what extent an

interactive relationship exists across specific levels of agency input. I then repeat the process to test for similar relationships for the models measuring changes in policy substance from the proposal stage to passage. My empirical analyses consist of logit pooled cross-sectional regression models measuring the interactive influence of agency input and presidential signaling on policy success and changes in presidential policy substance. As with the previous analyses, I measure policy success as “1” = success and “0” = no success, and I measure change in policy substance from the proposal stage to the legislative outcome as “0” = no change in policy substance, “1” = less than 50% changes made, “2” = greater than 50% changes made, and “3” = mostly changed or failure.

In essence, I argue that policy success and changes in a president’s policy proposal substance are a function of the level of agency input, presidential signaling, the interaction of agency input and presidential signaling, the ideology and majority control of Congress, presidential popularity, and a number of other control variables, which may be expressed in mathematical form as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Policy Proposal Outcomes (policy success, change in policy substance)} = & BI + \text{Agency} \\ & \text{Input} + \text{Presidential Signaling} + \text{Agency Input*Presidential Signaling} + \text{Issue Dynamics} + \\ & \text{Majority Control of Congress} + \text{Legislative Ideology} + \text{Public Opinion} + \text{Temporal Factors} + \\ & \text{Budgetary Situation} + \epsilon_i \end{aligned}$$

As with the previous chapters, I conduct separate analyses for each chamber to control for the differences in the makeup and legislative procedures in each legislative body. Each analysis includes chamber-specific control variables for the number of

crosscutting jurisdictions, the chamber pivot, and a dummy variable measuring instances where a given chamber is the “first mover” in considering a policy proposal. For each dependent variable, I first conduct an empirical examination of a model for the Senate and then follow with a similar empirical examination of a model for the House of Representatives.

### **Signaling with Agency Input: Testing for an Interactive Effect on Policy Success**

Given the strong evidence from Chapter IV that both agency input and presidential signaling have a positive and significant influence on presidential policy making success, it follows that higher levels of agency input presented in voluminous messages have a particularly potent, positive impact on success. However, because the results of my analyses in Chapter V indicate that only agency input and not presidential signaling significantly decreases the amount of policy changes needed for legislative passage, the prospect of an interactive relationship between agency input and signaling seems less likely. Nevertheless, I will test for the presence of an interactive relationship for both dependent variables and across various levels of agency input.

There are two main ways to investigate the possibility of an interactive relationship between agency input and presidential signaling. First, it is important to establish whether an overall interactive relationship between agency input and presidential signaling exists across all levels of agency input. If so, such results would demonstrate that increased signaling increases the likelihood of success of even the most centralized policy initiatives and has an even greater influence on initiatives with high levels of agency input. However, if an overall interactive relationship does not exist, it

may be that signaling only interacts at a specific level (or levels) of agency input. In that case, further testing at each individual level of agency input will be necessary to determine whether and how agency input and signaling interact. Specifically, testing at each individual level includes first testing the subgroup for highly centralized presidential policy initiatives of origins within the White House (i.e., level “1”) to determine whether voluminous signaling without substantive agency input can still increase the likelihood of presidential policymaking success and then doing the same for each of the other subgroups. The other subgroups to test are as follows: as a product of centralized outer staff (i.e., level “2”), of mixed-decentralized origins with the White House leading development (i.e., level “3”), of mixed-decentralized origins with agencies/departments leading policy development (i.e., level “4”), and of highly decentralized origins as a product of cabinet departments and/or executive agencies (i.e., level “5”).

### **Testing for an Overall Interactive Effect on Success in the Senate**

In my initial analysis, I find that agency input and presidential signaling have no overall interactive influence on policy success in the Senate (see Table 5 below). These results stand in contrast to the general expectations of hypothesis 3 that more voluminous signaling at each level of agency input increases the likelihood of proposal passage.



**Table 5 Overall Agency Input-Presidential Signaling Interactive Influence on Presidential Success in the Senate, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Success in the Senate			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	++sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Policy Development</i></b>				
Level of Agency Input	.335***	2.97	.3190	.1088
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	-.003	-.43	-	-
<b><i>Interactive Dynamic</i></b>				
Agency Input*Presidential Signaling	.003	1.20	-	-
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	.158	.59	-	-
Issue Complexity	.102	.66	-	-
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	.094	.67	-	-
Reorganization Impact	-.033	-.20	-	-
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
Senate Cloture Pivot	-9.055***	-2.36	-.7973	.2995
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	.238	.40	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	.033***	2.60	.4804	.1104
Change in Approval	.022*	1.62	.4129	.0479
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	-.16	-.69	-	-
Time in Term	-.003	-.50	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	-.382	-.21	-	-
N	464			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	96.60			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0000			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1514			

Dependent Variable: 1 = Success, 0 = No Success

Note: Presidential style administrative dummy variables also used but not shown above

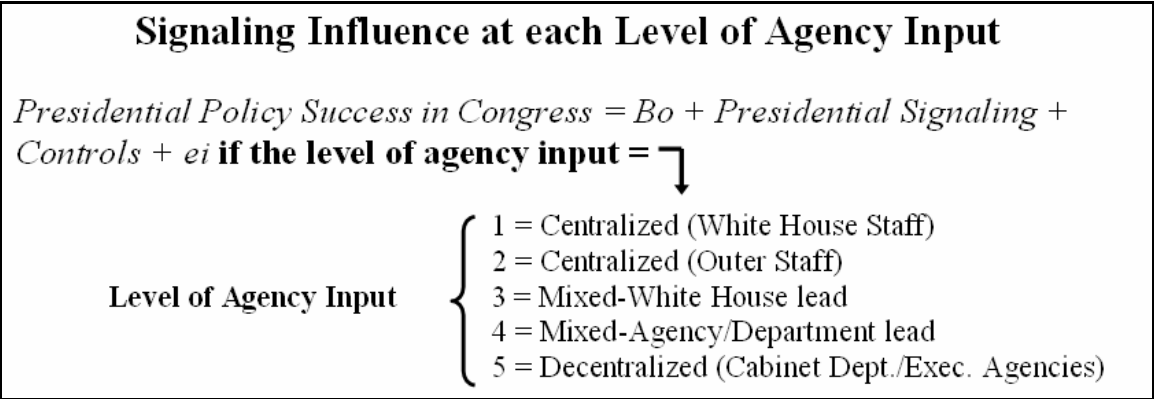
Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where  $p < 0.1^*$ ,  $p < 0.05^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01^{***}$

Nevertheless, given the previous evidence that agency input and signaling each independently influence presidential success, it may be that an interactive relationship does exist, but only under optimal conditions. Accordingly, I will next test the relationship across subgroup levels of agency input.

### **Testing Interactions within Agency Input Subgroup Levels on Success in the Senate**

To test the effect of signaling at each level of agency input, I first disaggregate my sample of 466 observations into subgroups for each level of agency input. I then rerun my empirical models for each subgroup to determine the effect (if any) that increased, more voluminous signaling can have on success in conjunction with the particular level of agency input (see Figure 1). As I mentioned previously, I first test the subgroup for highly centralized presidential policy initiatives of origins within the White House (i.e., level “1”) to determine whether voluminous signaling without substantive agency input can still increase the likelihood of presidential policymaking success. I then do the same for each of the other subgroups: as a product of centralized outer staff (i.e., level “2”), of mixed-decentralized origins with the White House leading development (i.e., level “3”), of mixed-decentralized origins with agencies/departments leading policy development (i.e., level “4”), and of highly decentralized origins as a product of cabinet departments and/or executive agencies (i.e., level “5”).

**Figure 1 Signaling Influence at each Level of Agency Input (Presidential Policy Success in Congress)**



The results of my analyses (Tables 6-10) indicate a significant relationship for only the level “4” subgroup of mixed-decentralized origins with agencies/departments leading policy development (N = 119; see Table 9).<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, I find that policy proposals of highly voluminous signaling containing little or no agency input (i.e., for subgroup levels “1,” “2,” and “3”) do not increase the likelihood of success, nor do proposals developed exclusively at the agency or department level (i.e., subgroup level “5”). To review the results, I first briefly outline the findings for the level “5” subgroup and then provide more expansive detail on the significant findings of the level “4” subgroup regarding the interactive relationship between signaling and agency input. Although the results for subgroups “1,” “2,” and “3” were insignificant, I nevertheless provide the table results for comparative purposes (see Tables 6-8 and 10).

A closer look at the observations for the level “5” subgroup suggest that, despite high levels of agency input, the absence of a relationship appears due to the nature of the observations for this subgroup, which mostly consist of policy initiatives that are apolitical, routinely passed, and periodically renewed without much deliberation. Consequently, presidents typically delegate the development of these policy initiatives to cabinet departments and/or executive agencies. Because legislators are unlikely to oppose such initiatives, presidents typically submit a brief statement for their proposal rather than employ voluminous signaling (e.g., as a Special Message to Congress). In addition, I find that increased approval increases success and increased time in term decreases the likelihood of success, as expected.

---

<sup>14</sup> This subgroups consists of 119 observations that represent approximately 25.5% of the total sample of 466 observations.

**Table 6 Level “1” Highly Centralized Inner Staff Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the Senate, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Success in the Senate			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	+-sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	-.0009	-.12	-	-
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	2.078**	1.79	.3410	.1900
Issue Complexity	-.297	-.61	-	-
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	.135	.39	-	-
Reorganization Impact	.385	.89	-	-
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
Senate Cloture Pivot	-8.621**	-2.15	-.8506	.2109
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	1.489	1.24	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	.037	.92	-	-
Change in Approval	-.024	-.46	-	-
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	-.152	-.22	-	-
Time in Term	.028*	1.51	.5141	.1408
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	-11.375**	-2.45	-.6978	.1983
N	81			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	26.49			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0091			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.2917			

Dependent Variable: 1 = Success, 0 = No Success

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where  $p < 0.1^*$ ,  $p < 0.05^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01^{***}$

**Table 7 Level “2” Highly Centralized Outer Staff Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the Senate, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Success in the Senate			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	±sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	-.001	-.07	-	-
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	-1.739**	-1.66	-.3483	.1548
Issue Complexity	2.075***	2.38	.7251	.2291
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	-.292	-.39	-	-
Reorganization Impact	-1.256**	-1.66	-.3398	.1815
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
Senate Cloture Pivot	-64.10***	-4.92	-1.000	.9136
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	6.759***	3.21	.7826	.5645
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	.099*	1.49	.8043	.2308
Change in Approval	.08*	1.47	.8944	.1652
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	-3.942***	-2.48	-.4734	.3234
Time in Term	.015	.69	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	-12.501*	-1.53	-.7383	.2047
N	61			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	42.29			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0000			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.5646			

Dependent Variable: 1 = Success, 0 = No Success

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

**Table 8 Level “3” Mixed-Centralized Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the Senate, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Success in the Senate			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	±sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	.003	.68	-	-
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	.172	.35	-	-
Issue Complexity	-.019	-.07	-	-
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	-.114	-.60	-	-
Reorganization Impact	-.907***	-2.96	-.4246	.1540
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
Senate Cloture Pivot	-6.654***	-2.78	-.0605	.0304
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	-.2538	-.46	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	.0157	.76	-	-
Change in Approval	-.0198	-.66	-	-
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	-.1251	-.29	-	-
Time in Term	-.0017	-.15	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	-1.66	-.60	-	-
N	123			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	27.85			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0058			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1799			

Dependent Variable: 1 = Success, 0 = No Success

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where  $p < 0.1^*$ ,  $p < 0.05^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01^{***}$

