

## **Presidential Productivity and the Race for Reelection**

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### **Abstract**

It is unclear how increased activity and stress during reelection campaigns affects president's ability to maintain typical productivity. The hypothesis tested in this research posits that they increase demands, which in turn forces bargaining and compromises on the president's time and attention to the extent that productivity decreases across certain executive actions. However, evaluating how these vary over president's time in office suggests quite the opposite; across multiple presidencies, the executive is consistently more productive during the year before Election Day in the amount of legislation signed and the number of signing statements. This holds true for both political parties and across differing levels of unity between Congress and the president.

### **1. Introduction**

The United States' national election process can be described in a single word: exhausting. Exposure to rampant media coverage undoubtedly contributes to this perception. In the 24-hour news cycle, election stories are common fodder whenever there is room for any campaign speculation. These stories begin to pick up well before the election year. It is difficult to be a consumer of news and not be familiar with the repetitive discussions about who will announce their candidacy when, potential running mates, early polling results, and particulars about platform issues that potential candidates and parties face. Then, the actual election year coverage seems endless: state-by-state primaries, party conventions, Vice Presidential news, donor coverage, and voting rights issues. The debates. The scandals. The ever repetitive, never-ending campaign advertisements.

The question begs: is undergoing the rigors of a presidential campaign as exhausting as it is to watch? Of particular interest is to what extent incumbent presidents make concessions and compromises on their time, energy, and focus in order to effectively campaign. In his memoirs, former president Lyndon B. Johnson described his reelection experience; "The growing burdens of office exact an enormous physical toll on the man himself and place incredible demands on his time under these circumstances. The old belief that a president can carry out the responsibilities of the office and at the same time undergo the rigors of campaigning is, in my opinion, no longer valid."<sup>1</sup>

The hypothesis reflects this sentiment; it is argued that, due to the additional stress and activity inherent in campaigning, incumbent presidents are less productive during the year prior to Election Day (in terms of specific powers and activities). Should this hold, it would lend support to those who want the 22<sup>nd</sup> Amendment repealed, which limits presidents to two, four-year terms. Many believe a single, uninterrupted six-year term would be more preferable, and the reasons described by Johnson are at the center of their argument. Buchanan calls this the "Needless Burden".<sup>2</sup>

Following the review of relevant research is a theoretical account of the hypothesis. Independent variables and their causal mechanisms are also detailed. In the Measurement section, the scope of the analysis is justified and data sources are provided in detail. Next presented is data coding and summary statistics. Then, the hypothesis is

analyzed with the use of several means tests represented in a number of tables. Finally, three theoretical alternative explanations are explored, followed by a Conclusion.

## 2. Literature Review

Much of the literature concerned with the election cycle and various aspects of the presidency focuses on the permanent campaign and its implications. This concept was popularized by Blumenthal, who described how politicians increasingly turned to consultants in order to maximize their polling approval and media exposure.<sup>3</sup> In this regard, Blumenthal was primarily concerned that this trend constituted “engineered consent”. In other words, the public's perception of politics was manufactured and their freedom of voting choice was therefore compromised. According to Doherty, the general understanding of the permanent campaign broadened to encompass a large range of campaign strategies employed throughout a president's term.<sup>4</sup>

What type of strategies have administrations used over the course of the election cycle? Existing studies have focused particularly on White House staffing,<sup>5</sup> polling,<sup>6</sup> shaping policy messages,<sup>7</sup> disaster declarations,<sup>8</sup> and domestic travel.<sup>4</sup> Due to the nature of these strategies and the fact none of them are evaluated here, there is little concern that any permanent campaign effects will disrupt this research.

Several studies have demonstrated relationships between the presidential campaign cycle and various policies initiated by the executive. However, these have predominately dealt with domestic economic policies<sup>9</sup> <sup>10</sup> or military action.<sup>11</sup> Stoll<sup>12</sup> falls into the latter camp and focuses exclusively on the relationship between political strategies for reelection and the use of military force. There appears to be no prior literature that investigates the possible affects presidential reelection campaigns have on administrations' ability to function as they otherwise would. This research will shed light on the functional capacity of presidents and their administrations during the period of heightened stress and activity preceding Election Day.

