Presidential Partisan Particularism: A Reconsideration

Shu Fu*

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Abstract

Rather than faithful stewards of national objectives, scholars claim, presidents display distinctly "particularistic" tendencies because their core constituencies regularly receive a disproportionate share of federal outlays. This paper reconsiders the interpretation of this empirical finding. Theoretically, it raises questions about the utility of strengthening a party by buying votes from the presidents' core voters. And empirically, it shows that the underlying patterns of partisan targeting do not accord with standard accounts of party building activities nor electoral considerations. Rather, this paper proposes and empirically tests an alternative interpretation—presidents' ideological considerations may better explain the main finding that undergirds claims about presidential partisan particularism. Presidents appear to use specific agencies to enhance the largesse they impart on core constituencies, and this is indicative of presidents pursuing ideological goals. Collectively, the fuller empirical evidence indicates a less cynical point of view on the orientation of the American presidency.

*Ph.D Candidate in Department of Political Science, the University of Chicago; fushu@uchicago.edu. I thank Douglas Kriner and Andrew Reeves for their clarification and generous feedback while I engage with their work. I also thank Will Howell for his valuable advice, thank Chris Berry, Anthony Fowler, Justin Grimmer, Bobby Gulotty, Eric Oliver, and Maggie Penn for helpful suggestions.

Introduction

It is a conventional claim that presidents are the true stewards of national welfare and represent the needs and interests of the nation as a whole (Fitzpatrick 1931; Howell and Moe 2016; Kagan 2001; Wilson 1908).[1] Recently, however, scholars have come to question this view. In the last several years, a body of literature on the American presidency alleges that the chief executives are decidedly "particularistic" in orientation, pursuing policies that channel public benefits disproportionately toward some specific and valuable political constituencies (Kriner and Reeves 2015; Lowande, Jenkins, and Clarke 2016; Stratmann and Wojnilower 2015). A debate on the orientation of the chief executives – whether they are national leaders or particularistic statesmen – has opened up in the study of the American presidency.

Scholars have examined a number of factors that shift presidential behavior to a particularistic pattern (Kriner and Reeves 2015; McCarty 2000), one of which is partisan motivation. Kriner and Reeves (2015) emphasize the president's role as a partisan leader, and they draw evidence from the divide-the-dollar politics to show that presidents influence the budgetary distribution to channel federal grants disproportionately to counties located in core states that solidly back the president's party in recent elections. Accordingly, they claim that the president's national outlook is clouded by partisan considerations.

How exactly should we interpret the meaning of the main empirical findings that undergirds claims about presidential particularism? Kriner and Reeves argue that it reflects efforts by presidents to boost their electoral fortune and build their party; that presidents, as it were, "are not national leaders, but rather predominantly leaders of the partisan coalitions that elected them to office" (Kriner and Reeves 2015, 168). They also cited Wood's partisan

[1]For example, Fitzpatrick (1931) mentioned that founding fathers explicitly expressed whose interests the American presidents ought to serve and represent, which was echoed by President Woodrow Wilson (1908) by saying "the president is the representative of no constituency, but of the the whole people; this perspective of the universalistic presidency is also routinely advocated by legal scholars, like Elena Kagan (2001) expressed the same view before being appointed as the Supreme Court Justice.

theory of presidential representation to support their interpretation: "Having achieved electoral success, presidents are anxious to pursue their most favored policies and reward core supporters with benefits that accrue from election outcomes" (Wood 2009, 36).

This paper reconsiders the interpretation of core state targeting. First, it underscores the difficulties of reconciling this documented pattern of federal spending with standard formal accounts of vote buying. Then, it replicates and reassesses the robustness of core state targeting. The rest of the paper focuses on empirically testing the potential interpretations of why core constituencies receive disproportionately more federal outlays—party building, electoral purposes, and the president's ideological agenda. If the documented effect reflects party building activities, other scholars have shown (Galvin 2010), it should be particularly large when the president's party's standing is weak. Using a variety of measures of party strength, however, I find the opposite to be true. The president's core constituents receive more federal outlays when their party is strong—precisely when party building efforts can be expected to wane. I then present evidence that the documented effect does not vary with the electoral cycle, which indicates that the core state targeting is not a function of electoral considerations. Lastly, I present evidence that the documented effect may reflect the president's policy priorities and ideological orientation. When conditioning on the agencies charged with actually disbursing these federal outlays (Berry and Gersen 2017; Krause and Meier 2003; Krause and O'Connell 2016), the core state effect entirely disappears; even more, the more benefits are allocated to the cores only through agencies that are ideologically aligned with the president. In sum, rather than evidence of party building nor electoral purposes, this central finding appears to be an artifact of presidents' efforts to direct federal outlays in ways that reflect their larger policy agendas.

Partisan Particularism and Its Interpretations

The notion that American presidents have a national outlook and represent the whole nation's interests at large is not only deeply rooted in the American political culture, but many political scientists and presidential scholars also treat it as an integral and essential part of the American institutional arrangement. Contrary to members of Congress who hold parochial interests in their own districts (Fenno 1978; Mayhew 1974), presidents are uniquely held accountable by the public for the performance of the whole government, and their leadership and legacies depend upon effective national governance (Moe and Wilson 1994). In their efforts to meet the onslaught of national expectations and leave behind a legacy, presidents focus on the wellbeing of the national community instead of pursuing parochial interests. As Howell and Moe (2016, 96) put it, "presidents use the authority, leverage, and resources at their disposal to elevate the national interest, to pursue long-term solutions to the nations' pressing problems, and to bring rationality and coherence to government as a whole."

In contrast to this traditional national orientations, however, a body of new research claims that presidents are particularistic, they pursue policies that direct public benefits disproportionately toward some specific and valuable political constituencies. Empirical evidence of presidential particularism are provided from multiple perspectives, including the distribution of federal grants (Kriner and Reeves 2015; Stratmann and Wojnilower 2015), disaster declarations and transportation grants (Reeves 2011). Although the traditional literature on American presidency incisively assumes that the commander-in-chief, on behalf of the United States in a volatile and complex world stage, is supposed to be more national in orientation (Canes-Wrone, Howell, and Lewis 2008; Wildavsky 1966), Lowande, Jenkins, and Clarke (2016) extend the particularistic claim into the realm of foreign affairs. They provide evidence from the U.S. trade policies between 1986 and 2006 and find that presidents

strategically target trade protections to industries in politically valuable states.

In order to understand the orientation of the particularistic president, scholars have discussed several origins that may shift presidents' outlooks toward some politically valuable constituencies instead of the whole nation at large. The interest of presidents' co-partisan constituencies stand out as one major factor (Kriner and Reeves 2015; McCarty 2000). Because the president as the party leader may be more inclined to be responsive to the needs and wants of their core partisan base.