**Table 9 Level “4” Mixed-decentralized Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the Senate, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Success in the Senate			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	+-sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	.043**	1.89	.4141	.1777
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	-.91**	-1.74	-.1578	.0810
Issue Complexity	.075	.24	-	-
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	.28	1.14	-	-
Reorganization Impact	.528*	1.45	.1527	.0572
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
Senate Cloture Pivot	-5.071***	-2.51	-.5791	.1187
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	-1.198**	-1.68	-.2005	.1053
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	.015	.64	-	-
Change in Approval	-.033	-.91	-	-
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	-.551	-1.09	-	-
Time in Term	-.011	-1.09	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	.155	.06	-	-
N	119			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	23.14			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0265			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1691			

Dependent Variable: 1 = Success, 0 = No Success

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where  $p < 0.1^*$ ,  $p < 0.05^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01^{***}$



**Table 10 Level “5” Highly Decentralized Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the Senate, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Success in the Senate			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	+sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	.002	.21	-	-
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	-.054	-.10	-	-
Issue Complexity	.404	1.06	-	-
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	.737*	1.42	.4523	.0865
Reorganization Impact	.128	.31	-	-
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
Senate Cloture Pivot	-1.125	-.45	-	-
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	.416	.65	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	.021	.91	-	-
Change in Approval	.081**	1.97	.7501	.1282
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	.635	.97	-	-
Time in Term	-.018*	-1.61	-.3492	.0983
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	-.658	-.22	-	-
N	82			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	14.01			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.3003			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1321			

Dependent Variable: 1 = Success, 0 = No Success

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where  $p < 0.1^*$ ,  $p < 0.05^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01^{***}$

**Level “4” Mixed-Decentralized Agency Input Subgroup (Senate Success)**

In my analysis for the level “4” subgroup in the Senate, I find partial support for my hypothesis (H3) that more voluminous signaling at each level of agency input increases the likelihood of proposal passage. According to Table 9, there is a significant and positive relationship between highly voluminous signaling of subgroup level “4” policy initiatives and the likelihood of presidential policy success in the Senate. Specifically, the predicted probability results suggest that when presidential signaling for subgroup level “4” initiatives changes from its minimum to maximum value, the likelihood of presidential policy success in Congress increases by 41.41% in the Senate.

The findings for the level “4” subgroup, along with the null findings for the other subgroups, indicate that although increased agency input and more voluminous signaling do not have an overall interactive influence on success, it is specifically when highly voluminous signaling occurs *in conjunction* with a high level of agency input consisting of mixed-decentralized origins with agencies/departments leading policy development that the likelihood of success in the Senate increases significantly. These findings hold important implications regarding presidential policy making strategies and presidential performance.

The key to understanding the importance of these findings centers on why the level “4” subgroup—and not the others—is most effective in helping the president succeed in the legislative arena and why greater signaling at such level provides the most potent form of influence over the policy making process. A close look at the observations for each of the subgroups shows a wide variety of initiatives with the

exception, as noted above, that the level “5” subgroup of highly decentralized initiatives includes a large number of policy initiatives that are apolitical, routinely passed, and periodically renewed with less deliberation. For the other subgroups, although initiatives nearer to the level “1” category tend towards newer and more social issues and initiatives nearer to the level “4” category tend towards issues that are more complex in nature, the range is very mixed overall across levels. Generally speaking, each category from levels “1” to “4” includes observations of initiatives that apply to a wide range of issue dynamics concerning saliency, complexity, crosscutting jurisdictions, and so on.

Given the generally well distributed variety of initiatives, it makes sense that it is the approach to policy development itself that most influences the manner that legislators interpret a policy proposal and, in turn, whether or not such a proposal passes into law. Thus, a president’s approach to policy development is the core determinant for affecting the policy arena and is particularly potent when proposed as a voluminous message to the Congress. The message that legislators appear to receive from such proposals is that the president values objective, expert advice required for developing legitimate policy solutions, that agency actors are willing and able to implement such proposals, and that voluminous signaling indicates such proposals are a major priority of the policy agenda. Although such an observation seems obvious in hindsight, it represents a clear contrast to mainstream ideas about presidential policy making.

Last, in using the level “4” approach, presidents benefit from a development style that encourages legislative and agency consultation, which provides presidents that opportunity to better gauge the legislative obstacles they face and to make any necessary

adjustments, on their own terms, in the substance of a given initiative prior to its formal proposal in order to help ensure its successful passage and eventual implementation.

The other development approaches, particularly the level “1” and “2” approaches, do not provide the same opportunity to maximize the utility of preparing an initiative during the development stage for formal proposal to Congress and are thus more likely to be subject to legislative scrutiny that may drastically alter or dismiss the president’s intended policy objectives.

In sum, because agency input provides presidents with sound expert advice, and because Congress views such advice as more legitimate, more voluminous signaling of a proposal that includes agency input likewise increases the overall clarity of the proposal and thereby further aid its passage into law. This insight represents a major new contribution to mainstream presidential scholarship. Having outlined the significance and implications for the findings on the interactive relationship for the level “4” subgroup, I will conclude this section with a review of the remaining findings for the other coefficients.

#### **Control Variable Findings for Success in the Senate (Level “4”)**

With regards to the influence that issue dynamics has on policy success in the Senate for the level “4” subgroup of agency input, the findings provide evidence of nuanced relationships not seen in the general models tested in Chapter IV. For instance, I find that issue novelty has a significant and negative influence on policy success for the level “4” subgroup of observations, with the predicted probability scores indicating a decrease in the likelihood of success in the Senate of 15.78%. This result makes sense

because a high level of agency input may not be as helpful to a president when dealing with an issue that is new and for which agencies have little or no institutional knowledge that is useful for the president to adopt in developing a policy proposal.

Regarding reorganization initiatives, I find that proposals constituting the reorganization of an agency appear to increase the likelihood of policy success in the Senate by about 15.27% from minimum to maximum value, which contrasts my general theoretical expectations that proposals constituting reorganization of one or more agencies should result in greater congressional opposition. However, it may be the case that this subgroup category is well suited for reorganization proposals given the high level of input the agencies themselves have in determining the reorganization plan. Indeed, members of Congress are less likely to oppose a reorganization presidential initiative if the agencies approve of and recommend the proposed changes.

Inline with my findings in previous chapters, I find that a greater ideological distance between the president and the Senate cloture pivot decreases the likelihood of policy success. Specifically, the results indicate that a change from a half standard deviation below the mean value to a half standard deviation above it can decrease the likelihood of success by about 11.87%.

Regarding majority control, the results indicate that the presence of divided government significantly decreases the likelihood of success by about 20.05%. This result is consistent with the literature and all my previous analyses from Chapter IV. Thus, although higher levels of agency input may squelch ideological differences, legislators in a divided government scenario may nevertheless fall back on their party

loyalties in voting against a bill proposed by a president of the opposing party.

### **Testing Interactions within Agency Input Subgroup Levels on Success in the House**

As with the analysis for success in the Senate, an overall interactive relationship between agency input and signaling does not exist for influencing success in the House. Nevertheless, it may be that an interactive relationship does exist at a specific level (or levels) of agency input (see Table 11).

To test across levels of agency input, I again disaggregate my sample of 466 observations into subgroups for each level of agency input and then rerun my empirical models for each subgroup to determine whether increased, more voluminous signaling increases success at each level (see Tables 12-16). As with the results for the Senate, I find an interactive relationship only for the level “4” subgroup of agency input (see Table 15).

To review the results, I first briefly outline the findings for the level “5” subgroup and then provide more expansive detail on the significant findings of the level “4” subgroup regarding the interactive relationship between signaling and agency input. Although the results for subgroups “1,” “2,” and “3” were insignificant, I nevertheless provide the table results for comparative purposes.

**Table 11 Overall Agency Input-Presidential Signaling Interactive Influence on Presidential Success in the House, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Success in the House			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	++sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Policy Development</i></b>				
Level of Agency Input	.336***	2.98	.3202	.1092
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	-.003	-.40	-	-
<b><i>Interactive Dynamic</i></b>				
Agency Input*Presidential Signaling	.003	1.26	-	-
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	.156	.58	-	-
Issue Complexity	.085	.56	-	-
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	.166*	1.64	.3401	.0484
Reorganization Impact	-.053	-.33	-	-
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
House Median Pivot	-6.875***	-2.34	-.7500	.2860
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	.001	.00	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	.035***	2.69	.4976	.1151
Change in Approval	.028**	1.91	.4896	.0587
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	.170	.74	-	-
Time in Term	-.005	-.82	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	-1.709	-.91	-	-
N	464			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	99.61			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0000			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1562			

Dependent Variable: 1 = Success, 0 = No Success

Note: Presidential style administrative dummy variables also used but not shown above

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where  $p < 0.1^*$ ,  $p < 0.05^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01^{***}$

**Table 12 Level “1” Highly Centralized Inner Staff Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the House, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Success in the House			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	±sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	-.001	-.16	-	-
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	2.904**	2.28	.4532	.2649
Issue Complexity	-.252	-.57	-	-
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	.1	.39	-	-
Reorganization Impact	.546*	1.46	.2309	.0783
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
House Median Pivot	-2.908	.33	-	-
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	.256	-1.13	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	.051	1.28	-	-
Change in Approval	-.001	-.03	-	-
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	.018	.03	-	-
Time in Term	.029*	1.5	.5176	.1420
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	-11.395**	-2.22	-.7000	.1994
N	81			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	21.91			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0385			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.2451			

Dependent Variable: 1 = Success, 0 = No Success

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*



**Table 13 Level “2” Highly Centralized Outer Staff Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the House, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Success in the House			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	+-sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	.007	.38	-	-
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	2.873***	2.53	.4392	.2610
Issue Complexity	.962**	1.86	.3770	.1443
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	.431	.90	-	-
Reorganization Impact	-.199	-.36	-	-
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
House Median Pivot	-7.865**	-1.89	-.7987	.2410
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	-.01	-.01	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	.005	.14	-	-
Change in Approval	.017	.37	-	-
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	1.06*	1.30	.1776	.0909
Time in Term	.0004	.03	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	8.067	1.25	-	-
N	61			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	24.30			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0185			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.2926			

Dependent Variable: 1 = Success, 0 = No Success

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

**Table 14 Level “3” Mixed-Centralized Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the House, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Success in the House			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	+-sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	.006	1.21	-	-
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	.64*	1.29	.1555	.0722
Issue Complexity	-.02	-.07	-	-
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	.166	.83	-	-
Reorganization Impact	-.867***	-3.07	-.4080	.1483
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
House Median Pivot	-3.464**	-2.13	-.4521	.1437
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	-.605	-1.14	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	.029*	1.49	.3744	.0980
Change in Approval	-.002	-.08	-	-
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	.244	.57	-	-
Time in Term	.001	.13	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	-1.929	-.64	-	-
N	123			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	26.95			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0078			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1561			

Dependent Variable: 1 = Success, 0 = No Success

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where  $p < 0.1^*$ ,  $p < 0.05^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01^{***}$

**Table 15 Level “4” Mixed-Decentralized Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the House, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Success in the House			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	++sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	.048**	2.04	.4196	.1898
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	-.899**	-1.74	-.1495	.0767
Issue Complexity	-.067	-.21	-	-
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	.643***	2.39	.4510	.1624
Reorganization Impact	.494	1.16	-	-
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
House Median Pivot	-2.894**	-1.88	-.3021	.0839
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	-.811	-1.19	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	.016	.72	-	-
Change in Approval	-.044	-1.08	-	-
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	.603	1.12	-	-
Time in Term	-.011	-1.21	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	1.598	.63	-	-
N	119			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	17.11			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.1456			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1856			