### 2.1. Previous Findings on Executive Orders

Mayer demonstrated that presidents issue more executive orders while in the midst of a reelection campaign.<sup>13</sup> While this is in contradiction to the hypothesis, there was not a significant difference in the number of orders issued during election years when presidents were running and when they were not seeking reelection. He concludes start-of-term and end-of-term strategies have a larger affect on the issuance of executive orders than affects from the campaign cycle itself. One possible explanation is that campaigning presidents find it expedient to take advantage of the political spotlight that accompanies national elections by issuing more of these. Likewise, it could be argued that presidents not seeking reelection employ end-of-term strategies that champion their political party in ways not unlike a campaign. By issuing more orders, executives (and their respective party) hope to appear strong and initiative. Executive orders are amongst the most visible forms of executive action because they have a strong ability to shape federal policy. As such, a campaigning administration may place a slightly higher priority on issuing these, while the frequency of other executive actions decline in accordance with my theory. Mayer's findings will be expanded on here by including later administrations and evaluating whether his conclusion still holds.

## 3. Theory

What effect does seeking reelection have on the president's ability to maintain typical productivity? The hypothesis posits that it decreases productivity amongst the majority of tested variables (specifically signed legislation, signing statements, proclamations, foreign travel, and communications with Congress as well as with foreign legislatures). Campaign obligations are a major priority that heightens their stress and activity levels dramatically. This places additional demands on the president's time and attention. Considering how innately stressful, active, and demanding the president's job is to begin with, they must sometimes resort to bargaining and compromising focus between their two positions: the Executive and the candidate. Administrations and strategists know that the security of the former relies on the success of the latter. It is therefore in presidents' interests to, if possible, prioritize campaigning duties over typical ones when they are unable to accomplish both. Thus, where campaign demands are so great that they force bargaining and compromising on the president's time and attention, certain powers and activities are employed less often than is typical.

The independent variable is presidential Campaign Status, which varies by periods when a reelection campaign is underway (“campaigning period”) and when there is no explicit campaigning effort (“non-campaigning period”). There is no convenient start and stop to the election cycle. One operational option is to count the number of days traveling on the campaign trail. However, this poses some issues, particularly concerning more modern administrations. Campaigning today involves more than domestic traveling to make speeches. Presidents attend fundraising events, are involved in creating advertisements, follow their opponent’s progress, and are briefed on all things campaign related. Precise measurement is further complicated because sitting presidents can easily gain political capital in ways not strictly related to campaigning. Everything the president does publicly during election season has the ability to influence voters. For these reasons, it is more accurate to operationalize Campaign Status with fixed temporal boundaries. For the purposes of this analysis, the Campaigning Period encompasses the year before Election Day. A president’s first three years and entire second term therefore constitute the non-campaigning period.

The dependent variables consist of various powers and activities that can be quantified in order to evaluate productivity. These include signed legislation, signing statements, pocket vetoes, executive orders, proclamations, news conferences, foreign travel, communication with foreign legislatures, major national addresses, and addresses and letters to Congress. Scholastic research has shown the use and frequency of unilateral powers in particular is dependent on Congressional checks (of which there are relatively few), and furthermore, individual executive actions should be studied in context of the larger political system.<sup>14</sup> If the hypothesis holds however, a significant measure of aggregate presidential actions concurrent with reelection campaign periods should decline compared to other years, regardless of situational politics and the unique events that shape them.

For each presidency and administration, it is expected that there are priority variation which affect how often different powers and activities are employed. Taken in aggregate, frequency should decrease for the majority of observations (it is predicted that a few will experience an increase or no relationship). On the individual administrative level, some variables are expected to contradict the general hypothesis due to anticipated priority variations. In other words, it is expected that some presidencies may favor particular activities, like foreign travel or pocket vetoes. Productivity may not decrease in those individual cases, but it should across aggregate presidencies.

### 3.1. Signed Legislation, Signing Statements, & Pocket Vetoes

One concern with considering signed legislation, signing statements, and pocket vetoes is they all rely directly on the legislative process before the president has an opportunity to respond in action. Nevertheless, it is worth measuring simply to establish the relationship (should there be one), although these are expected to be weaker. Hogue found that, on average, the Senate approves fewer court nominations and actually spends less time in session during national election years in order to make time for campaign activities.<sup>15</sup> If Congress is uniformly less active during the presidents’ campaigning periods, there is likely a measurable decline in the amount of bills and other legislation being passed on to the president.