Indeed, the literature on the president-party relationship claims that modern presidents as partisans-in-chief possess potent resources and unique authorities to affect party building. Party building is defined inconsistently, but one important feature of it is coalition building in the electorate (Frymer and Skrentny 1998; James 2000; Seligman and Covington 1989). What a president pursues is not only himself doing well in presidential elections, but also his fellow co-partisan officials doing well in congressional elections and local elections. An example of this coalition building is the existence of presidential "coattails"; that is, a popular presidential candidate is able to increase the winning probability of his co-partisan officials in congressional elections. Furthermore, presidents have ample means and strong capability to shape federal budgets at both the proposal and implementation stages (Berry, Burden, and Howell 2010). So with the goal of strengthening their coalition in mind, presidents can utilize this capacity to invest in their party's electoral competitiveness by promoting a partisan-driven federal outlay distribution that favors their co-partisans. In return, the partisan base would be solidified and electoral fortunes further consolidated. Especially in the era of increasing partisan polarization, the polarized president may achieve a more partisan budget and appropriations (Cameron 2002). As a vivid example, Obama's embrace of a partisan leadership was illustrated by his efforts to consolidate grassroots support by implementing liberal Democratic budget plans (Milkis, Rhodes, and Charnock 2012).

Consistent with the president's role as a partisan leader, Kriner and Reeves (2015) find

empirical evidence that presidents systematically direct a disproportionate share of federal funds to their core partisan base. Specifically, they show that a county in a core state received on average $28.3 million more in federal grant funding than a county in a non-core state. Moreover, this difference is consistent with some other empirical studies asserting that federal benefits are disproportionately targeted toward core voters (Chen 2008; Larcinese, Rizzo, and Testa 2006; Levitt and Snyder 1995).

A key theoretical question is how to interpret why presidents pursue budgetary policies that disproportionately reward core states. This paper aims at further interpreting the core constituency benefits and rethinking the presidential particularism. On the one hand, the core state targeting can be interpreted as a co-partisan bias. Presidents, as partisans-in-chief, deliberately channel federal funding toward the core states in order to keep their party competitive in election and sharpen their party brand. On the other hand, the disproportionate federal funding allocated toward the core states can also be explained by an ideological approach. The federal funds are actually driven by president's ideological priority and agency preference. The core state targeting is a coincidence that federal fundings are allocated to the places where the residents happen to be presidents' co-partisans. This less cynical interpretation may not indicate that there is a bias in presidents' outlook; the budgetary tilting toward the core does not mean a particularistic aim but the consequential results of president's ideology-driven policy priorities.

Scholars have made efforts to explain the co-partisan targeting in other political contexts (Fouirnaies and Mutle-Eren 2015), but the empirical evidence on its interpretation has yet fully explored in American politics. This paper contributes the literature by offering empirical tests for all the possible interpretations. But before the empirical exercise, it is worthwhile revisiting the theoretical interpretation of the co-partisan monetary targeting.

Theories on Distributive Politics and Vote-Buying

One possible interpretation of the correlation between core states and disproportionate federal grants reception rests on electoral incentives. Either for presidents themselves in the later presidential elections or for their co-partisans in the congressional contests, presidents may build their party's electoral competitiveness by targeting more federal grants toward the core. In other words, the presidents pursue budgetary policies that channel more budgetary largesse toward the co-partisans in the hope of their votes in return. In the formal literature, there is an old and rich discussion on vote buying. Vote buying models explain how and why lobbyists (such as traditional interest groups, or elected officials like the president who have power to allocate public goods) offer side payments to voters (or legislators) in exchange for their votes in elections (or floor votes). Federal budgetary outlays certainly can be seen as such payments that are, using the terms in Baron (2006), "politically-valuable resources." The essence of the vote buying literature is whether allocating targetable benefits to swing voters or to core voters maximizes electoral prospects.

Most vote buying models stand in the line of "swing voter logic." This logic predicts that presidents have no reason to target core voters. The pure Downsian model predicts that presidents will adopt a budgetary platform that targets the ideological position of the median voter (Downs 1957). Building on this logic, Frohlich and Oppenheimer (1984) argue that it is optimal for incumbent politicians to channel income transfers toward the most ideological moderate. Lindbeck and Weibull (1987) examine the validity of Hotelling's "principle of minimum differentiation" to project that federal resources should be distributed toward swing voters who are the most easily swayed by monetary transfers. Later, Dixit and Longregan (1995, 1996) offer a general model of how federal benefits are targeted, and also show that the parties' apportionments are driven by the density of swing voters. Alexander, Berry, and Howell (2016) offer empirical support for this claim.

Stokes (2005) extends the swing voter logic to a multi-period model. Stokes's theory views the machine-voter interaction as a repeated prisoner's dilemma. In each stage (election), voters would either vote for the party that allocates them public goods (comply) or vote against it (defect); while the political machine would either reward or not reward voters. In a one-shot game, the equilibrium would be mutual defection – no reward for the voter and no vote for the party. However, in the repeated and infinite sequence of elections, a grim-trigger strategy yields a party-voter exchange: voters vote for the party that bribes them. The loyal voters do not meet the equilibrium condition, yet swing voters are involved in the exchange because they are cheap to buy. Stokes argues against the core voter logic by claiming, "voters who are predisposed in favor of the machine on partisan or ideological grounds cannot credibly threaten to punish their favored party if it withholds rewards. Therefore the party should not waste rewards on them" (2005, 317).

On the other side of the debate, Cox and McCubbins (1986) set the cornerstone for the core voter model. They argue that for risk-adverse presidents, targeting distributive benefits toward core ideological constituents maximizes electoral returns. Because a party's core constituents are more reliably responsive to federal grant transfers, loyal voters targeting can be seen as a safer investment compared to the swing voters aiming. Hence, core targeting is a rational strategy for risk-averse players, whereas "if candidates are risk-acceptant as opposed to risk-averse then they may adopt less stabilizing strategies – *i.e.* invest more in swing groups" (Cox McCubbins 1986, 381). Furthermore, Cox and McCubbins find challengers in general more willing than incumbents to take risks on policy positions, so presidents as incumbent policy makers should be prone to take a safer strategy and invest more in their cores.

However, Cox (2009) himself conceded that compared with the mainstream swing voter models that explain well for persuading voters, core voter logic only holds if we consider coordination (an attempt to affect the number and character of alternative parties in a multi-

party political system) and mobilization (an attempt to buy turnout). Core voter logic has a conditional explanatory power, and one of the conditions (coordination) does not apply for the U.S. two-party political system. Therefore, formal theory literature reminds us that directing federal grants to core voters may not necessarily help presidents maximize their electoral prospects.

Replication of Core State Targeting

This section revisits the main empirical findings that support contentions about partisan bias in distributive outlays. I replicate the main results of Kriner and Reeves (2015) on federal grants distribution at the county level for the fiscal years 1984-2008, using data from the Consolidated Federal Funds Report (CFFR). The compiled dataset reports the amount of federal grants spent at the county level in a given year. With 25 years of data for 3,082 counties, the dataset includes 76,937 valid observations.

In estimating the presidential particularism in federal benefits distribution, I follow Kriner and Reeves's identification strategy and construct the dependent variable as the natural log of the amount of federal grants received by counties in a given year. I treat the federal grants distribution as a direct and proper measurement because it is part of the federal discretionary funds that can effectively reveal the president's will and priority. Each year, the federal government allocates hundreds of billions of dollars in grants to fund innumerable projects across the country. According to the latest available Consolidated Federal Funds Report[2], in 2010, the federal government awarded around $683 billion grants, accounting for 13.4% of all federal expenditure.

