

Enduring Rivals: Presidential Success and Support in the House of Representatives

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Abstract

We compare presidents' legislative support and success at the vote level of analysis. In so doing, we remind readers that these two outcomes measures, collected by Congressional Quarterly, Inc., may or may not reflect presidential agenda preferences. Success refers to a victory for the president on his vote positions, while support refers to margin of legislators taking the same position on the vote as the president. The vote level provides numerous characteristics of the legislation itself that serve as useful predictors of these two presidential position outcomes. These include its substantive nature, the stage of the vote on the floor, and the issue area of the vote. In addition to the characteristics of the votes themselves, we also incorporate presidential resources and environmental conditions. Virtually all of the component variables within these three concepts contribute to explaining presidents' legislative success and support in the House. We also find that, while models of overall House success and support perform similarly, controlling for party coalitional support dramatically alters the observed relationships. Therefore, without this further analysis, scholars risk misinterpreting the relationship between the president and Congress. Although we have not measured influence, we believe that these findings raise important implications for scholars of presidential-congressional relations and also suggest avenues for further research.

The year 1994 witnessed an historic election in which Republicans seized control of the House of Representatives for the first time in over 40 years. Once again the American electorate demonstrated an aversion to unified party control of government and effectively reined in an activist Democratic president. Yet, the GOP takeover of the House also signaled a significant power shift from the executive branch to Congress with respect to the national legislative agenda. Even in foreign policy, where executives' prerogative powers may be at their greatest, Republican legislators put the president on the defensive. Not only was President Clinton the first president in 25 years to fail to secure "fast-track" trade authority, but the GOP also forced the Clinton administration to accept a State Department reorganization

plan and defeated the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (*Economist* 2000). Needless to say, the enduring rivalry between the president and Congress for agenda control can frustrate policy making as each institution attempts to realize its own public policy preferences. Indeed, Thurber (1996, 13) writes, "the give-and-take between national and local representation, deliberation and efficiency, openness and accountability, specific interests and the 'public good' ensures a certain amount of confrontation between Congress and the president."

Although the above events were unusual, the rivalry between Congress and the president has deepened in recent years and become increasingly partisan. In order to gauge such conflict, researchers have devised numerous measures based on presidential position taking and member voting in both the House and Senate. For a period of 50 years, Congressional Quarterly, Inc. (CQ) has compiled interesting and important measures of presidential-congressional relations. Often using sophisticated multivariate analyses, scholars have referred to these measures as reflecting particular concepts, such as success, support, concurrence, leadership, or influence (Edwards 1989; Shull 1983, 1997; Shull and Shaw 1999; Bond and Fleisher 1990; Peterson 1990). Although all of these notions have appeared in the scholarly literature, sometimes they are used interchangeably and thus, we believe, incorrectly.

Success and support should not be interpreted as measuring influence, but they may be components of this broader concept. Ironically, this diverse terminology usually refers to one single relationship between the first two branches of our national government (i.e., congruence of preferences). The extensive utilization of these concepts has prompted debate about what they actually measure, which leads us to compare the two most widely used CQ indicators that are currently available, legislative success and support for presidents on their floor roll call vote positions in Congress.

While these measures may not capture the full relationship between Congress and the president, they do provide useful information about the strength of bargaining and the similarity of preferences on issues before the House. If success refers to victory for presidents (or concurrence of preferences on vote positions), support refers to the margin of such concurrence (Ragsdale 1998). Why presidents want victories is obvious but why should the size of member support matter to presidents? Much congressional literature refers to elements of vote margin. Riker (1962) spoke of the desirability of "minimum winning coalitions," arguing that efforts are wasted to gain more votes than necessary to achieve the desired outcome. In the age of divided government and enduring institutional rivalries, however, margin also seems to matter. Krehbiel (1998, xiv) argues that "winning coalitions are almost always greater than minimum majority sized." Thus, minimum winning coalitions rarely occur in recent times. Accordingly, presidents must bargain to be effective and influential, particularly during periods of divided government. Today, presidents cannot be assured of victory in the legislative arena even when they possess a partisan majority because of limited persuasive resources (Neustadt 1980; Brady and Volden 1998; Cameron 2000). Frequently presidents must moderate their views to obtain their policy preferences.

At this point we make no judgement as to whether success (victories) or support (margin) is the better measure, but argue that the choice should be determined by the research question. However, scholars have implicitly and explicitly assumed that winning matters more than margin. Although a minimum winning coalition (50.1%) would seem rational for a president in the legislative arena (Krehbiel 1998, 155), a larger coalition provides additional benefits by strengthening presidents' hands in dealing with Congress currently and in the future. In fact, the value of the victory increases as the margin increases by demonstrating political strength and deterring political opposition to the presidents' policy preferences.

In this paper, we first compare success and support at the vote level. Both measures are useful and reliable (Bond, Fleisher, and Krutz 1996). While success has been examined at this level, support has not and we include numerous determinants that have not been used heretofore. Second, we examine the partisan coalitions of support to see how support varies across party lines over time. Third, we consider several conditions of the nature of legislation itself: its stage in the legislative process (amendment or final passage vote), whether it is an appropriations or a substantive vote, the margin of vote, and the issue area of the vote. Lastly, we include some of the standard predictors that others have used, such as presidential resources, institutional change, and economic conditions. Accordingly, we systematically compare success and support and their determinants at the vote level of analysis. Our argument is that we will not be able to distinguish determinants of success versus support unless we include a diverse array of influences, what we call a multiple perspectives approach. The approach consists of numerous variables measuring presidential resources, the nature of legislation, and environmental influences to explain success and support.

NATURE OF SUCCESS VERSUS SUPPORT

Dahl (1963, 40) defines power as "A influences B to the extent that he gets B to do something that he would otherwise not do." This definition of power or influence is widely accepted by members of the scholarly community (Edwards 1991; Sullivan 1991). From this perspective, influence in Congress is observed only when members deviate from the way they would normally vote (Mouw and MacKuen 1992, 581). This more stringent definition undercuts efforts to measure presidential influence using success and support scores (Bond and Fleisher 1980; Edwards 1989). Pritchard (1986, 481) argues that such "scores indicate only how often congressional members vote as the president would have liked them to vote, which does not mean the president influenced the voting decision." Thus, support and success more likely reflect assertiveness and/or agreement on preferences, rather than influence or "sway" in Sullivan's (1991, 693) terminology. Understanding the measurement controversies better prepares the reader to assess the CQ support and success scores used here and other alternatives.