Dependent Variable: 1 = Success, 0 = No Success

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where  $p < 0.1^*$ ,  $p < 0.05^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01^{***}$

**Table 16 Level “5” Highly Decentralized Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the House, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Success in the House			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	+-sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	.002	.17	-	-
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	.012	.02	-	-
Issue Complexity	.458	1.24	-	-
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	.311	1.16	-	-
Reorganization Impact	.223	.56	-	-
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
House Median Pivot	-1.576	.59	-	-
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	.349	-.79	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	.021	.91	-	-
Change in Approval	.083**	1.89	.7590	.1312
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	-.642	-1.01	-	-
Time in Term	-.014*	-1.31	-.2899	.0817
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	-1.651	-.46	-	-
N	82			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	13.66			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.3228			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1283			

Dependent Variable: 1 = Success, 0 = No Success

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

For the subset group of the most highly decentralized initiatives (i.e., level “5”) that are a product of cabinet departments or executive agencies, I find no evidence of an interactive relationship between increased signaling and agency input. A closer look at the observations for the level “5” subgroup suggest that, despite high levels of agency input, the absence of a relationship appears mostly due to the nature of the observations for this subgroup, which mostly consist of policy initiatives that are apolitical, routinely passed, and periodically renewed without much deliberation. Consequently, presidents typically delegate the development of these policy initiatives to cabinet departments and/or executive agencies. Because legislators are unlikely to oppose such initiatives, presidents typically submit a brief statement for their proposal rather than employ voluminous signaling (e.g., as a Special Message to Congress). Once again as with the Senate results, I also find that increased approval increases success and increased time in term decreases the likelihood of success, as expected.

#### **Level “4” Mixed-Decentralized Agency Input Subgroup (House Success)**

Having briefly described the results for the subgroups lacking a significant interactive relationship, I will now focus on the significant findings for the level “4” subgroup. Specifically, the predicted probability results in Table 15 suggest that when presidential signaling for subgroup level “4” initiatives changes from its minimum to maximum value, the likelihood of presidential policy success in Congress increases by 41.96% in the House.

As with the results for the Senate, although increased agency input and more voluminous signaling do not have an overall interactive influence on success, it is

specifically when highly voluminous signaling occurs *in conjunction* with a high level of agency input consisting of mixed-decentralized origins with agencies/departments leading policy development that the likelihood of success in the House increases. Accordingly, presidents should place a greater focus on their managerial strategies for developing and proposing their policy initiatives because doing so provides presidents with significant opportunities for increasing their likelihood of success in policy making.

As I stated previously, the variety of initiatives across subgroup levels is generally well distributed, which makes sense since it is the approach to policy development itself that most influences the manner that legislators interpret a policy proposal and, in turn, whether or not such a proposal passes into law. Thus, a president's approach to policy development is the core determinant for affecting the policy arena and is particularly potent when proposed as a voluminous message to the Congress. The message that legislators appear to receive from such proposals is that the president values objective, expert advice required for developing legitimate policy solutions, that agency actors are willing and able to implement such proposals, and that voluminous signaling indicates such proposals are a major priority of the policy agenda. Although such an observation seems obvious in hindsight, it represents a clear contrast to mainstream ideas about presidential policy making.

Rather than simply centralizing the process to lower front-end costs and then relying mostly strategies such as going public to pass their initiatives into law, presidents should instead put forth a greater effort at the development stage to prepare their initiatives in a manner that improves their substance and bureaucratic legitimacy. More

specifically, presidents must prepare their initiatives in a way that allows them to interact—through consultation and cooperation—with agency actors and legislators so that they can better gauge the political landscape and the obstacles it presents to successful policy passage. Thus, as I stated previously, presidents should take advantage of the opportunity to revise and improve their initiatives in a manner that will help maximize their likelihood of success once they deliver their proposals to the Congress.

Having outlined the significance and implications for the findings on the interactive relationship for the level “4” subgroup, I will conclude this section with a review of the remaining findings for the other coefficients.

#### **Control Variable Findings for Success in the House (Level “4”)**

Similar to the results for the Senate, I again find that issue novelty has a negative and significant influence on presidential policy success in the House as well. In particular, the predicted probability results suggest that the presence of a new issue can decrease the likelihood of success by up to 14.95% in the House, which supports hypothesis 5. As I mention above, such a result makes sense since high levels of agency input are less likely to be useful regarding issues that are new and for which agencies have little institutional knowledge from which to draw reliable advice on.

Another interesting finding regarding issue dynamics is the positive influence that the number of crosscutting jurisdictions has on success in the House. Similar to the results from Chapter IV on the House, it appears that the greater number of congressional committees taking part in the House for a given issue, the greater the likelihood of legislative passage. In particular, I find that an increase in the number of

crosscutting moving from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half standard deviation above it can decrease the amount of changes to policy substance by up to 16.24%. More substantively, the mean number of crosscutting jurisdictions equals 1.64 with a half standard deviation value of about 1.2 such that movement from 1 to 3 crosscutting jurisdictions can decrease the amount of changes to policy substance by about 16%. Although this contradicts my general expectation that more crosscutting jurisdictions can lead to turf warfare between committees, it may be that the high level of agency input for this subgroup provides a more cooperative environment where committees can work together by focusing on the expert advice of agency actors to find common ground for passing a presidential initiative into law.

#### **Ideology Influence on Success in the House (Level “4”)**

As with the results for the Senate, I find that increases in ideological distance between the president and the House median pivot appear to decrease the likelihood of success in the House. Specifically, the results indicate that a change from a half standard deviation below the mean value to a half standard deviation above it can decrease the likelihood of success in the House by about 8.39%.

#### **Signaling with Agency Input: Testing for an Interactive Effect on Changes in Policy Substance**

Having thoroughly tested the models for success in Congress, I now apply the similar analyses for my models concerning changes in policy substance from proposal to passage. I argue that because agency involvement at the policy development stage along with voluminous signaling increases the likelihood of policy success, it may also be the



case that voluminous signaling in conjunction with agency input will lower the likelihood that legislators will significantly alter the substance of a given presidential policy initiative once the president formally proposes it. In other words, if presidents employ agency input for the development of a policy proposal, it is more likely that the consultation occurring during the development phase have already taken into account the preferences and suggestions of legislators (particularly key committee members) and thus decrease the need for further changes in the substance of the policy proposal (see Rudalevige 2002, 117).

In accordance with the models measuring success, I first conduct analyses that test for an overall interactive relationship between agency input and signaling using the full dataset sample of 466 observations. I find no evidence that agency input and presidential signaling have an overall interactive influence on changes in policy substance in either the Senate or the House (see Tables 17 and 18).

**Table 17 Overall Agency Input-Presidential Signaling Interactive Influence on Change in Policy Substance in the Senate, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Change in the Senate			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	++sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Policy Development</i></b>				
Level of Agency Input	-.442***	-3.60	-.3514	.1229
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	.005	.45	-	-
<b><i>Interactive Dynamic</i></b>				
Agency Input*Presidential Signaling	-.0004	-.12	-	-
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	-.045	-.17	-	-
Issue Complexity	.516***	3.25	.2163	.0830
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	-.113	-.81	-	-
Reorganization Impact	-.274*	-1.62	-.1217	.0397
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
Senate Cloture Pivot	5.739*	1.48	.6757	.1664
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	-.205	-.34	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	-.025**	-1.95	-.3240	.0711
Change in Approval	-.03**	-2.02	-.5095	.0548
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	.558**	2.22	.1117	.0542
Time in Term	.003	.48	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	-.869	-.44	-	-
N	464			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	73.63			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0000			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1258			

Dependent Variable: 0 = no change in policy substance, 1 = < 50% change, 2 = > 50% change, and 3 = mostly changed or failure

Note: Presidential style administrative dummy variables also used but not shown above

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

**Table 18 Overall Agency Input-Presidential Signaling Interactive Influence on Change in Policy Substance in the House, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

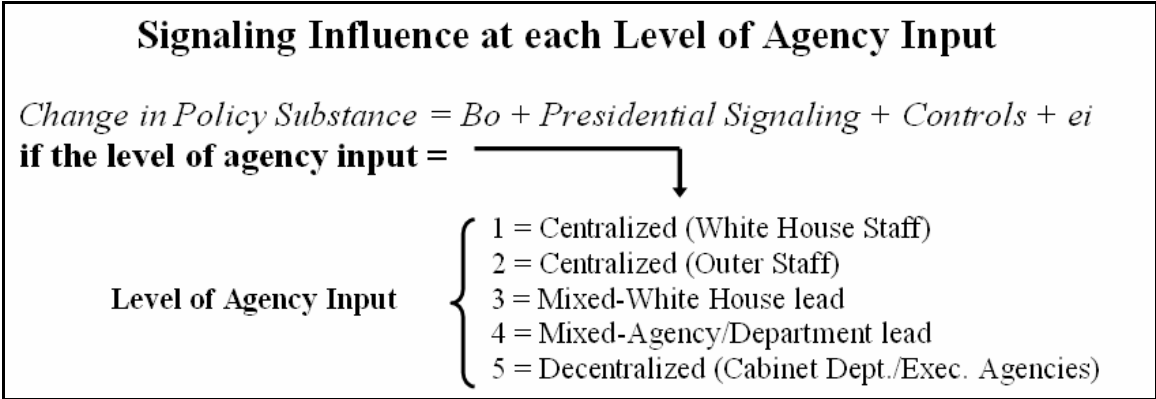
Variables	Change in the House			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	±sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Policy Development</i></b>				
Level of Agency Input	-.425***	-3.38	-.3223	.1120
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	.002	.18	-	-
<b><i>Interactive Dynamic</i></b>				
Agency Input*Presidential Signaling	.001	.28	-	-
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	-.046	-.17	-	-
Issue Complexity	.712***	4.34	.2826	.1084
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	-.112	-1.17	-	-
Reorganization Impact	-.223*	-1.32	-.0940	.0307
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
House Median Pivot	4.887*	1.75	.5531	.1684
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	.185	.33	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	-.034**	-2.54	-	-
Change in Approval	-.029*	-1.88	-	-
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	.114	.47	-	-
Time in Term	-.004	-.66	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	2.385	1.15	-	-
N	464			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	74.79			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0000			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1312			

Dependent Variable: 0 = no change in policy substance, 1 = < 50% change, 2 = > 50% change, and 3 = mostly changed or failure

Note: Presidential style administrative dummy variables also used but not shown above

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

**Figure 2 Signaling Influence at Each Level of Agency Input (Change in Policy Substance)**



The finding that agency input and presidential signaling have no overall interactive influence on changes in policy substance contradicts my fourth hypothesis, which states that more voluminous signaling at each level of agency input decreases the extent of changes in policy proposal substance from the proposal stages to the legislative outcome. Despite the contradiction, the finding is not altogether surprising given the fact that the results for signaling in Chapter V were also insignificant. As with the interactive relationships tested for the models measuring success, an interactive relationship may nevertheless exist to influence changes in policy substance from proposal to passage, but only under optimal conditions. Accordingly, I test the relationship across subgroup levels of agency input in each chamber to explore this possibility (see Figure 2).