A strong relationship between campaigning period effects and signing statements is expected. Statements indicate that the president has a greater interest in the policy matter at hand. But in the midst of a time-consuming reelection campaign, I predict that presidents have had fewer opportunities to craft political pontification when its not strictly necessary for the legislation to become law. In aggregate then, signing statements should be issued less over the year prior to Election Day.

Essentially, pocket vetoes are a way for the president to prevent a bill from becoming law without vetoing it with signature. By leaving it on their desk for too long without action, it is *de facto* dead. Departing from the main mechanism, I predict that pocket veto use varies across Campaign Status by *increasing* during the campaigning period. Perhaps the incumbent president is so overburdened with campaigning on top of typical activities that they are more likely to leave an unfavorable bill to die on the desk.

### 3.2. Public Activities

As leader of the nation, there are also a number of important public activities that should be evaluated to determine variations in a president’s productivity during campaigning periods, these include foreign travel, formal addresses (to Congress, the nation, foreign legislatures, and college commencements) and news conferences. However, several activities will be omitted: Domestic travel and speech making are not only common public activities of presidents but also major political campaigning strategies. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish between travel and speech that is campaign versus non-campaign related. It could be argued that all speeches - major and minor -

delivered during a reelection bid are essentially campaign speeches to the extent that they all have the ability to sway voters' decisions. Additionally, several activities do not vary in frequency: State of the Union Addresses, weekly addresses, and economic reports.

The hypothesis for both foreign travel and communication with foreign legislatures is that they decrease during the campaigning period. Even during years when foreign policy concerns take center stage, presidents must appeal to American voters by being particularly engaged with domestic issues. Not only does this afford foreign activities less expediency, it simply leaves less time to devote to such endeavors. Significant variation in formal national addresses is not expected because these tend to occur in response to major national or international events. Contrary to other variables, I expect news conferences to increase during the reelection period, as it is an easy way for the president to gain political capital within the campaign.

## 4. Methodology

Data on several powers and activities was collected on a month-by-month basis in a time-series section. This method was ideal for several reasons. Only two days that fall in the campaigning period are lost (these are Election Day and November 1<sup>st</sup>). It provided more detail and accuracy for analysis than yearly sums would. Errors were more easily detected and the process of double-checking data collection was made feasible. Also, it allowed for more analysis flexibility, particularly in controlling for varying levels of unity between Congress and the president. Yearly measurement would have to begin and end with November (for twelve months of campaigning before Election Day) and therefore accounts for government transitions less accurately.

To maintain focus on the affects of modern reelection campaigning, only administrations that follow Franklin D. Roosevelt's served time were considered. The time-series begins when Truman officially takes over the office in April of 1945. This is ideal because it omits the many irregularities of FDR's presidency (the number of terms, New Deal legislation, and the majority of the war efforts). Finally, the Truman administration most closely coincides with the end of World War II with roughly six months overlap.

### 4.1. Sources & Accuracy

The availability of data was the determining factor in whether each variable could ultimately be included for analysis. Initially, I pursued the most official resources for recent data, only to discover that in most cases these are more incomplete than databases other researchers have compiled. For example, the "Briefing Room" is a White House website feature that claims to "provide timely and accurate information about the President's latest events and public statements".<sup>16</sup> Compared to The American Presidency Project, an online database established by Woolley and Peters at UC Santa Barbara however, it becomes quickly obvious that the official White House online database archive contains several errors.<sup>17</sup> For instance, the nomination of Hillary Clinton as Secretary of State is nowhere to be found on that section of the website. Additionally, some documents appear to be misplaced, duplicated, and missing. The Executive Order database erroneously includes Messages to Congress (see October and November 2011) and Proclamations (see April 2011). There are two separate entries with different titles for Executive Order 13532, but the content of both are identical (there is no given explanation for this). Under normal expectations, official government website databases would be the most reliable and accurate, but the impressive number of errors observed led to searches for alternative academic resources.