At one time, CQ measured legislative success based on direct presidential requests through its box score indicator.¹ Box score success is a tangible measure

of presidential agenda preferences that provides numerous advantages to scholars (Hammond and Fraser 1984a; Shull 1983; Rivers and Rose 1985; Spitzer 1983; Covington, Wrighton, and Kinney 1995). Unfortunately, the disadvantages of the indicator are equally as pronounced, leading CQ to abandon the box score measure after 1975. Congressional Quarterly made judgments about success with which they were no longer comfortable. The organization's principal apprehension about its box score was that writers were quoting aggregate figures of presidential success without adequately considering the substance of the initiatives themselves or other qualitative or quantitative factors that may influence the outcome of the legislative process.²

In recent years, CQ has measured *success* in a different way, analogous to what Ragsdale (1998) calls concurrence. Now success connotes dichotomous victory or defeat on each vote position. The value can also be aggregated—measured as the proportion of presidential vote positions that are upheld by Congress. Thus, it can no longer be defined as an indicator of presidents' agenda success (box score).³ This measure now represents legislative agreement (in either or both chambers) with presidents' positions on individual votes or aggregations of roll call votes. Unlike the earlier success measure, CQ's current one is more closely related to the support score. In fact, both now use the total number of presidential positions as the basis for determining the score, and the measure of victory is calculated as the percentage of positions upheld by Congress (Bond and Fleisher 1990; Prins and Marshall 2001; Meernik 1993).

While useful as a measure of executive-legislative concurrence, the success score does have a notable weakness. A dichotomous measure of passage versus failure necessarily ignores important information about the magnitude of congressional coalitions in favor of or opposed to a president's positions. Scholars more interested in whether the president wins may be less concerned with how individual legislators, or even various groups, vote. If success represents more a measure of preference congruity than presidential influence, then a score that captures the magnitude of support may offer a more accurate description of this preference similarity. This information is crucial if the size and composition of voting coalitions varies in predictable ways across types of votes, issues, chambers, and possibly administrations. Therefore, a measure of magnitude is also desirable.

The second CQ measure is the *support* score, available by vote, for individual legislators, and often aggregated over time. Support connotes an alignment with presidential preferences consisting of the margin of individuals or groups of legislators siding with the president's positions. Like the success measure, the support score possesses both advantages and disadvantages. Because a support score can also be assigned to each member of Congress, it is possible to construct a variety of data aggregations. Shull (1997) and Gibson (1995) are among those that compare support annually by issue areas. In addition, support shows the president's abilities to attract votes from certain individuals and groups. However, critics commonly note two disadvantages: ambiguities exist in identifying which votes to use, and bias may be introduced by including routine, noncontroversial votes (Bond and Fleisher 1990; Edwards 1985).

Although support and success seem similar, both conceptually and empirically, some differences are likely. Support offers a richer avenue than success for studying partisan opposition. Since such coalitional support has changed dramatically since the early 1980s, examining presidents' legislative support is worthy of greater consideration than it has received heretofore. Accordingly, authors should not use them incorrectly or interchangeably, because they are not identical. One difference we anticipate is greater decline in support than in success, particularly in foreign and intermestic (crosscutting) policies due to diminished opposition party support. Politics no longer "stops at the water's edge." Controlling for opposition support should magnify any differences between these variables and also demonstrate the magnitude of presidential political and partisan strength. Due to its greater variation, support could prove more useful than success in examining coalition differences.

WHAT INFLUENCES PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESS AND SUPPORT

For both dependent variables, presidential success and support, we posit a set of independent variables based upon presidential resources, characteristics of the legislation itself, and elements of the environment. We provide several indicators for each of these concepts and they should tell us much about the two outcome measures. We assume that support and success are more subject to the external environment than is presidential position taking, which may be more a function of the characteristics of the legislation itself. We also investigate the partisan coalitions of support, which gives us further insight into the support series. Using the same models to explain success and support should allow us to compare them directly, which has not been done heretofore.

Presidential Resources

Among our determinants, presidential resources should presumably have a large impact on success and support in Congress. In particular, the importance of presidents' popular approval has been subject to considerable debate in the scholarly literature. Some empirical studies using popular approval find it related to legislative success (Rivers and Rose 1985; Ostrom and Simon 1985). However, other researchers question the influence of popular approval and find only a modest relationship (Bond and Fleisher, 1990; Edwards, 1989; Collier and Sullivan 1995; Shull and Shaw 1999). Bond, Fleisher, and Wood (2003) argue that the effect of popular approval on legislative success is mediated by party polarization, a dimension which we tap with our coalitional support analysis. While the empirical evidence remains mixed, presidential approval as a proxy for institutional clout should at a minimum persuade some legislators to defer to presidential preferences.⁴

The presidents' party margin in Congress is also considered an important presidential resource and has consistently been found to be the single most important determinant of a president's sway in the House (Shull and Shaw 1999;

Edwards 1989; Bond and Fleisher 1990).⁵ Although some prefer the dichotomous divided government variable (see Mayhew 1992; Jones 1994; Edwards, Barrett and Peake 1997; Bond and Fleisher 2000), we argue that the richness of party margin may have greater utility, particularly for the legislative support variable. Party margin is based upon two years while ADA or NOMINATE scores change annually. Nevertheless, greater presidential party margin consistently has been found to be the strongest predictor of both success and support. We hypothesize that party margin will be associated with higher levels of success and support. However, it is likely that party margin will influence legislative support more than legislative success. This is because coalitions may increase but this margin may still be insufficient to bring about victory.

Nature of Legislation

Like party margin, the nature or type of the legislation takes into account the legislative environment. For the first type of legislation, we identify all roll call votes according to whether they are appropriations or substantive.⁶ Fortunately, our database of votes in the 83rd-105th Congresses (House) allows these designations, and vote level data allow finer distinctions than are possible at more aggregate levels. It is on substantive legislation that we believe presidents will have greater success and support, perhaps because many appropriations decisions occur in subcommittees and are often quite specific. Presidents may not want to interfere in such internal maneuvering in Congress, but if presidents do take positions, Congress will be less willing to defer on narrower, more specific appropriations issues. There also is less reason for Congress to defer to presidents on budgeting issues, which are more within Congress's jurisdiction with the power of the purse.

The second element of the vote we examine is the stage of legislation, which reveals the resources presidents are willing to put into vote positions. We have little past research to guide us, but we assume that the later in the floor process, the more likely presidents are to be successful. Amendments tend to reflect a narrow single dimension while final passage is more often multidimensional and brings presidents broader benefits. Many of the controversies over the nature of legislation are resolved by the time a vote reaches final disposition, but also because amendments tend to be associated with conflict inasmuch as they represent challenges to proposals offered by the committee of jurisdiction (Smith 1989; Rohde 1994). Furthermore, it seems logical to assume that scarce resources will compel presidents to focus more intensely on the final disposition of legislation. Prins and Marshall (2001) find that presidents are less successful on amendments than on final passage foreign policy votes, perhaps because amendments receive less attention by presidents. Thus, we expect that presidents will obtain less support on amendments than on final passage of bills.