#### **Testing Interactions within Agency Input Subgroup Levels on Changes in Policy Substance in the Senate**

In testing for an interactive relationship between agency input and presidential signaling across agency input subgroups, I find that presidential signaling interacts with agency input only in the Senate and find no reliable empirical evidence that an interaction occurs in the House. Specifically, my analyses measuring interactive influences on changes in policy substance show that the level “3” and “4” subgroups in the Senate have significant interactive relationships, but indicate no interactive relationships across subgroups in the House. Although the findings indicate no interactive effect on changes in policy substance in the House, the significant findings for the Senate provide further evidence that the employment of highly voluminous

signaling for presidential policy initiatives of mixed-decentralized origins represents the most potent and influential policymaking strategy that presidents can employ to push their policy agendas through Congress.

Before delving into the specifics of the interactive findings in the Senate (see Tables 19-23), I first briefly review the findings for the Senate level “5” subgroup analysis. I then focus in detail on the Senate level “3” and “4” subgroup findings and their implications, and thereafter provide the table results for the null findings of the House analyses.

Regarding the level “5” subgroup analysis (see Table 23), I again find no evidence of an interactive relationship between increased signaling and agency input for the subset group of the most highly decentralized initiatives (i.e., level “5”) that are a product of cabinet departments or executive agencies. As with the findings for the success models, the absence of a relationship appears due to the nature of the observations for this subgroup, which mostly consist of policy initiatives that are apolitical, routinely passed, and periodically renewed without much deliberation. Consequently, presidents typically delegate the development of these policy initiatives to cabinet departments and/or executive agencies. Because legislators are unlikely to oppose such initiatives, presidents typically submit a brief statement for their proposal rather than employ voluminous signaling (e.g., as a Special Message to Congress).

**Table 19 Level “1” Highly Centralized Inner Staff Agency Input Influence on Changes in Policy Substance in the Senate, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Change in the Senate			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	+-sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	.006	.49	-	-
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	.211	.18	-	-
Issue Complexity	.916	1.25	-	-
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	-.833***	-2.36	-.4772	.0617
Reorganization Impact	-.695*	-1.34	-.1507	.0418
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
Senate Cloture Pivot	17.525***	3.13	.9878	.1998
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	-1.443	-.97	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	-.075	-1.24	-	-
Change in Approval	-.127**	-2.54	-.5504	.0945
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	1.193	1.22	-	-
Time in Term	.016	.68	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	-.692	-.10	-	-
N	81			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	26.41			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0094			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.4296			

Dependent Variable: 0 = no change in policy substance, 1 = < 50% change, 2 = > 50% change, and 3 = mostly changed or failure

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

**Table 20 Level “2” Highly Centralized Outer Staff Agency Input Influence on Changes in Policy Substance in the Senate, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Change in the Senate			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	++sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	-4.429	-.00	-	-
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	383.7379	.02	-	-
Issue Complexity	-70.845	-.01	-	-
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	39.709	.01	-	-
Reorganization Impact	-41.932	-.00	-	-
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
Senate Cloture Pivot	8054.301	.02	-	-
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	-752.178	-.01	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	-13.587	-.00	-	-
Change in Approval	-13.328	-.00	-	-
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	-	-	-	-
Time in Term	4.189	.00	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	1419.613	.00	-	-
N	44			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	55.04			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0000			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	1.0000			

Dependent Variable: 0 = no change in policy substance, 1 = < 50% change, 2 = > 50% change, and 3 = mostly changed or failure

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*



**Table 21 Level “3” Mixed-Centralized Agency Input Influence on Changes in Policy Substance in the Senate, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Change in the Senate			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	++sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	.011**	1.76	.2267	.0733
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	.556	.93	-	-
Issue Complexity	1.003***	2.70	.3509	.1158
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	-.068	-.30	-	-
Reorganization Impact	.123	.32	-	-
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
Senate Cloture Pivot	2.11	.92	-	-
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	1.122*	1.53	.1750	.0858
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	-.005	-.19	-	-
Change in Approval	.004	.11	-	-
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	1.011**	1.73	.1421	.0746
Time in Term	.003	.23	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	-3.831	-1.25	-	-
N	123			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	25.90			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0111			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.2333			

Dependent Variable: 0 = no change in policy substance, 1 = < 50% change, 2 = > 50% change, and 3 = mostly changed or failure

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

**Table 22 Level “4” Mixed-Decentralized Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the Senate, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Change in the Senate			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	++sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	-.014*	-1.47	-.4308	.0820
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	.078	.19	-	-
Issue Complexity	.563**	1.82	.2742	.0972
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	-.211	-.81	-	-
Reorganization Impact	.249	.70	-	-
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
Senate Cloture Pivot	4.159**	2.31	.5148	.1347
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	.552	1.11	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	-.009	-.51	-	-
Change in Approval	.02	.81	-	-
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	.477	1.06	-	-
Time in Term	.009	.89	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	-.899	-.36	-	-
N	119			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	14.48			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.2713			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.0794			

Dependent Variable: 0 = no change in policy substance, 1 = < 50% change, 2 = > 50% change, and 3 = mostly changed or failure

Note: Presidential style administrative dummy variables also used but not shown above  
Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

**Table 23 Level “5” Highly Decentralized Agency Input Influence on Changes in Policy Substance in the Senate, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Change in the Senate			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	+-sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	.008	.67	-	-
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	.546	.96	-	-
Issue Complexity	.151	.41	-	-
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	.276	.53	-	-
Reorganization Impact	-.86**	-1.91	-.3938	.1201
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
Senate Cloture Pivot	3.66*	-.62	.4879	.1373
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	-.39	1.56	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	-.006	-.31	-	-
Change in Approval	-.05*	-1.41	-.5210	.0911
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	-.423	-.67	-	-
Time in Term	.01	.89	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	4.18*	1.33	.3778	.0990
N	82			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	9.57			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.6535			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1094			

Dependent Variable: 0 = no change in policy substance, 1 = < 50% change, 2 = > 50% change, and 3 = mostly changed or failure

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

In accordance with previous findings, I find that greater ideological distance between the Senate cloture pivot and the president and a deterioration of the budget situation amid increases in the deficit each increase the likelihood of changes in policy substance. On the other hand, I find that a reorganization impact at the most decentralized level, as well as a positive change in approval over time decreases the likelihood of changes to policy substance.

Having briefly described the findings for the subgroups that did not have reliable empirical evidence of an interactive relationship between agency input and presidential signaling, I next provide more detail on the findings for the level “3” and level “4” subgroups in the Senate.

#### **Level “3” Mixed-Centralized Agency Input Subgroup (Senate Change)**

In my analysis of the Senate for the level “3” subgroup (see Table 21 above), I find partial support for my hypothesis (H4) that more voluminous signaling at each level of agency input decreases the amount of changes in policy substance. According to Table 21, there is a significant and positive relationship between highly voluminous signaling of subgroup level “3” policy initiatives and decreases in the amount of changes to policy substance in the Senate. Specifically, the predicted probability results suggest that when presidential signaling for subgroup level “3” initiatives changes from its minimum to maximum value, the likelihood of changes to the policy substance of a presidential proposal in the Senate decreases by 22.67%.

Indeed, because agency involvement at the policy development stage provides opportunities for cooperation between the president, legislators, and agency actors, it

makes sense that more voluminous signaling in conjunction with agency input lowers the likelihood that legislators will look to significantly alter the substance of a given presidential policy initiative once the president formally proposes it. Thus, if presidents employ agency input for the development of a policy proposal, it is more likely that the consultation occurring during the development phase has already taken into account the preferences and suggestions of legislators (particularly key committee members) and thus decreased the need for further changes in the substance of the policy proposal (see Rudalevige 2002, 117).

In sum, presidents are wise to prepare their initiatives in a way that allows them to interact—through consultation and cooperation—with agency actors and legislators so that they can better gauge the political landscape and the obstacles it presents to successful policy passage. As I noted with the previous analyses, presidents should take advantage of the opportunity to revise and improve their initiatives in a manner that will help maximize their likelihood of success once they deliver their proposals to the Congress. In accordance with the findings for the Senate regarding changes in policy substance, putting forth a greater effort to prepare presidential initiatives at the development stage is well worth the higher up-front managerial costs given that it will likely increase the likelihood that legislators will not significantly alter or reject the major components of their initiatives.

### **Control Variable Results for Changes in Policy Substance in the Senate (Level “3”)**

Concerning the impact that issue dynamics have on changes in policy substance in the Senate for the level “3” subgroup of agency input, I find that issue complexity has

a significant influence in increasing the amount of changes in policy substance. Specifically, the predicted probability scores indicate that the likelihood of changes in policy substance in the Senate may increase by about 11.58% moving from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half standard deviation above it. Substantively, given that the mean level of complexity is 2.042 on a three-point scale with a half standard deviation value of about .764, a full deviation shift up can increase the likelihood of changes to policy substance by nearly 12%. Indeed, complex proposals are harder for the president to pass through Congress because they are likely to lead to competing sources of bureaucratic advice (see Rudalevige 2002, 129).

With regards to majority control, the results indicate that the presence of divided government significantly increases the likelihood of changes to policy substance by approximately 17.05%. This result is consistent with the literature and all my previous analyses from Chapter V. Thus, although higher levels of agency input may squelch ideological differences, legislators in a divided government scenario may nevertheless fall back on their party loyalties in wanted to revise or recompose a bill proposed by a president of the opposing party.

Last for the level “3” subgroup, I find that cases where the Senate acts as the “first mover” chamber increases the likelihood that legislators will make changes to the substance of a presidential proposal. In particular, the predicted probability results suggest that acting as the first mover chamber increases the likelihood of changes to policy substance by about 14.21%.

**Level “4” Mixed-Decentralized Agency Input Subgroup (Senate Change)**

As with the analysis of the Senate for the level “3” subgroup, the findings for the level “4” subgroup provide further support for my hypothesis (H4) that more voluminous signaling at each level of agency input decreases the amount of changes in policy substance. According to Table 22, there is a significant and positive relationship between highly voluminous signaling of subgroup level “4” policy initiatives and decreases in the amount of changes to policy substance in the Senate. Specifically, the predicted probability results suggest that when presidential signaling for subgroup level “4” initiatives changes from its minimum to maximum value, the likelihood of changes to the policy substance of a presidential proposal in the Senate decreases by 43.08%.

These results indicate that although increased agency input and more voluminous signaling do not have an overall interactive influence on changes in policy substance, it is specifically when highly voluminous signaling occurs *in conjunction* with a high level of agency input consisting of mixed-decentralized origins with agencies/departments leading policy development that the likelihood of changes in policy substance in the Senate decreases significantly.

As with the Senate results for success, such findings demonstrate that presidents are able to keep their policy proposals in their original form when developing them using the advice of agency actors. The conundrum, however, is that presidents may face instances where the available agency advice significantly contradicts their own policy preferences. In such cases, presidents must choose between maximizing preferences at the risk of failure or compromising heavily for the sake of success. Of course, as a third

alternative, presidents may also attempt some sort of trade-off that keeps the general scope of the president's preferences in tact while also taking advantage of agency expertise when it comes to the nuances of the policy details in a given proposal. These considerations and the manner that presidents can begin to outline a theoretical framework for better understanding the role of presidential-agency compatibility in the policy making process are described in more detail in the future studies section of the concluding chapter.