Kriner and Reeves utilize a generalized difference-in-differences design with county

[2]Please see, https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/2011/governments/cffr-10.pdf, accessed Jun 2020.

and year fixed effects to investigate the effect of core states and the effect of swing states on federal grants allocation. In their formal specification,

$$\log(\text{outlays}_{it}) = \beta_1 \textit{Core State}_{i,t} + \beta_2 \textit{Swing State}_{i,t} + \mathbb{X}_{i,t}\Phi + \alpha_i + \delta_t + \varepsilon_{i,t}, \tag{1}$$

the main variables of interest are denoted as follows. *Core State* is coded "1" if that the president's party achieved an average 55% or more of the two-party vote in the previous three presidential election cycles in this county, and "0" otherwise; and *Swing State* is coded "1" where the losing candidate won an average 45% or more of the two-party vote over the past three election years. Hence, the baseline to compare is the hostile states. The control variables, $\mathbb{X}$, include politician specific controls (whether its member of Congress is from the president's party, from the majority party, a Committee chair, in the Appropriations or Ways and Means Committees)[3] and geographic-specific controls (population, poverty, and income per capita). The inclusion of county fixed effects, α_i, controls for all time-invariant county characteristics – both observed and unobserved; and the inclusion of year, δ_t, controls for time trend. The necessary parallel assumption here in this context is that the federal grants should be allocated in the same trend and pattern across the nation.

Improving upon Kriner and Reeves' already solid research design, I make several adjustments. First, following others (Alexander, Berry, and Howell 2016; Anderson and Woon 2014; Fouirnaies and Mutlu-Eren 2015), I account for the delay between the appropriation and allocation of federal outlays. Because federal expenditures in a given year are based upon the appropriations budget passed one year before, I match federal grants spent in year t to the political and demographic characteristics of year $t-1$. For example, the federal outlays in 2001, when George W. Bush was the president, were decided by the 2000 appropriations budget proposed by Democratic President Bill Clinton and passed in a Republican

[3]For the district-level controls in county-level data, there is a matching strategy that needs to mention. More than 80% of counties match uniquely into a single congressional district. For the population-dense counties that are subdivided into multiple congressional districts, I adopt Kriner and Reeves's strategy and assign to that county the member of Congress who represents the greatest share of the county's population.

Congress. To make no mistake, Kriner and Reeves (2015) did follow the same approach for the congressional variables in their analysis (e.g., is the county represented by a member of the majority party, a member of the president's party, etc.). On the measure of a core state or a swing state, however, Kriner and Reeves essentially coded the variables privileging *ex post* influence, matching federal grants in year t with the political characteristics in the same year t (they measure whether a state was a core state based on the president in power during the bulk of the fiscal year itself); although they rightly note that the results are similar when using an alternate coding scheme for core states using the 1-year lag. Given arguments in the literature about *ex ante* and *ex post* means of presidential influence over budgetary allocations (Berry, Burden, and Howell 2010), either seems reasonable. However, since we have little knowledge, as far as I have known, on whether the *ex ante* presidential influence on the federal outlays is greater than the *ex post*, or vise versa, I follow the majority of scholars in the field of distributive politics and use the 1-year lag adjustment on the measure of a core state and a swing state.

Furthermore, although the observations in the dataset are counties in years since the treatments (i.e., core states and swing states) are measured at the state level, I cluster the standard errors at the state level. Kriner and Reeves's analysis also examined whether counties represented by presidential co-partisans or members of the majority party received more money, so they reasonably clustered the standard errors on the county. In my reassessment, however, a core state is the main variable of interest; therefore, I cluster by state in order to get the most accurate estimate. Therefore, the adjusted model specification is formally written as,

$$\log(\text{outlays}_{it}) = \beta_1 \textit{Core State}_{i,t-1} + \beta_2 \textit{Swing State}_{i,t-1} + \mathbb{X}_{i,t-1}\Phi + \alpha_i + \delta_{t-1} + \varepsilon_{i,t}. \qquad (2)$$

Table 1 presents the effects of core state on federal grants distribution at the county

Table 1: Replication of Kriner and Reeves's Estimate of Core State Targeting

	DV: Logged Federal Grants	
	K&R Replication	*K&R Adjustment*
	(1)	(2)
Core State	0.064***	0.042**
	(0.006)	(0.018)
Swing State	0.039***	0.046**
	(0.005)	(0.019)
MC from president's party	0.020***	0.012
	(0.004)	(0.009)
MC from majority party	0.025***	0.021*
	(0.004)	(0.011)
Committee chair	−0.021**	−0.037
	(0.010)	(0.029)
Appropriations / Ways and Means	−0.010*	−0.024*
	(0.005)	(0.013)
County population (logged)	0.234***	0.233**
	(0.031)	(0.099)
Poverty rate	0.005***	0.004
	(0.001)	(0.002)
Income per capita	0.004**	−0.0004
	(0.002)	(0.002)
County Fixed Effects	✓	✓
Year Fixed Effects	✓	✓
Observations	76,937	76,916
R^2	0.953	0.894

Notes:
1. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.
2. Models (2) uses the year $t-1$ adjustment, Model (1) does not.
3. Kriner and Reeves's Model (1) uses robust standard error clustered by county. Since Core State is state-variant, I report robust standard errors clustered by state for Model (2).

level, estimated by Kriner and Reeves's model and my adjusted model. The evidence clearly points out that the president's core states did receive disproportionately more federal grants, so the core state targeting is a robust empirical observation. Column (1) in Table 1 exactly replicates Kriner and Reeves' finding (2015). A county in a core state would receive, on average, 6.4% more federal grants than a county in a hostile state. Column (2) presents the adjusted model with year $t-1$ adjustment and standard errors clustered by states. I find that the effect of core state targeting slightly shrinks in magnitude but is still significant: the coefficient of *Core State* is 0.042 with a 95% confidence level. Substantively, all else being equal, counties in states that strongly voted for the president's party in recent three elections are allocated 4.2% more federal grants than counties in non-core states. Comparing the two models, I find that the year $t-1$ adjustment shrinks the size of the core state effect to its two-thirds but increases the swing state targeting slightly. It suffices to say that the core states reaping disproportionately more federal grants is a robust and interesting finding in the distributive politics.

Interpretation of Core State Targeting

The evidence in the replication section reveals that presidents influence the budgetary distribution to channel federal grants disproportionately to politically valuable constituencies, especially the swing states and the co-partisan states. There is less interesting or surprising about the swing state targeting because it is consistent with the median voter theorem and vote buying theory. However, the core state targeting really catches our attention. While the core state targeting is intriguing, its interpretation is less clear. On the one hand, the core state targeting can be interpreted as evidence of the particularistic presidential outlook that benefits the co-partisan constituencies—presidents influence federal grants distribution to their cores to improve the party's performance in the upcoming elections. In short, presi-

dents deliberately target resources toward their cores to strengthen their parties for electoral purposes. On the other hand, a less cynical interpretation is that this disparity may arise due to Democratic and Republican presidents having different ideological visions of what serves the national interest and different policy agendas. Accordingly, more grants to core states may not indicate a partisan bias in presidential orientation but simply that presidents from two major parties just pursue distinct ideological goals. Therefore, in the following subsections, I provide additional evidence that aims at explaining the core constituency benefits as a reconsideration of presidential partisan particularism.