Obviously, much more research has used our third type of vote, categorized by issue area. Many studies have analyzed presidential success and support using Wildavsky's ([1966] 1991) two presidencies thesis (LeLoup and Shull [1979] 1991;

Cohen [1982] 1991; Bond and Fleisher 1990; Edwards 1989; Fleisher, Bond, Krutz, and Hanna 2000; Canes-Wrone, Howell, Lewis, and Moe 1999). A policy area approach is both valid and valuable since considerable research has shown that presidential support or success varies by the type of policy or issue area (Pritchard 1983; Gibson 1995; Shull 1997). Given the advantages of the policy approach, Pritchard (1986, 481) calls the cumulative aggregated CQ support scores "a relatively crude measurement of congressional voting decisions." An issue area approach advances such insight and understanding. Certainly conceptual difficulties and problems with coding exist, but they should not be deterrents.

Because the foreign-domestic distinction may mask differences in relations, despite considerable research utilizing this distinction, more specific substantive typologies may be desirable. Some authors (e.g., LeLoup and Shull [1979] 1991; Manning 1977) feel that budget and/or economic issues (particularly *intermestic* issues such as trade and immigration) blur the two presidencies thesis. Others see greater variation within domestic issue areas (Clausen 1973; Kessel 1974) and within foreign categories (Hinckley 1994; Ragsdale 1998; Prins and Marshall 2001; Gibson 1995). Although we recognize that more specific issue areas may distinguish presidential support and success better, we have chosen to control for foreign and defense, economic and budget, intermestic, and other domestic policy differences in this preliminary analysis.

We expect greater legislative deference to presidential positions in foreign policy (except for votes on international trade and immigration legislation, which tend to be much more conflictual; Shull 1997; Gibson 1995). Presidents should have the least success or support in the domestic realm, consistent with the "two presidencies" thesis. Probably moderate levels of success will occur on economic issues. However, success and support should vary in a slightly different way regardless of the number of votes available by issue area. This expectation is based on research that suggests greater deference to presidents in foreign policy. Numerous scholars have debated this potential two presidencies effect for over 35 years (see selections in Shull 1991 and subsequent arguments by Prins and Marshall 2001 and Fleisher, Bond, Krutz, and Hanna 2000; Canes-Wrone, Howell, Lewis, and Moe 1999). Thus, as with substance of and stage of vote, issue area of the vote should be an important predictor of presidents' support and, especially, success.

Environment

Institutional change has been examined by students of the presidency and Congress (Shull and Shaw 1999; Krehbiel 1998, 156). The argument is that presidential-congressional relations changed dramatically by the mid-1970s when Congress challenged presidential power and dominance in policy making. Several trends in success and support should occur largely along an early-late (or pre-post reform) designation, with both decreasing slightly over time. We expect presidents will receive less success and support in the post-reform period. This should be especially true for support. Thus, finding a relationship for this early-late dummy variable for both dependent variables would not be surprising at the

individual vote level, which is our focus. Such a finding could be a result of growing partisan voting and greater divided government in the modern period.

Perhaps related to institutional change is the incidence of contested votes in the House. Such votes are those within an 80-20 margin in contrast to near unanimous votes which are barely contested. Presidents should be less successful on positions on contested votes than on nearly unanimous votes (Bond and Fleisher 1990; Edwards 1985, 1989). Perhaps because of the dramatic increase in roll call voting due to House rules (also of the 1970s), amendments now are much more likely to appear in voting than previously and such votes likely are more contested than other types of votes. Thus, more contested votes probably appear in the more recent or post-reform period.

The last environmental variable gauges the state of the economy. Authors have used economic variables in predicting position taking and/or success (Peterson 1990; Shull and Shaw 1999; Brace and Hinckley 1992). We use the misery index, which combines the unemployment rate and the inflation rate. When the economy is doing well (low misery index) presidents probably are more likely to be successful than when the economy is performing poorly (Brace and Hinckley 1992). Thus, when unemployment and inflation are low, Congress is more content and more likely to defer to presidents. However, when the misery index is high, success and support should be low.⁷ Although the misery index represents a factor external to government, it is related to the political environment.

MEASUREMENT

Much of the data for this study are derived from a data set compiled by David Rohde of Michigan State University. This large data set contains all House floor roll calls from the 83rd-105th Congresses (1953-1998) and we are able to obtain the outcome (success and support) of presidential vote positions. In addition, we compile all the information on type of vote from this data set, while the remaining independent variables come from other sources. After discussing the dependent variables, president's legislative support (margin) and success (victories), we consider the independent variables (nature of the legislation, presidential resources, and the environment).

Dependent Variables

The Rohde data set uses the coding established by Congressional Quarterly, Inc. This organization provides a brief description of votes in both chambers where a presidential position is clear. According to Congressional Roll Call (1998, 26-B),

CQ determines presidential positions by examining statements by the president or by his authorized spokesmen, including spokesmen for the Office of Management and Budget. Statements by individual Cabinet members are not taken as positions unless endorsed by the President. If legislation is significantly amended, the original presidential position is considered invalid. When the position of the administration is not clear it is not included in the study.

Due to the dramatic increase in number of recorded votes, at least since the 1970s, most significant legislation does come to a roll call vote on the floor. Position taking and subsequent success and support are appropriate measures for analyzing presidential-congressional relations (Bond, Fleisher, and Krutz 1996, 109).

We assert that presidential success and support in the House are both similar and different. However, they must be analyzed slightly differently. Success is purely dichotomous: whether the president wins or not (i.e., whether his position is upheld). Thus, we use logit analysis to examine success. Our measure of support, on the other hand, is a percentage measure (margin of legislators favoring the president's positions, and would be a percentage at various levels of analysis).⁸ Thus, support here (at the vote level) is a percentage and will be examined using OLS regression analysis. We are aware that the different specifications of the dependent variables may have an influence on the results we obtain and that results from the two techniques are not exactly comparable (see below for additional discussion).

Students of presidential-congressional relations need to keep in mind the seemingly different nature of CQ's presidential legislative success and legislative support, despite the fact that they are both based on presidential position taking on legislative votes. While success and support may be conceptually different, we also wonder whether empirically these two measures capture different processes. This exercise should help scholars decide which measure is best suited for their particular analyses. Will the president fare better on CQ's support than on its success score, and will the determinants of each be different? Examined annually, success is usually higher than support but the most disaggregated vote level analysis may yield different results. With the position taking vote as the unit of analysis, we have 3,725 observations over our extensive time period.

Independent Variables

Presidential Resources. As others have done, we use popular support in Gallup polls as our measure of public prestige (Edwards 1989, chapter 6; Bond and Fleisher 1990, chapter 7). We use the familiar question: "Do you approve or disapprove how *president's name* is handling his job as president?" Neustadt (1980, 65) criticizes the Gallup support score as personal popularity and not constituting a complete measure of prestige (also see Rivers and Rose 1985, 184). However, as a general measure of popular prestige it contains all of the conceptual components of mass approval of presidents.⁹

Our second resource variable is the percentage of presidential partisans in the House. This variable is closely related to divided government and the president's majority or minority status. Indeed, Eisenhower is the only Republican to experience briefly unified government (1953-54) and Bill Clinton is the only Democrat to experience divided government during this period (1995-98). Accordingly, we expect that the president's party margin, which changes with each new Congress (every two years), will be a more discriminating variable and of greater use in our multivariate analysis than either divided government or majority/minority status.