#### **Control Variable Results for Changes in Policy Substance in the Senate (Level "4")**

With regards to the impact that issue dynamics have on changes in policy substance in the Senate for the level "4" subgroup of agency input, I find that only issue complexity has a significant influence. Specifically, the predicted probability scores indicate that the likelihood of changes in policy substance in the Senate may increase by about 9.72% moving from a half standard deviation below the mean to a half standard deviation above it. Substantively, given that the mean level of complexity is 2.042 on a three-point scale with a half standard deviation value of about .764, a full deviation shift up can increase the likelihood of changes to policy substance by nearly 10%. Indeed, complex proposals are harder for the president to pass through Congress because they are likely to lead to competing sources of bureaucratic advice (see Rudalevige 2002, 129).

Similar to my findings in previous chapters, I find that increases in ideological distance between the president and the Senate cloture pivot appear to increase the amount of changes in policy substance from proposal to legislative passage.



Specifically, the results indicate that a change from a half standard deviation below the mean value to a half standard deviation above it can increase the likelihood of changes to policy substance by about 13.47%.

### **Testing Interactions within Agency Input Subgroup Levels on Changes in Policy Substance in the House**

Unlike all the previous groups of analyses in this chapter, the findings for measuring changes in policy substance in the House suggest that no interactive relationship between agency input and signaling exists. Given that agency input and signaling together do provide increased levels of policy success, the null findings here demonstrate that the interactive influence on changes in policy substance are simply not as prevalent in the House as they are in the Senate. Although the results for all subgroups in the House were insignificant, I provide the table results for comparative purposes (see Tables 24-28).

**Table 24 Level “1” Highly Centralized Inner Staff Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the House, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Change in the House			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	++sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	.012	.88	-	-
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	-1.308*	-1.46	-.1034	.0558
Issue Complexity	.27	.43	-	-
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	.748**	1.76	.2759	.0893
Reorganization Impact	-1.284***	-2.63	-.3755	.0859
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
House Median Pivot	2.442	1.00	-	-
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	.965	.96	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	-.033	-.59	-	-
Change in Approval	-.087**	-1.71	-.3714	.0700
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	-.37	-.42	-	-
Time in Term	.007	.45	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	3.07	.43	-	-
N	81			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	21.46			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0440			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.3199			

Dependent Variable: 0 = no change in policy substance, 1 = < 50% change, 2 = > 50% change, and 3 = mostly changed or failure

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

**Table 25 Level “2” Highly Centralized Outer Staff Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the House, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Change in the House			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	++sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	-.048**	-1.81	.	.
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	-	-	-	-
Issue Complexity	-.596	-.53	-	-
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	-.719	-.89	-	-
Reorganization Impact	-.826	-.75	-	-
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
House Median Pivot	11.688*	.37	.	.
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	.663	1.51	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	-.038	-.76	-	-
Change in Approval	-.021	-.48	-	-
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	-2.382*	-1.45	.	.
Time in Term	-.001	-.11	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	7.219	.58	-	-
N	39			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	27.90			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0034			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.4062			

Dependent Variable: 0 = no change in policy substance, 1 = < 50% change, 2 = > 50% change, and 3 = mostly changed or failure

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

**Table 26 Level “3” Mixed-Centralized Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the House, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Change in the House			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	+-sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	.011	1.21	-	-
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	-.44	-.77	-	-
Issue Complexity	1.01***	2.86	.3303	.1065
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	-.162	-.81	-	-
Reorganization Impact	.114	.34	-	-
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
House Median Pivot	2.865*	1.60	.2456	.0693
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	.563	.89	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	-.014	-.58	-	-
Change in Approval	-.006	-.14	-	-
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	-.003	-.01	-	-
Time in Term	-.003	-.28	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	-1.475	-.49	-	-
N	123			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	21.53			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0432			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1866			

Dependent Variable: 0 = no change in policy substance, 1 = < 50% change, 2 = > 50% change, and 3 = mostly changed or failure

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

**Table 27 Level “4” Mixed-Decentralized Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the House, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Change in the House			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	++sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	-.007	-.78	-	-
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	.214	.49	-	-
Issue Complexity	.991**	2.97	.4544	.1655
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	-.434**	-1.88	-.7123	.1542
Reorganization Impact	.251	.71	-	-
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
House Median Pivot	1.245	.85	-	-
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	.274	.57	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	-.031**	-1.76	-.4329	.1037
Change in Approval	.023	.81	-	-
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	.153	.33	-	-
Time in Term	.002	.23	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	.897	.33	-	-
N	119			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	17.86			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.1199			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1162			

Dependent Variable: 0 = no change in policy substance, 1 = < 50% change, 2 = > 50% change, and 3 = mostly changed or failure

Note: Presidential style administrative dummy variables also used but not shown above

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

**Table 28 Level “5” Highly Decentralized Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the House, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

Variables	Change in the House			
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Min->Max	+-sd/2
<b><i>Presidential Signaling</i></b>				
Proposal Volume	.006	.48	-	-
<b><i>Issue Dynamics</i></b>				
Issue Novelty	.953**	1.75	.2263	.1147
Issue Complexity	.55*	1.56	.2611	.1020
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	-.271	-1.02	-	-
Reorganization Impact	-.554	-1.23	-	-
<b><i>Ideology</i></b>				
House Median Pivot	3.193*	.96	.4280	.1438
<b><i>Majority Control</i></b>				
Divided Government	.595	1.57	-	-
<b><i>Public Opinion</i></b>				
Presidential Approval	-.003*	-1.32	-.4047	.1142
Change in Approval	-.069**	-1.85	-.6389	.1224
<b><i>Temporal Factors</i></b>				
“First Mover” Chamber	1.458**	2.19	.3492	.1504
Time in Term	-.007	-.75	-	-
<b><i>Budgetary Situation</i></b>				
Deficit	7.128**	1.88	-.1684	.0488
N	82			
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	21.03			
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0499			
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1717			

Dependent Variable: 0 = no change in policy substance, 1 = < 50% change, 2 = > 50% change, and 3 = mostly changed or failure

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

## Summary

The interactive relationship between agency input and presidential signaling and its influence of policy success and changes in policy substance is more complex and nuanced than I hypothesized. Indeed, of all the models testing for an overall interactive effect, none provided any significant findings of such a relationship. Instead, I find that it is only for the specific subgroup level “4” of agency input (i.e. of mixed-decentralized origins with agencies/departments leading policy development) that a significant interactive effect exists. More specifically, I find that more voluminous signaling at such high level of agency input significantly increases the likelihood of policy success in both chambers, but only significantly decreases the amount of changes to policy substance in the Senate.

As a recommendation for improved presidential policy making, I thus argue that presidents should place a greater focus on their managerial strategies for developing and proposing their policy initiatives. Rather than simply centralizing the process to lower front-end costs and then relying mostly strategies such as going public or legislative coalition building to pass their initiatives into law, presidents should instead put forth a greater effort at the development stage to prepare their initiatives in a manner that improves their substance and bureaucratic legitimacy. More specifically, presidents must prepare their initiatives in a way that allows them to interact—through consultation and cooperation—with agency actors and legislators so that they can better gauge the political landscape and the obstacles it presents to successful policy passage. In doing so, presidents should take advantage of the opportunity to revise and improve their

initiatives in a manner that will help maximize their likelihood of success once they deliver their proposals to the Congress.

Built on the findings of Chapters IV and V, which provided solid evidence that agency input aids presidential policy making in substantial ways, the interactive effects uncovered in this chapter provide further evidence of how strategic presidential management in policy development and policy leadership in the legislative arena influences the policy making process. In addition, the findings also leave open the door to other questions regarding presidential-agency compatibility. Specifically, although the analyses of this study have shown that agency input increases success and lowers the likelihood of changes to policy substance, it remains to be discussed how the level of compatibility influences the development of presidential policy proposals. Specifically, scholars must also determine how presidential-agency compatibility can influence the presidential decisions on whether to employ agency input, the extent to which a president might compromise on certain policy preferences to gain agency support rather (than centralize the process to maximize personal preferences), and what role presidential-congressional compatibility and congressional-agency compatibility play in the process as well.



## CHAPTER VII

### CONCLUSION

Sitting atop the executive branch as head of state, the president is poised to lead the country in every facet of governance. This study has focused on the president's role in leading the policy making process, both from within the executive branch and in the legislative arena. As I stated at the beginning of this study, one of the major challenges presidents face in this task is in developing legislative policy proposals and then persuading members of Congress to pass them into law. Because the Constitution bounds presidents to share their power with the legislative branch, presidents depend heavily on Congress to enact their policy goals. Once presidents formally proposes their initiatives, they leave them at the hands of legislators who decide whether to consider them, alter their substance, and, depending on the overall level of opposition in legislative scrutiny, whether to pass them into law.

Although scholars have gone to great lengths to examine the agenda setting stage (i.e. the policy proposal stage) and legislative outcomes, very little attention has been paid to the development stage of the policy making process. More importantly, almost no attention has been given to consider how presidential management of the policy development stage influences presidential performance in the legislative arena. As a result, scholars have overlooked a key piece of the puzzle that explains why, when, and how presidents are more likely to succeed in achieving their policy goals by passing their initiatives through the Congress.

Indeed, scholars have amassed a large volume of research that addresses the various environmental constraints presidents face in moving policy through Congress. Among other things, this research addresses the ideological and partisan barriers a president can face in trying to build a legislative coalition of support for a given policy, the influence that public opinion has on presidential and legislative behavior (and the sheer difficulty of trying to move opinion), structural factors regarding the bicameral structure of the legislative branch, and so on. However, our knowledge of the president's managerial role in policy development and its influence on legislative outcomes has garnered far less attention.

As I explained at the outset of this study, within the rich descriptive literature on the managerial presidency there is some research on policy development and policy making, which argues generally that presidents should centralize the policy making process. Led by Moe's (1985) work, the underlying argument is that centralized policy development lowers managerial costs and relies on the input of president's inner-circle of advisors who are capable of providing "responsive" competence. However, more recent work demonstrates the drawbacks to such an approach, particularly in that it can increase overall transaction costs once the president formally proposes an initiative to Congress and thus decrease the likelihood of policy success. This dissertation has challenged the mainstream assumption that centralized policy development is more advantageous for policy making success. In doing so, I have demonstrated that greater efforts to develop policy initiatives with the more expert and objective advice of agency actors can have significant payoffs for presidential policy making performance.

My empirical analyses demonstrate that the use of agency input to develop presidential policy initiatives significantly increases the likelihood that presidents will succeed in passing their policy proposals into law and decreases the amount of changes to policy substance from the proposal stage to legislative passage. I also find that more voluminous signaling with high levels of agency input presents a particularly potent, positive influence on presidential policy making success in Congress.

The finding that increased agency input significantly increases legislative success and that increased agency input is particularly potent when presented in highly voluminous messages provides presidents with a new perspective of the policy making process and new incentives to consider in their policy making endeavors. Thus, rather than focus primarily on their personal political preferences, presidents should prioritize their initiatives in a manner that first considers whether agency input can be implemented in a manner consistent with their general policy preferences.

With regards to policy development, despite assertions in past research arguing that presidents should seek to centralize control of the policy development process (i.e., Moe 1985), the findings here indicate that presidents are more likely to achieve policy success in Congress by exerting more energy in developing policy initiatives for proposal to Congress. Thus, regardless of the issue at hand, presidents are more likely to succeed by using a more mixed approach with agencies taking the lead because legislators are more likely to view any issue at that level as more bureaucratically legitimate and less political in nature. More specifically, legislators—particularly partisan opponents of the president—are more likely to consider the passage of a

proposal seriously if they observe that the president has made a clear effort to incorporate the objectivity and expertise of agency actors and earn their support for implementation of said proposal.