Party Building?

How should we interpret the core state targeting from the perspective of presidential party building? Presidency scholars have shown that the propensity of presidents to engage in party building activities should depend on the competitive standing of their party. According to Daniel Galvin (2010), modern presidents play the role of partisan-in-chief by increasing their party's resources and enhancing their party's electoral competitiveness when their party holds a weak position of power. The ultimate goal of a president as a party leader, after all, is to enhance the competitive standing of his party. The competitive imbalance between the parties, therefore, creates different incentives for majority-party presidents and minority-party presidents; and such differences correspondingly produce distinct types of president-party interactions. As Galvin argues, "with their party in the ostensible minority, Republican presidents were driven to act in an innovative, constructive, and forward-looking fashion with respect to their party organization; with their party in the ostensible majority, Democratic presidents perceived no need for such an approach" (2010, 23).

Galvin's party building theory reveals a fundamental trade-off between solidifying the partisan core and achieving long-term and grand political objectives. The president's party

standing plays an imperative role in how the president balances this compromise. On the one hand, the minority-party presidents ought to have strong incentives to change their political environment, so they should engage in those political strategies that solidify their partisan bases. Its particular reason is shown in empirical evidence that voters reward incumbent presidents (or their party's nominee) for increased federal spending in their communities (Kriner and Reeves 2012). On the other hand, when the president's party holds a deep and durable competitive advantage, the chief executive sees no urgent need to invest more in their party. Hence, an empirically testable corollary I can generate from this assumption is that a strong party standing yields fewer party building activities from the president. It follows that if the core state targeting is indicative of partisan particularism, core states should, comparatively speaking, receive a smaller share of federal benefits when the president is faced with a stronger party competitive environment than with a weak party standing.

Party Building Corollary: *If supporting core voters is in the reason of party building, the president should employ core voter targeting LESS when his party is in a strong competitive standing than when in a weak competitive standing.*

According to this party building corollary, weak party competitive standing incentivizes a president to achieve federal policies that benefit his co-partisans, intending to strengthen his partisan base. In the distributive politics data, nonetheless, I do not find any evidence in support of this corollary.

Empirically, the goal here is to test the effect of core states on federal spending distribution conditional on the party competitive environment. I use multiple measures to quantify the president's party strength. The first measure is direct and straightforward, that is, divided *v.s.* unified government. This measure reflects the party standing at the federal level. A unified government indicates a strong party strength or a majority party owned by the president. Congress is the central venue in which presidents are trying to advance policy at the national level. When the president's party controls both chambers of Congress, the

president focuses on pushing forward his preferred policies. But if the other party possesses Congress, presidents cannot easily get their agenda through (Cameron 2000; Howell 2003). Hence, the core here is that presidents need to do something else to change the composition of Congress. If directing federal benefits more toward the core states has the effect of improving partisan strength within Congress in later years, we should expect them to do that costly activity when their party is weak in Congress. For example, from Eisenhower to Clinton's first term, the Democratic Party was conceived as the majority since the Democrats dominated Congress. When the president faces a unified government, which indicates a strong party standing, the chief executive is predicted to use fewer unilateral directives through discretionary budgets to exert his priority (Howell 2003). In other words, the president who faces a unified government is less likely to allocate more funds toward his co-partisans in order to solidify his core bases.

With this simple measure of party competitive standing in mind, I created a dummy moderator "Unified" as "1" when the president faces a unified government, and "0" otherwise. I then extend the adjusted model by interacting the moderator "Unified" with the variable of interest, "Core State", in order to assess the effect of core state targeting conditional on the party strength. Building upon the adjusted model specification, this multiplicative interaction model is formally specified as:

$$\begin{aligned}\log(\text{outlays}_{it}) =& \beta_1\ \textit{Core State}_{i,t-1} + \beta_2\ \textit{Core State}_{i,t-1} \times \textit{Unified}_{t-1} + \\ & \mathbb{X}_{i,t-1}\Phi + \alpha_i + \delta_{t-1} + \varepsilon_{i,t},\end{aligned} \tag{3}$$

where $\textit{Core State}_{i,t-1}$ is the base level term that indicates the divided government, and $\textit{Core State}_{i,t-1} \times \textit{Unified}_{t-1}$ is the interaction term that should reveal the effect of core state on spending allocation conditional on a stronger party strength. The constitutive term of $\textit{Unified}_{t-1}$ is left off of the equation as it is included in the year fixed effects. The party building corollary predicts β_2 being significantly less than 0.

I also create a more comprehensive and continuous measure of party competitive standing. It originates from the qualitative assessments by Galvin (2010), which drew upon a wealth of primary source materials, including internal White House memos, letters, strategy papers, personal notes, and White House tape recordings. Galvin assessed each party's standing based on the composition of both chambers of Congress, state legislative seats held by the party, partisan share of governorship. Fortunately, all these components to measure partisan competitive imbalance are quantifiable as well; I, therefore, construct a Party Standing Index (PSI) for the years 1984-2008. Party Standing Index is comprised of five evenly weighted components calculated each year.[4] The Party Standing Index is comprehensive because it is indicative of the party competitiveness at both federal and state levels. As shown in Table 2, two federal components are congressional seats share in both House and Senate. Three state components are governorship and state legislative seat share in both state upper and lower chambers. The index is based on the two-party evaluation, so third-party candidates are not included. Roughly speaking, a PSI larger than 0.5 indicates a strong party standing.

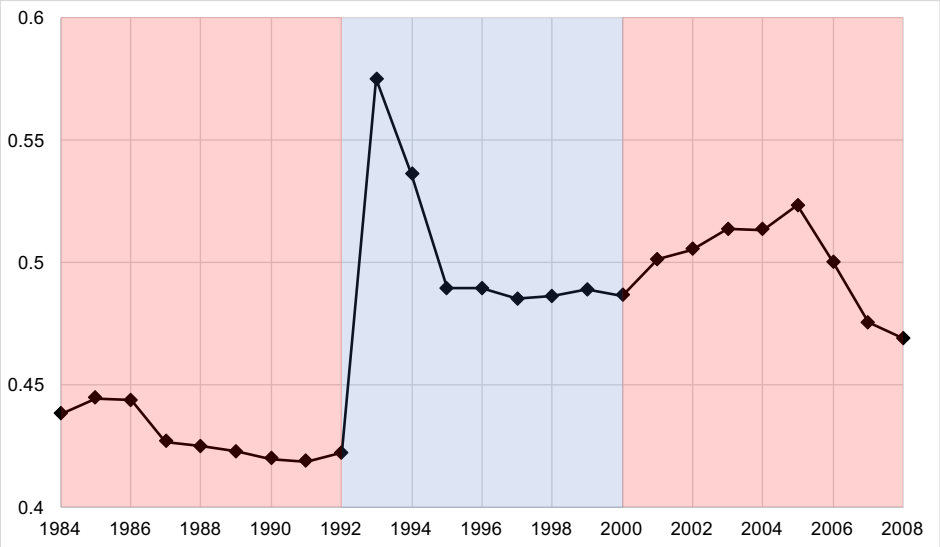
Table 2: Components of the Party Standing Index (PSI)

Congress	40% (Senate: 20%; House: 20%)
State Legislature	40% (upper chamber: 20%; lower chamber: 20%)
Governor	20%

Next, I discretize the continuous moderator PSI into three bins (corresponding to the three terciles separately), generate a dummy variable for each bin, and denote them "Weak", "Medium", and "Strong" party standing. The mean values of PSI for the three bins are 0.429, 0.484, and 0.521, and the medium for the three bins are 0.425, 0.486, and 0.513, respectively. Weak party standing years include four years of Reagan's second term and George H. W. Bush's four years; strong party standing years are the first two years of Clinton administration

[4]Ceaser and Saldin (2005) created a Major Party Index, using a similar calculation.