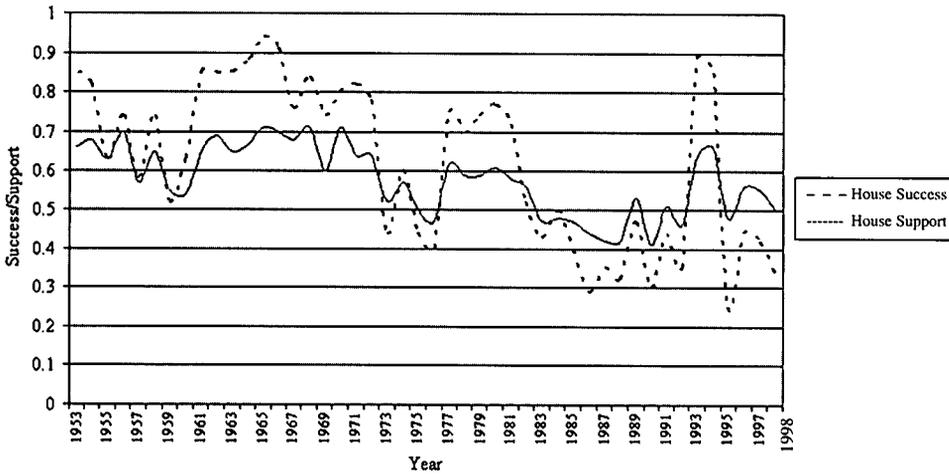
Nature of Legislation. We create three different variables from individual roll call data: substance, stage, and issue area. The first variable (*substance*) distinguishes appropriations versus substantive votes. Appropriations matters include all types of issues but they may also be amendments or partial rather than more complete bills. Substantive matters usually encompass broader issues that concern presidents. The next variable we create distinguishes the *stage* of the floor process. Obviously, amendments occur before conference committee or final passage of legislation. Rohde coded numerous steps in the voting process and we make a distinction between votes on amendments. We then code separately final passage votes, largely consisting of bills, resolutions, conference reports, and joint resolutions. We thus collapsed stage of legislation as a dichotomous variable (1 equals final passage and 0 equals all other votes, most of which are amendments).

We aggregate all of the 619 appropriations votes and the nearly 3,106 substantive position votes into three rather broad issue areas: foreign (including defense), economic (including budgeting and taxation), and other domestic. The Rohde data set lists many disaggregated policy areas that we chose to aggregate into the three more general issue areas: foreign, economic, and domestic. We wanted fairly broad policy areas that other scholars have used and observed some differences among them in studying presidential-congressional relations. For foreign and defense policy, we include defense subcategories: miscellaneous budget, weapons systems, veterans, Pentagon, intelligence, procurement, war, and NASA and AEC, plus aid, human rights, State Department, USSR/Warsaw Pact, and arms control. Economic votes include economic, taxes and budget issues, while domestic include such issues as social welfare, agriculture, and civil rights. We also include a dummy variable for intermestic issues to examine whether this increasingly salient element of the policy agenda generates more interinstitution controversy than more traditional foreign policy considerations. The intermestic category includes such issues as trade, export controls, Federal Trade Commission, tariff negotiations, import quotas, and immigration.

Environment. We offer a dichotomous control that measures important changes in the development of the House during the period of our study (Shull and Shaw 1999). We call it a pre-post reform variable, which divides the vote data into two time periods (1 = pre-reform, 1953-74 or 22 years, and 0 = post-reform, 1975-1998 or 24 years). Contentiousness between the branches is more evident in the later period. Also, contested votes are much more likely to occur in a post-reform Congress than in previous Congresses, so success and support should follow this trend as well.

Another environmental variable is the degree of splitting on a particular vote. We operationalize this 'consensus' variable as a vote with greater than 80-20 split (1 = consensus, 0 = contested). We do not simply limit our analysis to a conflictual subset of votes (votes with majorities less than 80%) because the confluence of preferences remains a primary interest here. By limiting the analysis to conflictual votes only, we may exclude many instances of consensus between the branches, and these large coalitions may fall disproportionately on particular types of legislation such as foreign policy. Some authors focus primarily on conflictual votes (Edwards

FIGURE 1
Presidential Success and Support in the House, 1953-1998



1989; Bond and Fleisher 1990). However, we believe that subsequently distinguishing conflictual from consensual votes and retaining both is useful in this analysis.

Finally, we incorporate the misery index, which was introduced into the political lexicon by Ronald Reagan in the 1980 presidential election campaign. It adds together the monthly average unemployment rate and the average monthly inflation rate (change in the monthly Consumer Price Index). The unemployment rate is the percentage of the labor force—16 years or older—without a job and is reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics Data (<http://146.142.4.24/cgi-bin/surveymost>). The Consumer Price Index is reported by the U.S. Department of Labor (<ftp://ftp.bls.gov/pub/special.requests/cpi/cpiiai.txt>). Brace and Hinckley (1992) find the misery index related to legislative success.

RESULTS

Figure 1 reveals the annual levels of success and support from 1953-1998. As is evident, the two series trend together. However, the 50% (+1) bar that separates success from failure creates a somewhat artificial difference between the series. Institutional features, such as divided government, help to generate large swings in presidential success scores. For instance, during President Clinton's first two years his success record hovered around 85% and his overall House support reached levels attained by Kennedy during his three years in office. In 1995, Clinton's effectiveness in the House plummeted. With control of the House rules, the GOP rejected the president's agenda and awarded him the lowest success rating of any post-World War II chief executive. While Clinton's level of support also floundered, the decline was nowhere near as precipitous as his success score.

Clearly presidential party control of the House has less of an impact on legislative support than on success. This is particularly evident during the extremes of Democratic unified control of government under Presidents Johnson and Carter, as well as Clinton's first two years. Figure 1 also reveals that the overall pattern for both success and support is downward in the post-reform House. Both series in fact have a strong and negative correlation with time. As we will see, the decrease in both success and support reflects the dramatic rise in partisanship and party homogeneity (Rohde 1991). Presidents find it much more difficult today to secure support from opposition members of the House. This has resulted in lower levels of support during divided government, but also large swings in success as control shifts from unified to divided government.

Comparing Success and Support

While success and support appear highly correlated at the annual level, it remains unclear whether the relationships between these two measures of presidential-congressional relations and salient exogenous variables are also similarly related. In fact, at the vote level, the measures of success and support correlate at $r = .77$, which admittedly remains strong, but certainly leaves room for variation. This overall correlation is a gross aggregation over time and issue areas. Interestingly, success correlates more strongly with opposition-party support than same-party support, an indication of the importance of reaching across the aisle. We discuss this finding more below.