The majority of the data comes from the American Presidency Project. Specifically, this includes data for signing statements, pocket vetoes, executive orders, proclamations, news conferences, communication with foreign legislatures, major national addresses, addresses to Congress, and letters to Congress. The collection process involved sorting the archives by date and manually counting the frequency of each action per month of each year. Random error undoubtedly occurred. To minimize this effect, a key term search coupled the visual account. For example, searching the entire webpage for "March" reveals the total number of times the word appears on the page. Clicking through each of the results further ensured they each represent individual dates. Therefore, instances in which the word "March" was included in the title or content of an entry were not counted.

There are a couple concerns with the American Presidency Project as a source. First, the citations of most documents are the government documents themselves, rather than where the records of them were found. However, the text of each is in full, supporting its legitimacy. Also, many record types include numerical ordering in their titles. Unlike official resources, no apparent absent records were observed. The second concern about the American Presidency Project is all data involving vetoes. Their pocket vetoes archives do not match the total numbers that the

Library of Congress reports, however, it is the only source I was able to find that provided individual veto records in making their claims. Nowhere else could records be located by month, rather than yearly totals that would unsuitable for this analysis.

Signed legislation data came from The Library of Congress (online) (archive can be accessed by choosing “signed by the president” under the ‘state in Legislative Process category, see link in References).<sup>18</sup> This particular set likely contains the greatest random error due to the nature of the data collection process. Each individual bill had to be viewed on its own page in order to assess the date signed into law, and each Congress sent hundreds and in some cases thousands individual pieces of legislation to the president’s desk. To reduce these errors, it was verified that one hundred pieces of legislations were accounted for each page of data (with the exception of the last pages of every Congress, each page contains one hundred entries). Still, given the sheer amount of information shifted through (over 11,000 individual legislations), plus the fact that final counts were done so independently, it is likely that some random errors are present. Foreign travel information was gathered from the online archive from the Office of the Historian.<sup>19</sup> A count was awarded for each country or leader visited rather than the number of days traveling, for multiple countries were often visited in the same day.

## 4.2. Coding

To represent Campaign Status, each month-year unit that occurs during the campaigning period (which encompasses the October prior to Election Day through the previous November) is coded with '1'. All other months spent in office are considered non-campaigning periods (0). To identify Executive Party, Democrats are represented with '0', while Republicans with '1'. Senate and House Majorities, and Party in Control of Congress are coded in the same manner. Concerning unity and divisions in Government, '1' is coded for instances of fully Unified Government, '2' is given to Split Congresses (regardless of which party controls which House), and '3' distinguishes Divided Governments. To account for changing Presidencies, an exit/entry variable was created. A President receives '1' for their entry month and '1' for the month they exit (all other months are coded '0'). This allows for representation of the month that office transitions take place; both presidents’ actions are accounted for and distinguishable during their first and last months in office.

## 4.3. Summary Statistics

846 month-year events were collected in a time-series. Summary statistics for each tested variables are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. summary statistics of aggregate presidencies by Campaign Status

Variable	Sum	Mean	Median	Mode	Skew	Min	Max	<i>SD</i>
SignedLegislation	11,337	22.32	13	0	3.52	0	250	30.5
Signing Statements	1,998	2.36	1	0	5.38	0	58	4.57
Pocket Vetoes	235	0.28	0	0	6.46	0	14	1.39
Executive Orders	4,133	4.89	4	3	1.83	0	28	3.44
Proclamations	6,555	7.76	6	3	1.33	0	35	5.67
News Conferences	1,523	1.8	1	1	0.99	0	9	1.56
Foreign Travel	1,533	1.81	0	0	2.53	0	27	3.71
Communication with Foreign Legislatures	66	0.08	0	0	5.51	0	4	0.34
Major National Addresses	235	0.28	0	0	1.94	0	3	0.53
Addresses to Congress	30	0.04	0	0	5.02	0	1	0.19
Letters to Congress	2,333	2.76	2	1	1.96	0	23	2.83

The Sum shows the total number of times each power or activity has been utilized from Truman in April 1945 to President Obama in September 2014. Throughout this time, presidents have given very few Congressional addresses (30) and have communicated with foreign legislatures fairly rarely (66), which makes it difficult to draw any sound conclusions here. The skew is so positive because, for each variable, there were typical extreme outliers for one or two months. For this reason the median is a better indicator than the mean to represent the average number of times each activity occurs in a given month. As seen by the minimum counts, each variable experienced at least one month of total inaction. The maximum monthly totals of each were outliers, which again contributes to the extreme positive skewness. This irregular distribution also results in high standard deviations. Foreign travel is represented by the number of countries and/or leaders visited on average each month rather than the number of days traveled.