Figure 1: Party Standing Index, 1984-2008



and the first six years of George W. Bush administration, which just happen to be the unified government years; the other eight years are middle party standing years. I further test the party standing corollary with this three-dummy multiplicative interaction model. The model specification is:

$$\begin{aligned}\log(\text{outlays}_{it}) =& \beta_1\ \textit{Core State}_{i,t-1} + \beta_2\ \textit{Core State}_{i,t-1} \times \textit{Medium}_{t-1} + \\ & \beta_3\ \textit{Core State}_{i,t-1} \times \textit{Strong}_{t-1} + \mathbb{X}_{i,t-1}\Phi + \alpha_i + \delta_{t-1} + \varepsilon_{i,t},\end{aligned} \tag{4}$$

where $\textit{Core State}_{i,t-1}$ is the base level term that here indicates the effect of core state targeting conditional on a weak party competitive environment. The two constitutive terms of $\textit{Medium}_{t-1}$ and $\textit{Strong}_{t-1}$ have been included in the year dummies, δ_{t-1}. The party building corollary predicts β_2 and β_3 being significantly less than 0 and $|\beta_2| < |\beta_3|$.

Measuring the party standing is sometimes arbitrary; therefore, I also incorporate an

already existing and widely used measure of a state's competition between the two major parties—the Ranney Index. Austin Ranney created a Ranney score that reflects the party standing in the state legislature. I use Carl Klarner's dataset of "Other Scholars' Competitiveness Measure," which includes the Ranney Index.[5] A Ranney Score ranges from 0 to 1, with a "0" signifying complete Republican control, a "1" signifying complete Democratic control of both chambers, and "0.5" as neither. Both chambers of state legislature being controlled by the president's party is a good sign for a competitive party standing at the state level. Therefore, I code "strong party standing in state" when the president's party completely controls the state legislature, "weak party standing in state" when the president's opposing party completely controls the state legislature, and "medium party standing in state" otherwise. The strong, medium, and weak party standing in state is similar to the three-bin estimators of Party Standing Index; hence I use a similar model specification as before. Formally,

$$\begin{aligned}\log(\text{outlays}_{it}) =& \beta_1\ \textit{Core State}_{i,t-1} + \beta_2 \textit{Medium in State}_{i,t-1} + \beta_3 \textit{Strong in State}_{i,t-1} + \\ & \beta_4\ \textit{Core State}_{i,t-1} \times \textit{Medium in State}_{i,t-1} + \\ & \beta_5\ \textit{Core State}_{i,t-1} \times \textit{Strong in State}_{i,t-1} + \mathbb{X}_{i,t-1}\Phi + \alpha_i + \delta_{t-1} + \varepsilon_{i,t},\end{aligned} \tag{5}$$

In this specification, interacting core state with the party standing in the state will provide some evidence for the state-variant party building explanation. It is worthwhile noticing here that the measures of party standing in state legislature, with subscripts of $i, t-1$, are both time-variant and state-variant, so the model includes the constitutive terms (i.e., party standing indicators in the state level, being noted as *Medium in State* and *Strong in State*). Taking advantage of the time-and-state-variant moderators, this model will provide a nitty-gritty estimate on the heterogeneity of the core state targeting with regard to the party strength.

[5]Please see https://dataverse.harvard.edu/dataset.xhtml?persistentId=hdl:1902.1/22519. The database can be found in Harvard Dataverse, accessed in May 2021.

Table 3: Party Building Corollary in Explaining Core State Targeting

	DV: Logged Federal Grants		
	Federal Level	*Federal & State Level*	*State Level*
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Core state	0.009	0.00005	−0.014
	(0.025)	(0.042)	(0.039)
Core state × unified government	0.126**		
	(0.053)		
Core state × medium party standing		0.030	
		(0.070)	
Core state × strong party standing		0.133*	
		(0.067)	
Core state × medium party standing in state			0.050
			(0.033)
Core state × strong party standing in state			0.096
			(0.094)
Swing State	0.049**	0.049**	0.043**
	(0.019)	(0.020)	(0.019)
MC from president's party	0.010	0.010	0.009
	(0.008)	(0.008)	(0.009)
MC from majority party	0.017*	0.017*	0.019**
	(0.009)	(0.010)	(0.009)
Committee chair	−0.031	−0.031	−0.035
	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.028)
Appropriations / Ways and Means	−0.020	−0.020	−0.021
	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.014)
County population (logged)	0.256***	0.257***	0.251**
	(0.095)	(0.094)	(0.105)
Poverty rate	0.004	0.004	0.003
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.002)
Income per capita	−0.0002	−0.0002	−0.001
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.003)
Medium party standing in state			-0.008
			(0.017)
Strong party standing in state			0.020
			(0.027)
County Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓
Year Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓
Observations	76,916	76,916	74,591
R^2	0.894	0.894	0.892

Notes:
1. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.
2. Robust standard errors are clustered by state.

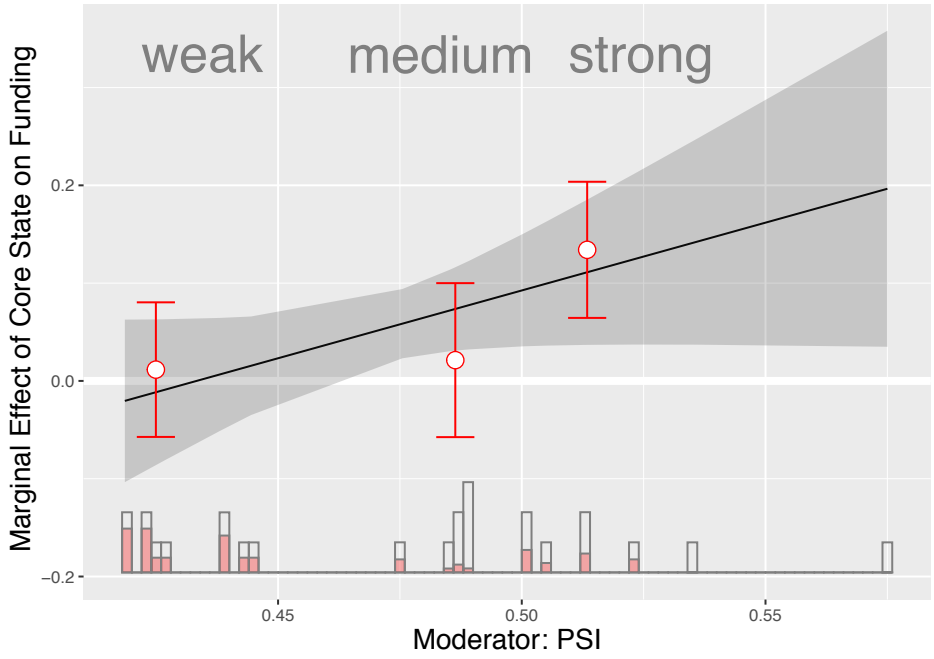
If the Party Building Corollary is true, we should observe that presidents target their core constituencies less disproportionately (or more evenly across the board) when his party is in a stronger competitive standing. During such conditions, after all, presidents have less of an urgent need to solidify or reward their cores by channeling more federal benefits. Strikingly, however, the results of multiplicative interaction models, as shown in Table 3, suggest just the opposite. The simple tests of unified government interaction, the more comprehensive test of Party Standing Index three-bin interaction, and the state-level party standing interaction suggest that core constituents benefit most when their party is strongest.