Table 1 provides the results from two models evaluating the determinants of president-House legislative relations.¹⁰ A logistic model of presidential success is presented in column two, while an ordinary least squares model of presidential support is presented in column five. Each model is based on 3,721 presidential position votes cast from 1953-98 in the House of Representatives. Admittedly, direct comparisons of the coefficients from these two models are impossible because of the different estimation procedures. However, given that scholars often use these measures interchangeably and draw inferences about the relationship between Congress and the president with insufficient attention to their unique characteristics, we make some broad comparisons here (see Vasquez 1993).¹¹

With legislative support, we explain 20% of the variance, and all variables are significant at better than the .05 level, except the appropriations votes distinction and presidential popular approval. In looking at success, our analysis provides similar results in terms of relationship direction and statistical significance. We theorized that the cost-benefit calculations for success and support might be somewhat different and we expected the impacts of certain of the independent variables (e.g., party margin) to differ as a result. However, we find few differences between overall success and support and these preliminary findings might suggest that success and support are largely indistinguishable. Achieving higher support may expend greater political capital than just attaining success, but higher support may deter future challenges to presidential policy preferences.

TABLE 1
Presidential Success and Support on House Roll Call Votes, 1953-1998

<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>Presidential Success Mode^a</i>	<i>Substantive Effects Success Mode^b</i>		<i>Presidential Support Mode^c</i>
		<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>	
Environmental				
Misery Index	.207*** (.032)	.42	.81	.010** (.003)
Post-Reform Era (1975-1998)	-1.20*** (.097)	.78	.52	-.101*** (.010)
Consensus Vote	.663*** (.090)	.59	.74	.160*** (.012)
Presidential Resources				
Presidential Approval	.794* (.340)	.58	.69	.002 (.031)
Party Margin	.069*** (.004)	.36	.86	.005*** (.000)
Nature of Legislation				
Final Passage Vote	.175* (.077)	.61	.65	.029*** (.008)
Appropriations Vote	-.151 (.106)	.64	.60	-.010 (.009)
Economic Policy Vote	.523*** (.121)	.61	.73	.029** (.011)
Foreign Policy Vote	.616*** (.126)	.61	.75	.034*** (.010)
Intermestic Policy Vote	-.598** (.188)	.64	.49	-.043* (.018)
Constant	-4.24*** (.420)			.256*** (.035)

Note: Robust standard errors in parentheses. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

^a LL = -2149.7; Wald = 539.8 ($\chi^2 < .000$); Pseudo $R^2 = .14$; N = 3721.

^b Substantive effects calculated by varying each independent variable from minimum to maximum values and recording the change in $P[Y = 1]$. Clarify was used to produce the predicted probabilities (see Tomz, Wittenberg, and King 1999).

^c F (10, 3710) = 99.61 (F < .000); Adj. $R^2 = .20$.

The two models in Table 1 demonstrate that numerous features of the legislative, economic, and presidential environments have important effects on the relationship between the House and the president. Not only do we observe this relationship reacting to the national economic situation, but there also appear to be temporal as well as partisan elements that affect presidential success and support in the House. Unsurprisingly, larger party margins tend to favor presidential prerogatives, while the ideologically divided post-reform era has created a less

supportive and less successful House environment. While presidents appear to achieve greater success and higher levels of support on foreign policy votes, they fare less well on intermestic issues, such as trade and immigration. This explains in part why foreign affairs as a whole no longer provide a favorable policy area for presidents. As intermestic issues come to represent a larger share of the foreign affairs agenda, congressional deference to White House preferences diminishes (see Marshall and Prins 2002).¹²

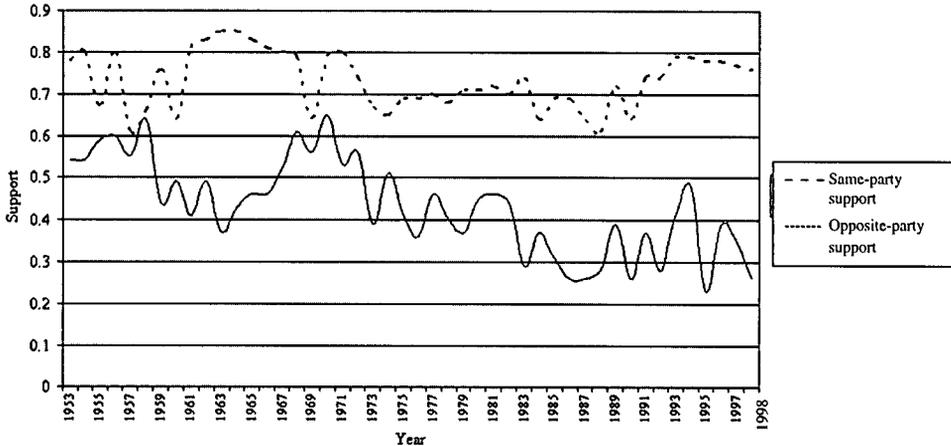
Columns three and four of Table 1 provide substantive effects for the logit model. The largest impact derives from party margin. An increase of fellow partisans in the House from 33% to 68% (low to high) increases the probability of presidential success from .36 to .86, an increase of 50 percentage points. The same shift in party margin increases presidential support by 15 percentage points, which does indicate that the 50.1% threshold does help to enhance the effect of party margin on success. The reform era change and the national economy also strongly affect success and support. The post-1974 environment provides presidents with 26 percentage points less success, and 10 percentage points less support, than the pre-reform period. The effects of the misery index are counter-intuitive. Going from an unemployment and inflation rate sum of 3% to 11% actually increases presidential success by 39 percentage points. One would expect presidents to fare less well in the House as the economy deteriorates. What we observe indicates perhaps that the relationship is more complex than the one modeled here and depends in part on party margin, but also on the strategic decision making of presidents when entering the legislative arena.¹³

We reiterate that a direct comparison of the success and support models is not possible. For one, logit coefficients should be interpreted as odds ratios or probabilities, while ordinary least squares estimates represent changes in observed units. Still, Vasquez (1993, 5) explicitly maintains that comparisons of model results across statistical estimators are a crucial part of scientific analysis. He writes, "Statistical findings can be compared to make philosophical assessments about the empirical adequacy of various explanations. If this could not be done, then what would be the point of doing research in the first place?" In general we expect signs and statistical significances to vary little across these two different estimators. And, apart from presidential approval, no relationship fundamentally changes when going from a model of legislative success to a model of legislative support. Both success and support appear affected by similar sets of explanatory factors.

Partisan Support for Presidential Positions

To further evaluate support for a president, we examine same- versus opposite-party support, which appears in Figure 2. The magnitude of support a president garners may vary predictably across these partisan divisions. In particular, we are interested in factors that may determine a president's support from his own copartisans versus support from opposite-party members, and vice versa. Because of growing contentiousness in Congress, we expect greater differences in the more recent period of our analysis. As party identification has increasingly

FIGURE 2
*Same- vs. Opposite-Party Support for a President's Positions on
 House Roll Call Votes, 1953-1998*



defined roll call voting in Congress, a model of overall House support for a president's stated positions may overlook partisan-specific relationships. Thus, we expect party coalitions to provide a useful control in our comparison of presidents' success and support in the House.