## 5. Analysis

Table 1.1. Aggregate Presidencies by Campaign Status

Variables	Non-Campaign Mean	Reelection Mean	<i>P</i>
Signed Legislation	20.15	32.62	0.005
Signing Statements	2.05	4.05	0.001
Pocket Vetoes	0.27	0.34	0.31
Executive Orders	4.94	4.63	0.13
Proclamations	7.63	8.15	0.19
News Conferences	1.82	1.71	0.22
Foreign Travel	1.92	1.26	0.02
Communication to Foreign Legislatures	0.08	0.07	0.34
Major National Addresses	0.28	0.28	0.5
Addresses to Congress	0.03	0.05	0.28
Letters to Congress	2.82	2.43	0.03

To test for a relationship between reelection campaigns and presidential productivity, two samples were disaggregated based on Campaign Status. Table 1 shows that aggregate means across presidencies largely do not conform to my hypothesis. There is very little variation in the average number of pocket vetoes, proclamations, news conferences, foreign travel, communication to foreign legislatures, and addresses and letters to Congress across Campaign Status. Only four variables followed the predicted patterns, but did so weakly. During campaigning periods, presidents tend to issue more pocket vetoes, while foreign travel and communication to foreign legislatures decrease. These appear insignificant. As no relationship in regards to major national addresses was predicted, its result is particularly satisfying; there was a mean of 0.28 addresses per month across Campaign Status and the p value was 0.5, meaning that, statistically, there is zero relationship.

Contrary to my hypothesis, many variables experience significant frequency increases during the campaigning period. Signed legislation during the non-campaigning period averaged 20.15 pieces per month. This increased to an averaged 32.62 pieces when reelections were underway. For all of my results, there was significantly more legislation signed during the campaigning period than other times. Signing statement averages nearly doubled from

2.05 per month during non-campaigning to 4.05 during reelections. This action is less related to Congress than it is the president making a politically motivated statement. One explanation for these finding is they reflect Congress and the president's willingness to capitalize on political spotlight afforded by election years. Or maybe they feel the public scrutiny behind that spotlight and are motivated to appear more active given the upcoming election and their interest to win.

It is interesting that slightly fewer executive orders have been issued during campaigning periods, while Mayer found the opposite to be true.<sup>13</sup> This is likely due to differences in measurement rather than inaccurate counts. However, given he only found a slight variation as well, it is completely possible that fifteen additional years of observations altered the existing trend. Additional research should be done to verify this.

Focus then shifted on individual presidencies and administrations in order to isolate individual behavior and priorities. Almost all variables followed similar patterns as the aggregate averages, and the hypothesis was largely unsupported. Signed legislation and signing statements tend to experience the most dramatic increases during the campaigning period. Foreign travel and communications to foreign legislatures tend to slightly decrease across most presidents' Campaign Statuses. Many presidents held slightly more news conferences during reelections, but these were also insignificant. As predicted, the frequency of major national addresses appears to have an insignificant relationship with campaign status.

Table 1.2 demonstrates how the Obama Administration has irregular variation compared others. There is incredibly little variation at all across Campaign Status, particular in the areas of signed legislation, signing statements, executive orders, and proclamations.