Column (1) in Table 3 shows that the counties located in core states reap significantly more federal grants conditional on a unified government situation. And the distinction between unified government and divided government periods is sharp: the coefficient of $\beta_2 = 0.126$, with 95% confidence interval, indicates a strong party competitive environment yields around 12.6% more in allocating grants toward core states than non-core states than a divided government scenario does. Therefore, the simple test of core state targeting conditional on divided or unified government does *not* support the party building corollary. In other words, massive co-partisan constituencies targeting is not the product of a weak party competitive environment but instead arises when the presidents' party controls Congress.

Column (2) in Table 3 further demonstrates that the stronger party competitive standing the presidents face, the more federal grants are distributed toward counties in the president's core states. Specifically, the coefficient of base-level core state is not significantly from zero. In contrast, the coefficient of core state is 0.030 when interacted with medium party standing, and is 0.133 interacted with strong party standing, which is significant at the 90% confidence level. When the presidents are in a weak party competitive environment, they cannot benefit their core. While as the party standing improves from weak to medium, and from medium to strong, core states acquire even more federal grants than do non-core states.

Column (3) in Table 3 shows the marginal effect of core state conditional on the party

Figure 2: Marginal Effects of Core State on Funds Allocation Conditional on Party Strength



Notes: At the bottom of each figure is displayed stacked histogram that shows the distribution of moderator. In the histogram, the total height of the stacked bars refers to the distribution of the moderator in the data and the red and grey shaded bars refer to the distribution of moderator in the core states and non-core states.

standing in the state legislature. Although none of the coefficients with regard to the core state interactions pass the 0.1 significant level, the point estimates demonstrate the same pattern as Column (2)—core states receive disproportionately more benefits from federal grants when the president's party is strong in the state legislature.

Figure 2 further presents marginal plots of the instantaneous effects of core state on the federal grants allocation conditional on the party strength. I follow the method of marginal effects of binning estimators introduced by Hainmueller, Mummolo, and Xu (2017) and generate the marginal plots. This method relaxes the linear interaction effect assumption and flexibly allows for heterogeneity in how the conditional marginal effect changes across values of the Party Standing Index. In addition, it offers protection against the potential

problems of extrapolation or interpolation to areas where common support in the data is very sparse.[6] Figure 2 demonstrates a clearly growing effect of core state on federal grants distribution as the party competitiveness becomes stronger. And in the strong party standing binning, a significantly positive correlation between core states and more federal spending allocation appears

Electoral Purposes?

The other side of the core state targeting interpretation is about presidents targeting core voters for election purposes. That being said, a risk-averse president may target his co-partisans to solidify his partisan voting proclivity in elections. Kriner and Reeves (2015) have empirically tested the hypotheses concerning swing and core state targeting and the election cycle by including the interactions of the swing and core state variables with an election-year indicator. Here I conduct a similar analysis with some modifications. First, I keep using the 1-year adjustment to capture the *ex ante* influence of presidents on the federal grants distribution. Second, I take care of both *ex ante* and *ex post* influence of presidents in one model. Here, if year t or year $t-1$ is the presidential election year, I code it as "1". For instance, the appropriations bills for FY 2001 were passed in 2000 under a Democratic president, but most of the grants were allocated under a Republican president. I treat both 2000 and 2001 as election years. Therefore, the interaction term between *Core State* and *election year (t-1 and t)* can reveal the both *ex ante* and *ex post* influences of presidents on the core state targeting for electoral purposes. Third, here I also include the election year interaction with swing states. This aims to tease out how election years impact the core state targeting and the swing state targeting, respectively.

[6]For mathematical details, please see Jens Hainmueller, Jonathan Mummolo, and Yiqing Xu, "How Much Should We Trust Estimates from Multiplicative Interaction Models? Simple Tools to Improve Empirical Practice." February 13, 2017. Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=2739221 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2739221

Table 4: Electoral Concerns in Explaining Core State Targeting

	DV: Logged Federal Grants	
	Ex Ante	*Ex Ante & Ex Post*
	(1)	(2)
Core state	0.038*	0.037*
	(0.020)	(0.020)
Core state × election years (t-1)	0.016	
	(0.026)	
Core state × election years (t-1 and t)		0.009
		(0.020)
Swing state	0.031	0.029
	(0.021)	(0.020)
Swing state × election years (t-1)	0.058**	
	(0.029)	
Swing state × election years (t-1 and t)		0.034*
		(0.019)
MC from president's party	0.011	0.012
	(0.008)	(0.009)
MC from majority party	0.021*	0.021*
	(0.011)	(0.011)
Committee chair	−0.037	−0.038
	(0.029)	(0.029)
Appropriations / Ways and Means	−0.024*	−0.024*
	(0.013)	(0.013)
County population (logged)	0.235**	0.233**
	(0.098)	(0.099)
Poverty rate	0.004	0.004
	(0.002)	(0.002)
Income per capita	−0.0004	−0.0004
	(0.002)	(0.002)
County Fixed Effects	✓	✓
Year Fixed Effects	✓	✓
Observations	76,916	76,916
R^2	0.894	0.894

Notes:
1. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.
2. Robust standard errors are clustered by state.

Table 4 demonstrates to what extent electoral concerns can explain core state targeting. The insignificant interaction terms in both models indicate that core state targeting does not vary with the electoral calendar, even we consider both *ex ante* and *ex post* presidential influence on the federal grants allocation. The core state coefficients in both models are positive and statistically significant. However, the election year interactions are substantively small and not statistically significant. This suggests that core state targeting is *not* for the purpose of boosting electoral fortunes; instead, presidents channel federal grants to their partisan base in a constant manner. By contrast, swing state targeting is especially acute during election years, not significant in off years. This result shows that the president's strategy of targeting voters for electoral gain is used primarily in swing states rather than core states.

Akin to this analysis, Kriner and Reeves (2015, 164-166) found a very similar result in their work. Since they measured whether a state was a core state based on the president in power during the bulk of the fiscal year itself, so they privilege *ex post* influence. My results expose the *ex ante* itself and both *ex ante* and *ex post* presidential influence over budgetary allocations. In combination, I am confident to say that the electoral purposes are short of interpreting those grants disproportionately allocated to the core constituencies.