It is clear from Figure 2 that same-party support, from its high point of more than 80% under Kennedy and early Johnson, dropped considerably in the years following those presidencies. However, it increased somewhat during the middle of Clinton's presidency. This figure shows even more dramatically than CQ's measure of party voting (*CQ Roll Call 1999*, B-7) the growing contestedness of voting in the House, particularly in support of the president. Party consensus reached its peak under Nixon, but has declined precipitously since then. By the Clinton administration, the gap between same- and opposition-party support of the president reached its all-time greatest difference. In some years the difference was as great as 60 percentage points.

Our regression analysis of same- versus opposite-party support for presidents appears in Table 2. Once again, differences emerge in our explanation of House-president relations when party is used as a control. In fact, striking variation across these two models shows how partisan support helps refine our understanding of the relationship between the president and the House of Representatives. First, the overall explanatory power of the models varies rather drastically. The sets of covariates we included better explain opposite-party support than same-party support for a president. This makes sense because similarity of preferences should naturally predispose presidents and copartisans to vote alike. Presidential resources, the economy, and the nature of legislation should affect opposition-party members, as they are the ones more likely

TABLE 2
*Same- and Opposite-Party Support for Presidential Positions on
 House Roll Call Votes, 1953-1998*

<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>Presidential Support Model (Same Party)^a</i>		<i>Presidential Support Model (Opposite Party)^b</i>	
	<i>Unstandardized Beta</i>	<i>Standardized Beta</i>	<i>Unstandardized Beta</i>	<i>Standardized Beta</i>
Environmental				
Misery Index	-.001 (.003)	-.009	.018*** (.004)	.083
Post-Reform Era (1975-1998)	-.026* (.011)	-.049	-.152*** (.013)	-.219
Consensus Vote	-.017 (.012)	-.030	.337*** (.014)	.443
Presidential Resources				
Presidential Approval	.052 (.034)	.025	-.074 (.040)	-.029
Party Margin	.003*** (.000)	.110	.001** (.000)	.041
Nature of Legislation				
Final Passage Vote	.027** (.009)	.052	.034*** (.011)	.049
Appropriations Vote	-.045*** (.011)	-.065	.019 (.013)	.021
Economic Policy Vote	.038** (.013)	.053	.005 (.016)	.005
Foreign Policy Vote	-.019 (.013)	-.024	.067*** (.014)	.064
Intermestic Policy Vote	-.078*** (.021)	-.065	.008 (.025)	.005
Constant	.594*** (.039)		.246*** (.046)	

Note: Robust standard errors in parentheses. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

^a $F(10, 3710) = 15.5$ ($F < .000$); Adj. $R^2 = .03$.

^b $F(10, 3710) = 121.8$ ($F < .000$); Adj. $R^2 = .26$.

contemplating the costs and benefits of supporting versus opposing presidential positions.

Second, the decline in support for a president's position has been more strongly felt among opposite-party members, as partisan voting in Congress has increased dramatically (also see Figure 2 again). On individual votes presidents typically receive support from 73% of copartisans, while only 41% from members of the opposition. A two-sample t-test with unequal variances confirms that this large mean level difference is statistically significant. This relationship clearly

strengthens in the post-reform era, which is obvious from the strength of the reform variable. In the post-reform era, presidents have lost support from both parties in the House. However, the drop appears considerably larger for the opposition. In the post-reform era, presidents on average receive 15 percentage points less support from the opposition compared to the pre-reform era. With an opposition block in the House of 200 members, for example, this results in 30 fewer votes for the president. Support from copartisans in the House, in contrast, dropped only four percentage points, from 75% in the pre-reform to 71% in the post-reform era.¹⁴

Third, policy differences in these two models suggest puzzling relationships. On economic policy votes, presidents garner more support from fellow partisans than in other issue areas. In contrast, presidents secure greater support from the opposition party on foreign policy votes. This does not mean that presidents receive more total votes from the opposite party compared to votes from the president's own party in the House on foreign policy issues. This result implies only that the opposition party is much more willing to accede to presidential preferences on foreign policy issues compared to general domestic policy issues. Interestingly, intermestic issues decrease same-party support for a president, but have little impact on opposite-party support. This same relationship holds for appropriations votes as well. We also find that same-party support is not affected by the misery index but opposite-party support is. Not surprisingly, consensus votes are strongly associated with opposite-party support as such support is necessary for near-unanimous coalitions.

In Table 2, we include standardized beta coefficients to allow for parameter comparisons within the same model.¹⁵ For the same-party model, number of fellow partisans has the strongest impact on presidential support. Indeed, the influence is nearly twice that of the policy distinctions and over twice the effect of the reform-era changes. We do observe that trade and immigration votes decrease presidential support by nearly seven percentage points among his own partisans in the House. Given the absence of an effect for opposite-party support, it seems that these intermestic issues contribute to lower presidential support both as a result of general opposition to the president from across the aisle, but also as a result of same-party defections. For the opposite-party model, the post-reform environment has the most significant influence.¹⁶ On average in the post-1974 period, presidents receive 22 percentage points less support from the opposite party than in the pre-1975 period. Presidents have lost support in the House and this loss stems mainly from the opposite side of the aisle. However, final passage and foreign policy votes represent two places where presidents receive greater support on average from opposite-party members. The foreign policy distinction suggests perhaps some deference to the president on an issue that typically does not affect constituent concerns. The statistical significance of the final passage dummy indicates the cross-party effort to get legislation to a final disposition stage. At this point, many members of the opposition party have invested sufficient time and energy in subcommittee and committee markups to prevent a failure on the floor, even if the vote provides a president with a legislative victory.

In Table 2, the party margin variable seems counter-intuitively related to presidential support. Why should the president's margin of copartisans increase opposite-party support? We once again observe a temporal shift in the relationship. In the pre-reform era, increases in the president's copartisans in the House decrease opposite-party support. In the post-reform period, the reverse appears to be true. Increases in the president's party margin actually increase opposite-party support. This finding most likely represents presidents reaching across the aisle during divided government to pass policy.

In comparing the results from Table 2 with the support model in Table 1, we once again observe some significant differences. For instance, in Table 1 the misery index appears to have a strong and positive influence on House support for a president's position. In Table 2, however, we see that this impact occurs only on opposite-party support and not same-party support.¹⁷ The direction of this relationship is not what we expected, but the differential impact on same versus opposite-party support is intriguing and needs further research.¹⁸ These findings may mask partisan differences between Democrats, who are more concerned about unemployment, and Republicans, who are more concerned about inflation (Hibbs 1987). Comparing these tables further, we see that votes on appropriations bills are not related to overall support of a president's position. This hypothesized relationship does appear when we confine the analysis to same-party support, which indicates that a president's party members in the House are more likely to resist presidential influence on appropriations legislation. These party-specific impacts suggest that models of executive-congressional relations need to pay more attention to the nature of different coalitions and their alignment with presidential preferences.