Table 1.2. President Obama's Productivity by Campaign Status

Variables	Non-Campaign Mean	Campaign Mean	<i>P</i>
Signed Legislation	12.37	12.08	0.48
Signing Statements	0.42	0.42	0.49
Pocket Vetoes	0	0	-
Executive Orders	2.7	2.75	0.45
Proclamations	12.16	12.25	0.48
News Conferences	1.65	1.92	0.32
Foreign Travel	1.95	2.58	0.33
Communication to Foreign legislatures	0.07	0	0.02
Major National Addresses	0.09	0.33	0.06
Addresses to Congress	0.04	0.08	0.29
Letters to Congress	2.75	2.25	0.15

The Obama administration was unique in another way; the Election of 2012 marked the first time candidates heavily utilized online media strategies. One study found the President's campaign posted close to four times as much content and utilized nearly twice as many social media platforms than did the opposition<sup>20</sup>. The results of my tests suggest that, should there be some relationship here (between President Obama's consistent productivity levels and employing Internet media reelection strategies), it has nothing to do with the causal mechanism of my hypothesis. Why? This type of strategy likely shifts some degree of activity away from the president and on to campaign interns and staffers who are wholly devoted to posting social media content. Had the hypothesis held, it could be theorized

that this eased the resulting stress and demands on the president, which in turn led to less bargaining and compromising and more consistent productivity. Productivity decreases among previous presidencies would be observable. Clearly, however, this is not the case.

Alternatively, the political spotlight hypothesis could potentially explain why signed legislation and signing statement productivity, as shown in Table 1.2, was so consistent while it increased dramatically during every other presidents' campaigning periods (since Truman). Perhaps politicians will begin to rely more heavily on online media campaign strategies rather than speeding up the flow of their legislative processes. Or maybe the irregularities displayed by this administration all comes down to the unique behavior of individual presidents and their teams. Scholarly attention should be given to future reelection periods to investigate if this productivity trend continues, and if so, whether the Internet-driven campaign has any relation to it.

### 5.1. Control Tests: Executive Party and Executive/Legislative (dis)unity

Perhaps productivity is more affected by reelections based on other factors. Two controls were considered: executive party and varying levels of unity and disunity between the president and Congress, in terms of party control.

The hypothesis for executive party was that there may be some characteristic or behavioral differences that would be a better predictor of decreased productivity during the campaigning period. One explanation may be that Republican presidents are more prone to increased stresses during their campaign periods than their Democratic counterparts. Why? As conservatives favoring tradition and convention in a society that has undergone rapid social progression, the burden is placed on them to convince minorities that they deserve their votes over Democrats, the party that has been more supportive of civil rights expansions. This increases stress and possibly activity, resulting in larger demands and more compromises on their time and focus, thus leaving less to devote towards typical presidential duties.

Table 2. Aggregate Presidencies By Executive Party And Campaign Status

Variables	Democrats			Republicans		
	<i>Non-Campaign Mean</i>	<i>Reelection Mean</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Non-Campaign Mean</i>	<i>Reelection Mean</i>	<i>P</i>
Signed Legislation	18.05	24.16	0.12	21.9	38.96	0.01
Signing Statements	2.17	3.54	0.03	1.93	4.49	0.006
Pocket Vetoes	0.16	0.05	0.03	0.37	0.58	0.2
Executive Orders	5.72	5.41	0.26	4.2	3.97	0.21
Proclamations	7.0	8.18	0.05	8.33	8.13	0.39
News Conferences	2.16	1.95	0.17	1.5	1.5	0.49
Foreign Travel	1.72	1.26	0.15	2.1	1.26	0.02
Communication to Foreign Legislatures	0.08	0.05	0.16	0.08	0.08	0.47
Major National Addresses	0.19	0.21	0.38	0.36	0.33	0.37
Addresses to Congress	0.03	0.08	0.1	0.03	0.01	0.13
Letters to Congress	3.16	2.31	0.003	2.5	2.53	0.47

As seen in Table 2, Campaign Status samples were divided further by president's political party (in aggregate, not individual). Significant correlations indicate that during campaigning periods, Democratic presidents consistently issue more signing statements (1.37 per month) and proclamations (1.18 per month). During the same time, they issue fewer pocket vetoes (0.11 per month) and letters to Congress (0.85). On the other side of the aisle, Republicans issue about 2.56 more signing statements and take 0.84 fewer trips to foreign countries per month. While statistically significant, most of these findings are weak because they vary so little. That campaigning Republican presidents sign an average of 17.06 more pieces of legislation per month than Democrats is substantial and interesting, but it is unknown why this is. More research should be devoted to differences in party and how they affect this productivity variation across the Campaign Status.