The President's Agenda

Rather than a function of party building activities or electoral considerations, the core state targeting, I argue, may instead reflect the president's policy priorities and general ideological orientation. Presidents from two parties have distinct ideologies and policy priorities that they believe best serve the national interest. For example, Democratic presidents advocate increasing tax rates and allocating more federal grants to bridging the educational gap between rich and poor communities. Coincidentally, many poor people who reside in the

socio-economically disadvantaged districts exhibit the most need for federal funds and have already been supporters of the Democratic party. On the other hand, Republican presidents believe that it is essential to preserve natural lands, so allocate funds through the Department of Interior. And the recipients of federal funding from the Department of Interior are primarily in rural places, and they are likely to be Republican. Hence, policy and budgetary tilting to the core constituencies is not the particularistic aim but the meaningful results of the president's ideology-driven policy priorities. In other words, presidents may achieve universalistic ends by particularistic means.

Advancing this line of thinking further, we can evaluate the flow of federal grants through federal agencies. The core state targeting can be caused *not* by the political bias of presidents; rather, by the more mission-driven priorities of agencies (see, for example, Berry and Gersen 2017; Krause and Meier 2003; Krause and O'Connell 2017). The presidency scholars have acknowledged that presidents can effectively exercise control over agency behavior through politicization and centralization (Lewis 2008; Lewis and Moe 2009); and meanwhile, presidents have *ex ante* and *ex post* influence on the federal fund appropriations (Berry, Burden, and Howell 2010). The administrative agencies make substantial efforts to ensure that the budget proposal reflects the president's policy priorities, and federal agencies execute a substantial portion of the federal grants. Therefore, the agencies, filled with partisan appointees who ideologically align with the presidents, also work more closely with the Executive Office of the Presidency would get more leverage in federal funding appropriation. For example, empirical evidence shows that in 2009, President Obama worked closely with Secretary of Education Arne Duncan to allocate a substantial proportion of federal money to create and advance their Race to the Top Initiative (Howell and Magazinnik 2017). Therefore, agencies do not weigh equally; and the effect of core state targeting can reasonably be a consequence of ideology-driven priorities of specific agencies.

To take into consideration the heterogeneity of federal funds allocated from different

agencies, I rely on the original CFFR dataset. The original dataset offers us an opportunity to filter the federal grants distribution by the federal agency because the original dataset contains the precise amount of money from each agency across counties over the years. So I benefit from the detailed agency code and disaggregate the dataset into county-year-agency panel format, which provides an opportunity to tease out the ideological distinction of presidents from different parties.

I employ two empirical strategies to test the ideological approach that can potentially explain the core state targeting. The first strategy is to run the same model specification in the agency-county-year panel datasets and, meanwhile, fix federal agencies. By adding agency fixed effects into the previous model, which has already fixed county and year, we can control the different impacts on federal grants allocation across federal agencies. Then, adding agency-by-county fixed effects, I account for all time-invariant characteristics – observable and unobservable – of both agencies and counties/districts, and the interactions between agencies and counties as well. In other words, fixing county and agency or fixing county by agency can partial out spending distributions that are caused by ideology-driven connection between the agency and the county. If the core state targeting still holds in the agency-county-year datasets, after fixing the agency, that indicates the partisan particularism of presidents. But if the core state effects are gone, it means that the core state benefit is driven by across-agency variation rather than within-agency variation. This suggests that the ideology approach can better explain the core state targeting that we observe.

The second empirical strategy is to interact the core state variable with a moderator that identifies whether an agency is ideologically aligned with the sitting president. Suppose the core state targeting is a function of the president's ideology and policy agenda. In that case, we should expect that the core state targeting only occurs under the condition that the agency's ideological tilt is aligned with the president. To identify those ideologically aligned agencies, I rely on David Lewis's (2008) agency categories in his book *The Politics*

of Presidential Appointments. Lewis attempted to identify agencies that tend to be consistently liberal, consistently conservative, or neither. He surveyed around thirty expertise of academics and Washington observers and used these expert survey responses to get estimates of which agencies are consistently liberal or conservative. Table A.1 in Appendix demonstrates that among 76 federal agencies, there are 22 consistently liberal agencies (e.g., African Development Foundation, Commission on Civil Rights, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Labor, and Social Security Administration, etc.) and 23 consistently conservative agencies (e.g., Commodity Futures Trading Commission, Department of Defense, Department of Interior, National Security Council, and Small Business Administration, etc.). Then, I code *Ideologically Aligned Agency* as "1" for those liberal agencies during the Democratic presidential administrations and those conservative agencies when the Republican presidents are sitting in the White House; "0" otherwise. In the model specification, I interact the core state with the ideologically aligned agency. If the core state targeting is a function of presidential ideology, we would expect to see a significantly positive point estimate for the interaction term. Formally,

$$\begin{aligned}\log(\text{outlays}_{i,j,t}) =& \beta_1 \textit{Core State}_{i,j,t-1} + \beta_2 \textit{ Ideologically Aligned Agency}_{j,t-1} + \\ & \beta_3 \textit{ Core State}_{i,j,t-1} \times \textit{Ideological Aligned Agency}_{j,t-1} + \\ & \mathbb{X}_{i,j,t-1}\Phi + \alpha_i + \gamma_j + \delta_{t-1} + \varepsilon_{i,j,t}.\end{aligned} \tag{6}$$

where subscript i refers to county, i refers to agency, and t year. And α_i, γ_j, δ_{t-1} are county, agency, and year fixed effects. Table A.2 in Appendix also reports a more robust specification with county by agency and year fixed effects, which shows very similar results.

Table 4 presents the results. Column (2) shows that after holding the agency constant—adding agency fixed effects—the point estimate of core state becomes very small and not statistically significant. Substantively, it shows that a core state would not receive disproportionately more grants within a specific agency. The result suggests that the core state

Table 5: Ideological Approach in Explaining Core State Targeting

	DV: Logged Federal Grants			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Core state	0.042**	0.018	0.018	−0.037
	(0.018)	(0.028)	(0.028)	(0.031)
Ideologically aligned agency			0.046**	−0.009
			(0.020)	(0.024)
Core state * Ideologically aligned agency				0.253***
				(0.061)
Swing state	0.046**	−0.020	−0.020	−0.020
	(0.019)	(0.021)	(0.021)	(0.022)
MC from president's party	0.012	0.020	0.020	0.019
	(0.009)	(0.013)	(0.013)	(0.013)
MC from majority party	0.021*	0.026*	0.026*	0.026*
	(0.011)	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.015)
Committee chair	−0.037	0.055	0.055	0.055
	(0.029)	(0.046)	(0.046)	(0.046)
Appropriations / Ways and Means	−0.024*	−0.004	−0.004	−0.004
	(0.013)	(0.012)	(0.012)	(0.012)
County population (logged)	0.233**	0.493***	0.492***	0.488***
	(0.099)	(0.069)	(0.070)	(0.069)
Poverty rate	0.004	0.015***	0.015***	0.014***
	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.003)
Income per capita	−0.0004	0.001	0.001	0.001
	(0.002)	(0.003)	(0.003)	(0.003)
County Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year Fixed Effects	✓	✓	✓	✓
Agency Fixed Effects		✓	✓	✓
Observations	76,916	612,036	612,036	612,036
R^2	0.894	0.496	0.496	0.496

Notes:
1. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.
2. For the purpose of convenient comparison, Column (1) is the same as Column (2) in Table 1.
3. Robust standard errors are clustered by state.

targeting happens only across agencies but not within agencies. It indicates that the presidents' ideological preference of federal agencies matters in the federal funding allocation. In sum, the core state targeting dissipates after considering the ideological details.