Concerning the interactive influence that occurs for level “4” initiatives proposed as highly voluminous messages, the findings confirm that presidents are particularly likely to maximize success by signaling to Congress that they have made a sincere effort to develop a legitimate policy solution and that such a solution is of the highest priority for the public agenda. In contrast, although voluminous signaling of more centralized policy initiatives also confers to legislators that such initiatives are of the highest priority, the origin of such initiative as a product of inner-circle presidential advisors makes it unlikely that greater emphasis alone can convince partisan opponents that the initiative represents a legitimate policy prescription that rises above partisan politics. This is not to say that highly centralized and ideologically driven policy initiatives cannot represent legitimate solutions, but to emphasize that political opponents are more likely to view such initiatives through an ideological lens and therefore far less likely to see past any ideological differences to support such initiatives in a bipartisan manner. Instead, it is by earning the endorsement of agencies that presidents can create a perception of bureaucratic legitimacy, which signals to legislators that their actions represent a sincere effort towards effective policy making for serving the public good.

### **Future Studies**

In this dissertation, I have taken some important steps in exploring the role and value of agency input in presidential policy development and its influence on

presidential policy making performance in the legislative arena. My findings also leave open the door to researching other questions, primarily regarding (1) the influence of politicization on the value and potential of agency input, (2) the development of a more nuanced understanding of the networking and communications that occur between agency actors and the president, and (3) the incorporation and measurement of the concept of presidential-agency compatibility. Accordingly, I will briefly outline my plans for addressing these nuances as part of my ongoing research agenda.

The concept of politicization implies active presidential efforts to undermine the neutrality of agencies in favor of realigning their preferences – whether through redesign or repopulation – with the preferences of those at work in the Oval Office. Beyond this general conceptual framework, there are several ways in which this vague premise can become practice, such as through the addition of political appointees on top of existing career civil service employees or the placement of loyal political appointees into important bureaucratic posts formerly held by career professionals (see Hecló 1975; Lewis 2005, 498). It is important to take into account how politicization influences the relative objectivity and expertise of a given agency over time. Specifically, I will continue working towards the development of a more nuanced measure of the president's use of agency input that not only estimates the general involvement of an agency, but also controls for the extent to which an agency has been politicized. By doing so, I will be better able to discern between symbolic versus tangible employment of objective and expert agency input.

My theoretical framework has emphasized that the difference in the level of objectivity and expertise between the president's inner-circle advisors and that of agency actors is relative. In particular, I have emphasized that although agency input is not absolute in its objectivity and expertise, it is nonetheless presumed to be relatively more so than the input of inner-circle advisors. The findings on how agency input increases presidential policymaking success and decreases changes in policy substance indicate that, relatively speaking, a more objective and expert-based approach to policy development is more likely to aid the president's policy making efforts. Nevertheless, a more nuanced approach is necessary to better distinguish between symbolic and substantive measures of agency objectivity and expertise.

Because politicization represents a deterioration of objectivity and expertise, legislators, particularly partisan opponents of the president, have reason to doubt the validity of input derived from a highly politicized agency. Implicit in my theoretical framework and in the discussion of the findings is the notion that legislators can tell the difference between a partisan versus a more objective approach towards presidential policy making. Accordingly, politicization is presumably one of the factors that may influence whether legislators view a given initiative as legitimate. To this point, I have presumed that legislators can generally distinguish between genuine versus symbolic approaches to employing agency input and that symbolic approaches entailing politicized agency staff are less likely to succeed than the genuine, more objective input of dedicated career civil servants. However, by incorporating more nuanced measures that take into account the influence of politicization, I can develop a better understanding

of when and under what conditions agency input is most effective in helping presidents move legislation through Congress.

Another important step I can take to build on our understanding of presidential-agency relations is to measure more precisely how, when, and to what extent presidents employ agency input. As a way to build on the ordinal measure of centralization as employed in this study, I plan to delve more deeply into the legislative prehistory of presidential initiatives in order to collect information on the networking and communication that occurs between presidents, their inner-circle staff, and agency actors in the development of presidential initiatives. In doing so, I will be able to better discern what kinds of interactions can best aid presidents in seeking out their policy agendas. Accordingly, I will explore how presidential-agency interactions may influence the manner that agency involvement translates into policy outcomes, and not only concerning success and changes in policy substance, but also with respect to policy implementation and its long-term effects.

Last, I plan to explore how presidential-agency compatibility (i.e. the extent to which a president's ideological beliefs and policy preferences concerning a given issue line up with those of a given agency) influences presidential management of the policy making process and its impact on presidential performance in the legislative arena. Specifically, I plan to explore how presidential-agency compatibility can influence presidential decisions on whether to employ agency input, the extent to which a president may compromise on certain policy preferences to gain agency support (rather than centralize the process to maximize personal preferences), and what role

presidential-congressional compatibility and congressional-agency compatibility play in the policy making process.

Although the findings of my dissertation demonstrate that agency input increases success and lowers the likelihood of changes to policy substance, how the level of compatibility influences the development of presidential policy proposals remains an open question for scholars. From the perspective of the Oval Office, presidents must make a difficult choice: are they better off trying to maximize their personal policy preferences or is it in their own best interests to seek the more objective and expert-based opinion of agency civil servants? In making such a decision, presidents should consider the overall level of compatibility between themselves, the agencies at hand, and Congress to decide the extent to which they can and are willing to employ agency input.

Before exploring how presidents have dealt with compatibility in the past and prescribing how they might maximize policy making in the future, I must first tackle the challenge of coming up with reliable measures of agency preferences. Thus far, scholars have employed only loose proxy dichotomous measures that capture party changes in the Congress and White House. Although more recent studies have begun to develop ideological measures across agencies (see Clinton and Lewis 2008), such measures are still inherently subjective, do not cover all agencies, and do not vary overtime. Generally speaking, it may be necessary to develop a wide variety of measures and to test them thoroughly in order to develop a truly valid measure and operationalization of agency preferences that can accurately capture the dynamics and importance of compatibility in the presidential-agency relationship.



In all, this dissertation has provided new avenues for understanding presidential policy making. Uniting research on presidential policy making with the knowledge and theories of bureaucratic policy making, this study introduced a theoretical framework for addressing the role and value of agency input in presidential legislative policy making. Given the strong evidence that agency input is a key ingredient to successful presidential policy making, I conclude that presidents can greatly benefit from employing a policy making strategy with agency input at its core. I hope that this conclusion provides an impetus for scholars to reconsider conventional wisdom regarding presidential-bureaucratic management and legislative policy making and also challenges them to build upon and expand our understanding of the president's role in the policy making process.

## REFERENCES

- Anderson, James. E. 1997. *Public Policymaking*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.
- Bailey, Michael, Lee Sigelman, and Clyde Wilcox. 2003. "Presidential Persuasion on Social Issues: A Two-Way Street?" *Political Research Quarterly* 56(1): 49-58.
- Balla, Steven J. 1998. "Administrative Procedures and Political Control of the Bureaucracy." *American Political Science Review* 92(3): 663-73.
- Balla, Steven J. 2000. "Legislative Organization and Congressional Review of Agency Regulations." *Journal of Law and Economic Organization* 16(2): 424-448.
- Balla, Steven J., and John R. Wright. 2001. "Interest Groups, Advisory Committees, and Congressional Control of Bureaucracy." *American Journal of Political Science* 45(4): 799-812.
- Baumgartner, Frank R., and Bryan D. Jones. 1993. *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Bawn, Kathleen. 1995. "Political Control versus Expertise: Congressional Choices about Administrative Procedures." *American Political Science Review* 89: 62-73.
- Bawn, Kathleen. 1997. "Choosing Strategies to Control the Bureaucracy: Statutory Constraints, Oversight, and the Committee System." *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 13: 101-126.
- Bertelli, Anthony M., and Christian R. Grose. 2006. "Secretaries of Pork? Executive Ideology, Multiple Bureaucratic Principles, and Distributive Public Policy." Unpublished manuscript, Athens: University of Georgia.
- Bond, Jon R., and Richard Fleisher. 1990. *The President in the Legislative Arena*.

Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Bond, Jon R., Richard Fleisher, and B. Dan Wood. 2003. "The Marginal and Time Varying Effect of Public Approval on Presidential Success in Congress." *Journal of Politics* 65(1): 92-110.
- Brady, David W, and Craig Volden. 2006. *Revolving Gridlock: Politics and Policy from Jimmy Carter to George W. Bush*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Burke, John P. 2000. *The Institutional Presidency: Organizing and Managing the White House from FDR to Clinton*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Cameron, Charles. 2000. *Veto Bargaining: President and the Politics of Negative Power*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cameron, Charles, and Jee-Kwang Park. 2006. "A Primer on the President's Legislative Program." In *Presidential Leadership: The Vortex of Power*, eds. B. A. Rockman and R. W. Waterman. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 45-79.
- Campbell, Colin, and Donalds Naulls. 1991. "The Limits of the Budget-Maximizing Theory: Some Evidence from Officials' Views of Their Roles and Careers." In *The Budget-Maximizing Bureaucrat: Appraisals and Evidence*, eds. A. Blais and S. Dion. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 85-118.
- Canes-Wrone, Brandice. 2001. "The President's Legislative Influence from Public Appeals." *American Journal of Political Science* 45(2): 313-29.
- Canes-Wrone, Brandice. 2006. *Who Leads Whom? Presidents, Policy, and the Public*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Canes-Wrone, Brandice, and Scott de Marchi. 2002. "Presidential Approval and

- Legislative Success.” *Journal of Politics* 64: 491-509.
- Carmines, Edward G., and James A. Stimson. 1980. “The Two Faces of Issue Voting.” *American Political Science Review* 74: 78-91.
- Clinton, Joshua D., and David. E. Lewis. 2008. “Expert Opinion, Agency Characteristics, and Agency Preferences.” *Political Analysis*, 16(1), 3-16.
- Coase, Ronald H. 1937. “The Nature of the Firm.” *Econometrica* 16(4): 386-405.
- Coase, Ronald H. 1990. “Accounting and the Theory of the Firm.” *Journal of Accounting and Economics* 12: 3-13.
- Cohen, Jeffrey E. 1986. “The Dynamics of the ‘Revolving Door’ on the FCC.” *American Journal of Political Science* 30(4): 689-708.
- Conley, Richard S. 2003. *The Presidency, Congress, and Divided Government*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press.
- Edwards, George C. III. 1980. *Presidential Influence in Congress*. San Francisco: W. H. Freeman.
- Edwards, George C. III. 1989. *At the Margins: Presidential Leadership of Congress*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Edwards, George C., III. 2001. “Why Not the Best? The Loyalty-Competence Trade-Off in Presidential Appointments.” *Brookings Review* 19(2): 12-16.
- Edwards, George C., III. 2002. “Strategic Choices and the Early Bush Legislative Agenda.” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 35(1): 41-45.
- Edwards, George C. III. 2003. *On Deaf Ears: The Limits of the Bully Pulpit*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

- Edwards, George C. III., and Andrew Barrett. 2000. "Presidential Agenda Setting in Congress." In *Polarized Politics: Congress and the President in a Partisan Era*, eds. J. R. Bond and R. Fleisher. Washington, DC: CQ Press, 109-33.
- Epstein, David and Sharyn O'Halloran. 1994. "Administrative Procedures, Information and Agency Discretion." *American Journal of Political Science* 38(August): 697-722.
- Epstein, David and Sharyn O'Halloran. 1999. *Delegating Powers: A Transaction Cost Politics Approach to Policymaking under Separate Powers*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Esbaugh-Soha, Matthew. 2006. *The President's Speeches: Beyond "Going Public."* Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.
- Esbaugh-Soha, Matthew. 2008. "The Impact of Presidential Speeches on the Bureaucracy." *Social Science Quarterly* 89(1): 116–132.
- Fisher, Louis. 1998. *The Politics of Shared Power: Congress and the Executive*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press.
- Ginsberg, B. 2007. *The American Lie: Government by the People and Other Political Fables*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.
- Golden, Marissa M. 2000. *What Motivates Bureaucrats? Politics and Administration During the Reagan Years*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Goodwin, Doris Kearns. 1991. *Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Groseclose, Tim, and David C. King. 1998. "Little Theatre: Committees in Congress."