CONCLUSION

Ours is the first effort to compare presidents' legislative support and success at the vote level of analysis. In so doing, we remind readers that neither measure collected by Congressional Quarterly, Inc. reflects presidential agenda preferences; these are matters before Congress that come to a roll call vote on which the president decides to take a position. At one time CQ collected an indicator of the presidents' legislative agenda but determined that it was unreliable and stopped its collection in 1975. Until Rudalevige (2002), most empirical work on presidential-congressional relations has been based upon our two CQ outcome measures, which may or may not reflect the presidential agenda. Success refers to a victory for the president while support refers to the margin of legislators taking the same position on the vote as the president. Success reveals greater variation over time than support, with large increases or decreases occurring when the government changes from unified to divided control or vice versa. Interestingly, the largest gaps in these two series occur during periods of unified party government, where success is nearly assured, but opposition-party support is problematic. Both variables exhibit a decline during the post-reform period, so the rivalry between the first two branches not only is enduring, but it has intensified.

Although support and success appear similar, we observe some differences. Thus, the two measures should not be used interchangeably because each is explained somewhat differently by various independent variables. The vote level provides numerous characteristics of the legislation itself that serve as useful predictors of these two outcomes of the 3,721 presidential position-taking votes in the House from 1953 to 1998. These characteristics of the legislation include its substantive nature, the stage of the vote on the floor, and the issue area of the vote. In addition to these characteristics of the votes themselves, we also incorporate presidential resources and environmental conditions as part of our commitment to a multiple perspective approach. Virtually all of these variables contribute to explaining presidents' legislative success and support in the House.

Although overall models of success and support are similar, the issue area designations reveal important differences in coalitional support. Presidents now are much less successful in their foreign policy vote positions than previously, particularly during our post-reform Vietnam period (Meernick 1993). However, presidents still generally fare better in foreign policy, especially when intermestic issues are categorized separately. The growing importance of intermestic issues has blunted the distinction between domestic and foreign policy, the long-studied two presidencies thesis. Thus, its importance is reiterated in this research. Similarly, economic and intermestic issues are significant predictors for both support and for success. Thus, issue area is important in our analysis and we may analyze even more disaggregated issue areas in future research as others have done (e.g., Shull 1997; Gibson 1995; Ragsdale 1998). In fact, all of these studies were limited to yearly data, but the Rohde data set at the vote level allows us to investigate even narrower issue areas because we have so many more observations upon which to base our analysis. Thus, in the future we hope to examine even more specific issue areas, such as civil rights and social welfare votes within the domestic policy sphere. In doing so, we expect to get a better handle on whether Canes-Wrone and deMarchi (2002) are correct that the importance of popular approval for success depends upon whether it is an interactive variable and also on particular issue areas. Further research should tap whether these authors and Bond, Fleisher, and Wood (2003) are correct in stating that popular approval is highly related to party polarization.

Our analysis of coalitional support for the president reveals the dramatic increase in partisan voting since the early 1980s. The overall decline in support is due largely to less opposition party support than previously. Many have discussed the "decline in comity" in Congress (see Uslaner 1994) and it certainly appears in roll call voting. An exception occurs on consensus votes where opposition support increases dramatically. Presidents still receive greater opposition-party support for their foreign policy vote positions but not for economic issues. Surprisingly, on the often controversial intermestic issues of trade and immigration, support for presidents by their own party is diminishing. Our evidence then indicates that, while models of overall House success and support perform similarly, controlling for coalitional support dramatically alters the observed relationships. This poses a significant problem if success or support are arbitrarily chosen

to measure preference alignment between the two political branches of the U.S. federal government without controlling for party support. In effect, the relationship between Congress and the president is independently influenced by the measure of the dependent variable and the statistical procedure used to estimate the relationships. Lastly, the impact of some exogenous factors, like the misery index, is party specific. Due to its greater variation, support is more useful than success in examining these party coalitional differences. Therefore, without controlling for coalitional support, scholars risk misinterpreting the relationship between the president and Congress.

Several avenues for further research present themselves, including the expansion of our analysis to narrower issue areas. We have also touted the benefits of disaggregated analysis at the vote level. However, we wonder whether the lowest unit of analysis always is the most desirable. Certainly presidency scholars have often been plagued with few cases (King 1993) and often take any opportunity to increase their N. But, is the vote level too low to capture phenomena that change very little from one vote to the next, and could we better explain success and support if they were aggregated to higher levels? Some of our predictor variables are based on the same unit of analysis as the vote, especially those that refer to the nature of legislation. Other explanatory variables, however, are at the month level or even higher and some, like pre-post reform and party margin, are gross aggregations. To see what differences occur at different levels of aggregation our next effort will examine support and success at the various levels of analysis, to test whether the level of data aggregation has independent effects on the observed relationship between the president and Congress.

APPENDIX A
Descriptive Statistics

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Dev.</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
Success	.604	.489	0	1
Support	.568	.248	0	1
Misery Index	6.374	1.579	2.220	10.920
Post-Reform Era (1975-1998)	.601	.490	0	1
Consensus Vote	.274	.446	0	0
Presidential Approval	.539	.123	.257	.848
Party Margin	49.280	10.549	33.100	67.800
Final Passage Vote	.428	.495	0	1
Appropriations Vote	.166	.372	0	1
Economic Policy Vote	.144	.351	0	1
Foreign Policy Vote	.116	.320	0	1
Intermestic Policy Vote	.048	.215	0	0

APPENDIX B
Correlation Matrix

	Success	Support	Misery Index	Pres. Approval	Party Margin	Reform Period	Consensus Votes	Final Passage	Appropriations Policy	Economic Policy	Foreign Policy	Intermestic Policy
Success	1.00											
Support	.77	1.00										
Misery Index	-.12	-.15	1.00									
Pres. Approval	.01	.01	-.24	1.00								
Party Margin	.32	.26	-.27	-.09	1.00							
Reform Period	-.24	-.24	.62	-.18	-.21	1.00						
Consensus Votes	.15	.32	-.09	.01	.04	-.10	1.00					
Final Passage	.11	.18	-.15	.07	.06	-.14	.28	1.00				
Appropriations Policy	-.06	-.07	-.06	-.01	.02	-.03	-.13	-.15	1.00			
Economic Policy	.04	.01	.02	.05	.00	.03	-.03	.05	-.18	1.00		
Foreign Policy	.06	.02	.03	-.01	.02	.05	-.05	.01	-.16	-.15	1.00	
Intermestic Policy	-.03	-.03	.02	.03	-.04	.03	.01	.02	-.10	.43	.05	1.00

Notes

¹*Congressional Quarterly* included in this measurement only the specific legislative requests contained in the president's messages to Congress and other public statements and whether or not Congress enacted such measures within the same calendar year. Although CQ did not specify which statements they used, Shull (1983) and others have included all public remarks (taken from *Public Papers of the Presidents*) as opposed to just the State of the Union addresses used by some scholars (e.g., Light 1982). Policies emanating from the executive branch that were endorsed by the president but not specifically requested by him were excluded. When such requests or proposals were substantially changed or amended by Congress, CQ made a judgment (without supplying specific coding rules) about whether the legislation conformed to the president's original request (see *Congressional Quarterly Almanac* 1963, 86).