Divided Government typically refers to any case in which one party does not control the Executive and both Houses. This is unsatisfactory for controlling for varying levels of unity and division between Congress and the President. It does not distinguish between Congresses under divided control and so called "lame duck presidencies" in which both houses are controlled by the president's party opponents. It is important to account and control for both separately in order to account for how these variations affect the executive. Under a 'lame duck' presidency for example, it is less likely a Democratic president's executive would orders go unopposed by a Republican controlled Congress. This particular scenario will therefore be referred to as 'Divided Government', while Congress under the control of both parties will be called a 'Split Congress'. In a 'Unified Government', a single party controls the Legislature and Executive branches.

Table 3 - Unity and Division between Executive and Legislative Branches

	Single Party Control			Split Congress			Divided Government		
Variables	<i>Non-Campaign Mean</i>	<i>Campaign Mean</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Non-Campaign Mean</i>	<i>Campaign Mean</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Non-Campaign Mean</i>	<i>Campaign Mean</i>	<i>P</i>
Signed Legislation	20.53	31.08	0.06	18.59	27.5	0.17	21.14	36.86	0.03
Signing Statements	2.1	3.28	0.09	1.79	2.41	0.3	2.12	4.97	0.003
Pocket Vetoes	0.17	0.03	0.1	0.32	0.55	0.35	0.33	0.44	0.28
Executive Orders	6.05	4.9	0.01	4.28	3.22	0.01	4.31	4.92	0.06
Proclamation	6.56	7.92	0.03	9.55	12.41	0.06	7.78	6.97	0.11
News Conferences	2.48	1.77	0.02	1.27	0.95	0.11	1.52	1.9	0.02
Foreign Travel	1.66	1.23	0.24	1.49	1.86	0.32	2.33	1.09	0.0009
Communication to Foreign Legislatures	0.06	0	0.0005	0.06	0.14	0.24	0.11	0.08	0.31
Major National Addresses	0.26	0.25	0.49	0.31	0.36	0.35	0.28	0.26	0.39

Addresses to Congress	0.04	0.03	0.47	0.04	0.05	0.41	0.03	0.06	0.18
Letters to Congress	2.62	2.59	0.06	2.72	2.18	0.09	3.04	2.42	0.03

Table 3 shows that controlling for varying levels of unity does substantially change variation. The amounts of legislation signed during campaigning periods continue to decrease across varying levels of unity and divisions. The variation that occurs under Divided Governments is the most significant, and also where the highest means occur across Campaign Status (regarding signed legislation). Also under Divided Governments, presidents tend to take fewer vacations during campaigning periods than any other times. These tests have demonstrated that fewer foreign travel trips are taken during this time in general. It can be speculated that operated in an environment where political opponents control the legislative branch likely encourages the president to focus on domestic issues and campaigning even more than they otherwise would.

## 6. Conclusions

The hypothesis that increased activities that occur with reelection campaigns create a stunted affect in the President's ability to maintain typical productivity of certain powers and activities is easily rejected. While foreign travel significantly decreases during this time, the findings of this study suggest it is unlikely that presidents avoid trips because they are too busy with campaigning. If this were the case, other productivity decreases would have been observed. Rather, trips are likely not considered politically expedient during this time to begin with. There are however significant frequency increases in signed legislation and signing statements issued during presidents' campaigning periods, and more research needs to be done in order to determine the nature of this relationship. Major national addresses appear to be unrelated to Campaign Status, regardless of the executive's political party or the varying levels of unity within government. For the measure used, the finding for executive orders contradicted that of previous work in that they decrease slightly while presidents run for reelection.<sup>13</sup>

Finally, there is no significant relationship between the frequency of other variables and a president's campaign status, although individual administrations vary here (see appendix). The findings are consistent when controlling for the president's political party and three varying levels of unity and disunity between the Executive and Legislative branches. Perhaps most importantly, this study demonstrates the unique analysis that can be performed with this sort of data. It would greatly aid the researching community if such information was verified and made comprehensive, and accessible through the appropriate official entities.

## 7. Acknowledgements

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