- In *Great Theatre: The American Congress in the 1990s*, eds. H. F. Weisberg and S. C. Patterson. New York: Cambridge University Press, 135-151.
- Groseclose, Tim, Steven D. Levitt, and James M. Snyder. 1999. "Comparing Interest Group Scores across Time and Chambers: Adjusted ADA Scores for the U.S. Congress." *American Political Science Review* 93: 33-50.
- Gruber, J.E. 1987. *Controlling Bureaucracies*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Hall, Peter A., and Rosemary C.R. Taylor. 1996. "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms." *Political Studies* 44(5): 936-57.
- Hart, John. 1995. *The Presidential Branch: From Washington to Clinton*. Chatham, NJ: Chatham House.
- Heclo, Hugh. 1975. "OMB and the Presidency – The Problem of Neutral Competence." *Public Interest* 38(Winter): 80-98.
- Heclo, Hugh. 1999. "OMB and Neutral Competence." In *The Managerial Presidency*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, ed. J. P. Pfiffner. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 131-143.
- Hess, Stephen. 2002. *Organizing the Presidency*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.
- Jones, Charles O. 2005. *The Presidency in a Separated System*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.
- Kerwin, C. M. 2007. *The Management of Regulation Development: Out of the Shadows*. Washington, DC: IBM Center for the Business of Government, 2008 Presidential Transition Series.

- King, David C. 1997. *Turf Wars*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Krause, George A. 2004. "The Secular Decline in Presidential Domestic Policymaking: An Organizational Perspective." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 34(December): 779-792.
- Krehbiel, Keith. 1998. *Pivotal Politics: a Theory of U.S. Lawmaking*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lewis, David E. 2005. "Staffing Alone: Unilateral Action and the Politicization of the Executive Office of the President, 1988-2004." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 35(September): 496-514.
- Light, Paul C. 1999. *The President's Agenda: Domestic Policy Choice from Kennedy to Clinton*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Lipsky, Michael. 1980. *Street-Level Bureaucrats*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Long, Norton E. 1952. "Bureaucracy and Constitutionalism." *American Political Science Review* 46(3): 808-818.
- Mashaw, J. L. 1997. *Greed, Chaos, and Governance: Using Public Choice to Improve Public Law*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Meier, Kenneth J., and Laurence J. O'Toole. 2006. *Bureaucracy in a Democratic State: A Governance Perspective*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Milgrom, Paul, and John Roberts. 1990. "Bargaining Costs, Influence Costs, and the Organization of Economic Activity." In *Perspectives on Positive Political Economy*, eds. J. Alt and K. Shepsle. New York: Cambridge University Press, 57-89.

- Miller, Gary J. 1993. "Formal Theory and the Presidency." In *Researching the Presidency: Vital Questions, New Approaches*, eds. G. C. Edwards III, J. H. Kessel, and B. A. Rockman. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 289-336.
- Moe, Terry M. 1982. "Regulatory Performance and Presidential Administration." *American Journal of Political Science* 26(February): 197-224.
- Moe, Terry M. 1985. "The Politicized Presidency." In *The New Direction in American Politics*, eds. J. Chubb and P. E. Peterson. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 235-271.
- Moe, Terry M., and Scott A. Wilson. 1994. "Presidents and Political Structure." *Law and Contemporary Problems* 57: 1-44.
- Nathan, Richard. 1983. *The Administrative Presidency*. New York: Wiley.
- Neustadt, Richard E. 1955. "Presidency and Legislation: Planning the President's Program." *American Political Science Review* 49(4): 980-1021.
- Neustadt, Richard E. 1960. *Presidential Power: The Politics of Leadership*. New York: Norton.
- Neustadt, Richard E. 1990. *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan*. New York: Free Press.
- Niskanen, William A. 1971. *Bureaucracy and Representative Government*. Chicago: Aldine Atherton.
- Niskanen, William A. 1991. "A Reflection on Bureaucracy and Representative Government." In *The Budget-maximizing Bureaucrat: Appraisals and Evidence*, eds. A. Blais and S. Dion. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 13-22.



- Nixon, David C. 2004. "Separation of Powers and Appointee Ideology." *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 20(2): 438-57.
- North, Douglass C. 1990. "A Transactions Cost Theory of Politics." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 2(4): 355-67.
- O'Leary, Rosemary. 1994. "The Bureaucratic Politics Paradox: The Case of Wetlands Legislation in Nevada." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 4(4): 443-467.
- Oleszek, Walter J. 1996. *Congressional Procedures and the Policy Process*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- O'Toole, Laurence J., Jr., and Kenneth J. Meier. 2002. "Plus ça Change: Public Management, Personnel Stability, and Organizational Performance." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 13(1): 43-64.
- Peterson, Mark A. 1984. "The President's Legislative Program: More than Meets the 'Eye'?" Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, April 1984.
- Peterson, Mark A. 1990. *Legislating Together: The White House and Capitol Hill from Eisenhower to Reagan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pfiffner, James P. 1996. *The Strategic Presidency*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.
- Pfiffner, James P. 1999. *The Managerial Presidency*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. College Station: Texas A&M University Press.
- Poole, Keith T. 2005. *Spatial Models of Parliamentary Voting*. New York: Cambridge

University Press.

Poole, Keith T., and Howard Rosenthal. 1997. *Congress: A Political-Economic History of Roll Call Voting*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Ragsdale, Lyn, and John J. Theis, III. 1997. "The Institutionalization of the American Presidency, 1924-92." *American Journal of Political Science* 41(October): 1280-1318.

Rinquist, Evan J. 1995. "Political Control and Policy Impact in EPA's Office of Water Quality." *American Journal of Political Science* 39(May): 336-63.

Rosenbloom, David H. 2000. *Building a Legislative-Centered Public Administration: Congress and the Administrative State, 1946-1999*. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press.

Rosenbloom, David H. 2001. "Retrofitting the Administrative State to the Constitution: Congress and the Judiciary's Twentieth-Century Progress." *Public Administration Review* 60(1): 39-46.

Rourke, Francis E. 1981. "Grappling with the Bureaucracy." In *Politics and the Oval Office: Towards Presidential Governance*, ed. A. J. Meltsner. San Francisco, CA: Institute for Contemporary Studies, 123-140.

Rourke, Frances E. 1992. "Political Responsiveness and Neutral Competence in American Bureaucracy." *Public Administration Review* 52(6): 539-546.

Rudalevige, Andrew. 2002. *Managing the President's Program: Presidential Leadership and Legislative Policy Formulation*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

- Seidman, Harold, and Robert Gilmour. 1986. *Politics, Position and Power*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Shepsle, Kenneth A. 1989. "The Changing Textbook Congress." In *Can the Government Govern?*, eds. J. Chubb and P. E. Peterson. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 238-267.
- Snyder, Susan K., and Barry R. Weingast. 2000. "The American System of Shared Powers: The President, Congress, and the NLRB." *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 16(2): 269-305.
- Walcott, Charles E., and Karen M. Hult. 1995. *Governing the White House: From Hoover through LBJ*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.
- Walcott, Charles E., and Karen M. Hult. 2005. "White House Structure and Decision Making: Elaborating the Standard Model." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 35(June): 303-31.
- Weko, Thomas J. 1995. *The Politicizing Presidency: The White House Personnel Office, 1948-1994*. Kansas: University Press of Kansas.
- West, William F. 2004. "Formal Procedures, Informal Processes, Accountability, and Responsiveness in Bureaucratic Policy Making: An Institutional Policy Analysis." *Public Administration Review* 64(1):66-80.
- West, William F. 2005. Neutral Competence and Political Responsiveness: An Uneasy Relationship. *Policy Studies Journal* 33(2): 147-60.
- Williamson, Oliver E. 1979. "Transaction-Cost Economics: The Governance of Contractual Relations." *Journal of Law and Economics* 22: 23-58.

- Williamson, Oliver E. 1996. *The Mechanisms of Governance*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Williamson, Oliver E. 1998. "Transaction Cost Economics: How It Works; Where It Is Headed." *De Economist* 146(1): 23-58.
- Williamson, Oliver E., and Scott Masten. 1995. *Transaction Cost Economics, vol. II*. Brookfield, VT: Edward Elgar Publishing Company.
- Wilson, James Q. 1989. *Bureaucracy*. New York: Basic Books.
- Wolf, Patrick J. 1999. "Neutral and Responsive Competence: The Bureau of the Budget, 1939-1948." *Administration & Society* 31(1): 142-67.
- Wood, B. Dan, and James E. Anderson. 1993. "The Politics of U.S. Antitrust Regulation." *American Journal of Political Science* 37(February): 1-39.
- Wood, B. Dan, and Richard Waterman. 1991. "The Dynamics of Political Control of the Bureaucracy." *American Political Science Review* 85(September): 801-28.
- Wood, B. Dan, and Richard Waterman. 1993. "The Dynamics of Political Control of the Bureaucracy Adaptation." *American Journal of Political Science* 37(May): 497-528.

## APPENDIX

**Table A-1 Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the Senate, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

	Success Model 1 for the Senate		Success Model 2 for the Senate		Success Model 3 for the Senate	
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Coefficients	Z-Score	Coefficients	Z-Score
Agency Input (Decentralization)	.421***	4.67	.422***	4.72	.426***	4.75
Presidential Signaling	.006**	1.65	.006**	1.68	.006**	1.74
Issue Novelty	.206	.78	.204	.78	.232	.88
Issue Complexity	.094	.62	.089	.59	.107	.70
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	.098	.71	.117	.85	.125	.90
Reorganization Impact	-.207	-.13	-.007	-.04	-.016	-.10
<b><i>Senate Cloture Pivot</i></b>	<b><i>-7.86**</i></b>	<b><i>-2.53</i></b>	-	-	-	-
<b><i>Divided Government</i></b>	-	-	<b><i>-.613*</i></b>	<b><i>-1.29</i></b>	-	-
<b><i>Percentage Seats in Senate</i></b>	-	-	-	-	<b><i>.092**</i></b>	<b><i>2.32</i></b>
Presidential Approval	.032**	2.55	.029**	2.30	.03**	2.41
Change in Approval	.021*	1.53	.017	1.23	.022*	1.59
“First Mover”	-.141	-.62	-.137	-.60	-.196	-.85
Chamber Time in Term	-.003	-.56	-.011**	-1.97	-.006	-.88
Deficit	-.205	-.11	-1.09	-.60	-1.057	-.60
N	466		466		466	
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	95.47		90.39		94.10	
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0000		.0000		.0000	
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1489		.1410		.1468	

Dependent Variable: 1 = Success, 0 = No Success

Note: Presidential style administrative dummy variables also used but not shown above

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where  $p < 0.1^*$ ,  $p < 0.05^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01^{***}$