Furthermore, Columns (3) and (4) reveals that the core state targeting occurs via federal agencies that are ideologically aligned with the sitting presidents. In Model (3), the coefficient of ideologically aligned agencies is positive and statistically significant. Substantively, agencies preferred by the president, on average, are given more money, and that's true to all the counties and all the states. This would suggest that presidents are not particularist; rather, they have different sets of policy agendas that they believe best serve the national interests. Moreover, in Model (4), the interaction terms between core state and ideologically aligned agency is positive and statistically significant, and its magnitude is substantively larger than core state targeting with no condition on the agency. How we interpret this result? For example, Cook County in Illinois gets a lot of money from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under a Democratic president, and Blaine County in Montana gets a lot of grants from the Department of the Interior. Because Cook is urban and Blaine is very rural. Democratic presidents plan to improve the infrastructure in the urban Cook county, so the money is allocated through HUD. Republican presidents emphasize protecting and preserving the land in Blaine county, and the grants are distributed through the Department of Interior. Therefore, this evidence—the core state targeting only occurs through ideologically aligned agencies—suggests that the core state targeting is a function of presidential ideology and policy priority. And, this interpretation is less cynical and may push back the claim of presidential partisan particularism.

Conclusion

At the center of longstanding debates surrounding the American presidency are concerns about perspective and strategy. Do presidents work on behalf of the nation as a whole? Or, instead, do they attend to the material interests of their partisan base?

Prominent claims about presidential particularism rest on the empirical observation that core constituents of the president's party receive a disproportionate share of federal outlays. This paper further probes the interpretation of the core state targeting. It aims to call into question the strength and meaning of an intriguing finding and offer richer empirical evidence to reconsider the claim of presidential partisan particularism. A large body of formal theories on vote buying does not support the core voter logic. It suggests, instead, that targeting and rewarding core constituencies should not be presidents' rational actions to gain electoral advantage. Although the core state targeting is a robust empirical finding, its interpretation might be less cynical and less indicative of a particularist presidency. The paper offers three sets of evidence. First, when testing additional hypotheses that should hold if the party building interpretation were true, I find no evidence consistent with existing accounts of presidential particularism. Second, this core constituency targeting does not appear to be motivated by electoral concerns because it does not vary with the electoral calendar. Finally, I present additional evidence that suggests that presidential policy priorities and ideological commitments might better interpret core state targeting.

A great deal of uncertainty remains with respect to the debate between the president as a national leader or a particularistic advocate. This paper starts from this puzzle and contributes to the previous literature in several ways. First, I call into question the strength of the conclusions made by other scholars around presidential particularism. I extend the electoral and party building line of argument and derive an empirically testable corollary from the original interpretation. Also, I offer empirical evidence for other potential interpre-

tations on the core state targeting. This is an empirical exercise to comprehensively explore the meaning of an interesting and bold finding that potentially has various interpretations. Second, by reviewing formal theoretical literature, I attempt to link the empirical evidence with respect to co-partisan constituency targeting to the rich formal theories on vote buying and distributive politics. This opens up future research opportunities to further develop our theoretical comprehension of presidential behavior with better formal models. Third, building upon Galvin's (2010) concept of the party competitive standing, which relies on archival and anecdotal evidence, I have created a quantified measurement of the party competitive environment. This enables us to explain the presidential partisan motivation more rigorously.

To be clear, a variety of uncertainties persist. In all of this scholarship, the distinct influence of legislators, presidents, and bureaucrats remains a matter of ongoing dispute. The precise nature of the bargaining relationship between these actors, moreover, is often underspecified. And the generalizability of these findings to other periods of American political history remains unknown. Just now, though, one thing can be stated clearly: that strong supporters of the president's party receive more federal outlays, to the extent that the finding is true and robust, is not obvious evidence of presidential particularism; rather, it may simply be an artifact of the president's larger policy agenda that is channeled through a federal bureaucracy.

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Online Appendix

Table A.1: Agency Ideologies Based on Expert Surveys, 1988–2005

Liberal	*Moderate*	*Conservative*
African Development Foundation	Broadcasting Board of Governors/USIA	Commodity Futures Trading Commission
Appalachian Regional Commission	Department of Agriculture	Council of Economic Advisers
Commission on Civil Rights	Department of Energy	Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board
Consumer Product Safety Commission	Department of Justice	Department of Commerce
Corporation for National and Community Service	Department of State	Department of Defense
Council on Environmental Quality	Department of Transportation	Department of Homeland Security
Department of Education	Department of Veterans Affairs	Department of Interior
Department of Health and Human Services	Executive Residence at the White House	Department of the Air Force
Department of Housing and Urban Development	Farm Credit Administration	Department of the Army
Department of Labor	Federal Communications Commission	Department of the Navy
Environmental Protection Agency	Federal Election Commission	Department of the Treasury
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	Federal Housing Finance Board	Export-Import Bank of the United States
Federal Labor Relations Authority	Federal Maritime Commission	Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation
Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service	Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission	National Security Council
Merit Systems Protection Board	Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board	Nuclear Regulatory Commission
National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities	Federal Trade Commission	Office of Management and Budget
	General Services Administration	Office of National Drug Control Policy
National Mediation Board	Inter-American Foundation	Office of the U.S. Trade Representative
National Science Foundation	National Aeronautics and Space Administration	Overseas Private Investment Corporation
Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission	National Archives and Records Administration	Securities and Exchange Commission
	National Capital Planning Commission	Small Business Administration
Peace Corps	National Credit Union Administration	Trade and Development Agency
Social Security Administration	National Labor Relations Board	U.S. International Trade Commission
U.S. Agency for International Development	Office of Administration	
	Office of Government Ethics	
	Office of Personnel Management	
	Office of Science and Technology Policy	
	Office of Special Counsel	
	National Transportation Safety Board	
	Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation	
	Railroad Retirement Board	

Table A.2: Robustness Check of Ideological Approach in Explaining Core State Targeting

	DV: Logged Federal Funds	
	(1)	(2)
Core state	0.008	−0.032
	(0.047)	(0.053)
Ideologically aligned agency		−0.017
		(0.053)
Core state × Ideologically aligned agency		0.215***
		(0.063)
Swing state	−0.011	−0.010
	(0.039)	(0.039)
MC from president's party	0.013	0.012
	(0.016)	(0.016)
MC from majority party	0.009	0.010
	(0.018)	(0.018)
Committee chair	0.071*	0.069*
	(0.041)	(0.041)
Appropriations / Ways and Means	−0.018	−0.019
	(0.021)	(0.021)
County population (logged)	0.436***	0.430***
	(0.115)	(0.115)
Poverty rate	0.011**	0.010**
	(0.004)	(0.004)
Income per capita	0.003	0.003
	(0.004)	(0.004)
County × Agency Fixed Effects	✓	✓
Year Fixed Effects	✓	✓
Observations	612,036	612,036
R^2	0.621	0.621

Notes:
1. *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01.