**Table A-2 Agency Input Influence on Presidential Policy Making Success in the Senate, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

(Logit Predicted Probabilities)			
	Success Model 1 for the Senate	Success Model 2 for the Senate	Success Model 3 for the Senate
	Min->Max (-+sd/2)	Min->Max (-+sd/2)	Min->Max (-+sd/2)
Agency Input (Decentralization)	.3947 (.1371)	.3961 (.1377)	.3991 (.1388)
Presidential Signaling	.3270 (.0497)	.3311 (.0502)	.3391 (.0523)
<b><i>Senate Cloture Pivot</i></b>	<b><i>-.7497</i></b> <b><i>(.2622)</i></b>	-	-
<b><i>Divided Government</i></b>	-	<b><i>-.1491</i></b> <b><i>(.0745)</i></b>	-
<b><i>Percentage Seats in Senate</i></b>	-	-	<b><i>.6361</i></b> <b><i>(.1833)</i></b>
Presidential Approval	.4684 (.1072)	.4294 (.0971)	.4441 (.1008)
Change in Approval	.3942 (.0452)	-	.4152 (.0480)
Time in Term	-	-.2698 (.0758)	-

Dependent Variable: 1 = Success, 0 = No Success

Note: Results shown only for coefficients with significant findings

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where  $p < 0.1^*$ ,  $p < 0.05^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01^{***}$

**Table A-3 Agency Input Influence on Presidential Success in the House, 1949-2007  
(Logit Regression Models)**

	Success Model 1 for the House		Success Model 2 for the House		Success Model 3 for the House	
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Coefficients	Z-Score	Coefficients	Z-Score
Agency Input (Decentralization)	.427***	4.73	.431***	4.80	.436***	4.81
Presidential Signaling	.007**	1.86	.006**	1.74	.007**	1.88
Issue Novelty	.206	.78	.204	.78	.215	.81
Issue Complexity	.076	.51	.081	.54	.088	.58
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	.172**	1.70	.188**	1.88	.182**	1.80
Reorganization Impact	-.04	-.25	-.016	-.10	-.048	-.30
<b><i>House Median Pivot</i></b>	<b><i>-.651*</i></b>	<b><i>-1.36</i></b>	-	-	-	-
<b><i>Divided Government</i></b>	-	-	<b><i>-6.56***</i></b>	<b><i>-2.55</i></b>	-	-
<b><i>Percentage Seats in House</i></b>	-	-	-	-	<b><i>.109***</i></b>	<b><i>2.80</i></b>
Presidential Approval	.033***	2.61	.03***	2.36	.028***	2.29
Change in Approval	.026**	1.80	.017	1.26	.024**	1.73
“First Mover” Chamber	.147	.64	.12	.53	.171	.74
Time in Term	-.005	-.83	-.01**	-1.75	-.003	-.54
Deficit	-1.549	-.88	-.953	-.52	-2.036	-1.15
N	466		466		466	
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	98.63		93.45		99.66	
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0000		.0000		.0000	
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1539		.1458		.1555	

Dependent Variable: 1 = Success, 0 = No Success

Note: Presidential style administrative dummy variables also used but not shown above

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where  $p < 0.1^*$ ,  $p < 0.05^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01^{***}$

**Table A-4 Agency Input Influence on Presidential Policy Making Success in the House, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

(Logit Predicted Probabilities)			
	Success Model 1 for the House	Success Model 2 for the House	Success Model 3 for the House
	Min->Max (-+sd/2)	Min->Max (-+sd/2)	Min->Max (-+sd/2)
Agency Input (Decentralization)	.3995 (.1390)	.4033 (.1405)	.4071 (.1419)
Presidential Signaling	.3522 (.0555)	.3404 (.0523)	.3534 (.0558)
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	.3516 (.0502)	.3778 (.0552)	.3660 (.0531)
<i>House Median Pivot</i>	<b>-.7317</b> (.2737)	-	-
<i>Divided Government</i>	-	<b>-.1579</b> (.0790)	-
<i>Percentage Seats in House</i>	-	-	<b>.7290</b> (.2306)
Presidential Approval	.4766 (.1094)	.4409 (.1000)	.4182 (.0942)
Change in Approval	.4665 (.0551)	.3330 (.0374)	.4431 (.0518)
Time in Term	-	-.2417 (.0676)	-

Dependent Variable: 1 = Success, 0 = No Success

Note: Results shown only for coefficients with significant findings

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where  $p < 0.1^*$ ,  $p < 0.05^{**}$ ,  $p < 0.01^{***}$



**Table A-5 Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the Senate, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

	Success Model 1 for the Senate		Success Model 2 for the Senate		Success Model 3 for the Senate	
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Coefficients	Z-Score	Coefficients	Z-Score
Agency Input (Decentralization)	-.407***	-4.55	-.439***	-4.99	-.433***	-4.94
Presidential Signaling	.002	.60	.002	.66	.002	.70
Issue Novelty	.054	.23	-.032	-.14	-.011	-.05
Issue Complexity	.518***	3.35	.527***	3.41	.527***	3.42
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	-.119	-.91	-.151	-1.16	-.15	-1.15
Reorganization Impact	-.259	-1.61	-.256	-1.59	-.282*	-1.77
<b><i>Senate Cloture Pivot</i></b>	<b>1.782**</b>	<b>2.10</b>	-	-	-	-
<b><i>Divided Government</i></b>	-	-	<b>.475**</b>	<b>2.03</b>	-	-
<b><i>Percentage Seats in Senate</i></b>	-	-	-	-	<b>-.023**</b>	<b>-1.70</b>
Presidential Approval	-.01	-1.14	-.017*	-1.75	-.012	-1.33
Change in Approval	-.015	-1.13	-.019	-1.42	-.017	-1.24
“First Mover” Chamber	.554**	2.26	.621***	2.54	.65***	2.64
Time in Term	.01**	2.03	.008	1.61	.009*	1.77
Deficit	-.205	-.15	-.551	-.41	-.993	-.75
N	466		466		466	
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	63.75		63.47		62.26	
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0000		.0000		.0000	
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1086		.1081		.1061	

Dependent Variable: 0 = no change in policy substance, 1 = < 50% change, 2 = > 50% change, and 3 = mostly changed or failure

Note: Presidential style administrative dummy variables also used but not shown above  
Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

**Table A-6 Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the Senate, 1949-2007 (Predicted Probability Scores)**

(Logit Predicted Probabilities)			
	Success Model 1 for the Senate	Success Model 2 for the Senate	Success Model 3 for the Senate
	Min->Max (-+sd/2)	Min->Max (-+sd/2)	Min->Max (-+sd/2)
Agency Input (Decentralization)	-.3267 (.1137)	-.3503 (.1226)	-.3461 (.1210)
Issue Complexity	.2177 (.0836)	.2211 (.0849)	.2214 (.0850)
<b><i>Senate Cloture Pivot</i></b>	<b>.2292</b> <b>(.0521)</b>	-	-
<b><i>Divided Government</i></b>	-	<b>.1011</b> <b>(.0493)</b>	-
<b><i>Percentage Seats in Senate</i></b>	-	-	<b>-.1645</b> <b>(.0407)</b>
Presidential Approval	-	-.2233 (.0482)	-
“First Mover” Chamber	.1114 (.0540)	.1238 (.0603)	.1294 (.0632)
Time in Term	.1938 (.0564)	-	.1725 (.0498)

Dependent Variable: 0 = no change in policy substance, 1 = < 50% change, 2 = > 50% change, and 3 = mostly changed or failure

Note: Results shown only for coefficients with significant findings

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

**Table A-7 Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the House, 1949-2007 (Logit Regression Models)**

	Success Model 1 for the House		Success Model 2 for the House		Success Model 3 for the House	
	Coefficients	Z-Score	Coefficients	Z-Score	Coefficients	Z-Score
Agency Input (Decentralization)	-.405***	-4.12	-.416***	-4.24	-.414***	-4.21
Presidential Signaling	.005	1.15	.005	1.31	.005	1.15
Issue Novelty	-.059	-.22	-.062	-.23	-.06	-.22
Issue Complexity	.718***	4.37	.708***	4.32	.707***	4.31
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	-.112	-1.17	-.132*	-1.41	-.123*	-1.31
Reorganization Impact	-.234*	-1.39	-.240*	-1.42	-.227*	-1.35
<b><i>House Median Pivot</i></b>	<b>5.385**</b>	<b>2.20</b>	-	-	-	-
<b><i>Divided Government</i></b>	-	-	<b>.657*</b>	<b>1.33</b>	-	-
<b><i>Percentage Seats in House</i></b>	-	-	-	-	<b>-.093**</b>	<b>-2.36</b>
Presidential Approval	-.033**	-2.50	-.031***	-2.32	<b>-.029**</b>	-2.26
Change in Approval	-.029**	-1.86	.022*	-1.50	-.027**	-1.81
“First Mover” Chamber	.116	.47	.122	.50	.091	.37
Time in Term	-.004	-.63	-.00008	-.01	-.006	-.83
Deficit	2.559	1.31	1.955	.98	3.108*	1.57
N	466		466		466	
LR Chi <sup>2</sup>	74.88		71.76		75.62	
Prob>Chi <sup>2</sup>	.0000		.0000		.0000	
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	.1311		.1256		.1323	

Dependent Variable: 0 = no change in policy substance, 1 = < 50% change, 2 = > 50% change, and 3 = mostly changed or failure

Note: Presidential style administrative dummy variables also used but not shown above

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

**Table A-8 Agency Input Influence on Changes in Presidential Policy Substance in the House, 1949-2007 (Predicted Probability Scores)**

(Logit Predicted Probabilities)			
	Success Model 1 for the House	Success Model 2 for the House	Success Model 3 for the House
	Min->Max (-+sd/2)	Min->Max (-+sd/2)	Min->Max (-+sd/2)
Agency Input (Decentralization)	-.3075 (.1066)	-.3157 (.1096)	-.3137 (.1089)
Issue Complexity	.2837 (.1089)	.2804 (.1076)	.2795 (.1072)
Crosscutting Jurisdictions	-	-.3006 (.0312)	-.2790 (.0291)
Reorganization Impact	-.0985 (.0320)	-.1011 (.0329)	-.0955 (.0311)
<b><i>House Median Pivot</i></b>	<b>.5983</b> <b>(.1844)</b>	-	-
<b><i>Divided Government</i></b>	-	<b>.1330</b> <b>(.0644)</b>	-
<b><i>Percentage Seats in House</i></b>	-	-	<b>-.6088</b> <b>(.1607)</b>
Presidential Approval	-.3993 (.0885)	-.3776 (.0833)	-.3548 (.0779)
Change in Approval	-.4673 (.0488)	-.3706 (.0383)	-.4504 (.0469)
Deficit	-	-	.2324 (.0566)

Dependent Variable: 0 = no change in policy substance, 1 = < 50% change, 2 = > 50% change, and 3 = mostly changed or failure

Note: Presidential style administrative dummy variables also used but not shown above

Results are for one and two-tailed tests, where p<0.1\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.01\*\*\*

**VITA**

José D. Villalobos received a B.A. in Political Science from The University of Texas at San Antonio in May 2003 and a Ph.D. from Texas A&M University in December 2008. His areas of interest include presidential management, presidential-bureaucratic policy making, the public presidency, presidential-congressional relations, mass media and the rhetorical presidency, and studies on immigration policy and Latino/a politics. His mailing address for the university is 2010 Allen Building, 4348 TAMU, College Station, TX 77843-4348.