²Problems associated with the box score have been discussed by many scholars. Its most widely recognized drawbacks include the following: first is recognition that legislation may take more than one year to pass (Bond and Fleisher 1990; Edwards 1989; Peterson 1990; Shull 1983). This is a problem because calendar year is the unit of analysis. Light (1982) and others show that many of the president's legislative requests are repeated subsequently. A second problem is ambiguity in identifying actual legislative proposals by the president. They are derived from presidents' speeches but sometimes come from other "top officials." Third is the lack of scores for individual legislators (Edwards 1985; Peterson 1990; Shull 1983), making only aggregate rather than individual level analysis possible (Bond, Fleisher and Krutz 1996). Finally, the equal weighting of all requests (Shull 1983) does not distinguish the important from the trivial. This charge is not totally accurate since most major requests appear in the form of multiple initiatives. The box score of presidential initiatives are simply calls for legislation, not necessarily actual bills before Congress. Thus, the box score shows whether the president follows through on his stated agenda preferences but does not assure us that the presidential request was actually introduced in Congress.

³Despite these acknowledged problems, some scholars still consider box scores a potentially valuable data base (Spitzer 1983; Hammond and Fraser 1984b; Shull 1983; Covington, Wrighton, and Kinney 1995). CQ box scores are far from perfect, but they do provide a conceptually valid measure of presidential success (on *their* preferences) in Congress. Improvements can be made by modifying the coding rules and expanding the presentation of the data (Shull 1983). Peterson (1990) used a form of the box score in his analysis and rekindled interest in similar measures. These changes in part address some of the empirical problems that led to the demise of the box score indicator of success.

⁴Approval may influence support more than success due to the greater variability of the margin variable. Thus, greater popular approval should lead to greater success and support, although Canes-Wrone and deMarchi (2002) argue that its importance may vary by issue area. Bond, Fleisher, and Wood (2003) also insist, along with Canes-Wrone and deMarchi, that approval is mediated by party polarization, an element we consider later in this article.

⁵Political party is a fixed measure of preferences and scholars have attempted to ascertain more sensitive measures of ideological preferences of both legislators (Bond and Fleisher 1990; Poole and Rosenthal 1997) and presidents (Gleiber and Shull 1992). Initially we sought a way to tap the congruence of ideological preferences of both actors and examined the absolute difference in presidents' and legislators' ADA scores. However, we realize the tautological problem of using ideological measures based on roll call votes to predict voting behavior on some of the same votes. Bond and Fleisher (1990, 241) solved this problem by deleting presidential position-taking votes but we did not want to lose these votes. Since our ideological distance measure added little to the explanation of either success or support, we deleted this variable from our analysis. ADA and Nominate scores are highly correlated but so are they both with presidential-party margin, the latter of which has been seen as the most important predictor of success and support. Besides, the center of gravity of ideological space changes very little even if there is a change in party control of the House because parties are more polarized (Poole and Rosenthal 1997, 85). This is because the mean Nominate score changes only marginally due to the large N (435) in the House.

⁶Earlier, we sought to include procedural votes when examining position taking, but found that presidents never took positions on them, so they were omitted in this analysis.

⁷Initially we considered Mayhew's budget situation (surplus or deficit/outlays) but found the misery index to be a more discriminating variable.

⁸When the legislator is the unit of analysis, its measurement can also be dichotomous (yes or no).

⁹We use the aggregate popular approval level from the prior month while Bond and Fleisher use the single prior poll to indicate the president's popular approval. They assert (1990, 181) that missing polls occurred in 32 of the 384 months (1953-84) examined. Our Gallup data contain few missing months of polls during congressional sessions but when they occurred, we included the closest poll prior to the vote. These data were obtained from Ragsdale (1998). One potential problem we faced is that the Gallup organization has asked far more polls during a single month in the later than in the earlier period. However, public opinion polls are fairly stable over such short time periods and we do not believe that the different numbers of polls per month contaminate the results.

¹⁰We use robust standard errors in our analyses. The robust function in Stata employs the Huber/White/Sandwich estimator of variance. To mitigate the effects of model mis-specification and/or heteroskedasticity, the robust estimator is utilized and typically provides better estimates of the standard errors.

¹¹Vasquez (1993, 5) maintains that statistical findings across models and estimators can and should be compared, although he recognizes that direct comparisons of coefficients makes little sense.

¹²Our analyses in Table 1 do not directly allow us to conclude that votes on intermestic issues lead to lower presidential success and support. We can conclude that compared to a baseline category of largely domestic policy votes, presidents achieve greater success and support on traditional foreign policy issues than on votes dealing with trade and immigration. To directly compare these two policy areas, we ran a separate analysis on just foreign policy and intermestic votes, setting foreign policy votes as the base category. We find a dummy variable for intermestic votes to be negative and significantly related to both success and support. Presidents are less successful and less likely to garner support in the House on intermestic votes compared to votes on more traditional foreign policy issues.

¹³We further explored the relationship between the misery index and success and found a temporal change occurring along the pre-post reform break. In the pre-reform era, the misery index negatively affects presidential success, but the relationship remains undistinguishable from zero statistically. In the post-reform era, the misery index positively affects presidential success. This temporal shift also does not depend on the vote-level unit of analysis used here. We ran the same model using month, quarter, and year as the unit of analysis and the shift in the directional affect of the misery index remains.

¹⁴A two-sample t-test with unequal variances shows mean level support for presidential positions to be statistically different in both the pre-reform and post-reform eras.

¹⁵The two models presented in Table 2 use the same dependent variable (presidential support in the House), but are basically based on two different samples (same-party presidential support and opposite-party presidential support). The number of observations for both models are identical (N=3721) and the minimum and maximum values for Y are the same (0 and 1). The mean and standard deviation vary as one would expect. The same-party model has a dependent variable with a mean of .73 and a standard deviation of .26. The opposite-party model has a mean of .41 and a standard deviation of .34.

¹⁶Consensus votes have the strongest influence on presidential support among opposite-party members. However, given that consensus votes are defined by coalitions larger than 80%, this relationship is to be expected. We include this variable as a control and not for any theoretical contribution.

¹⁷To assess statistically whether coefficients from the individual models of legislative support actually differ, we use two-sample t-tests to compare models in Table 2, as well as to compare models from Table 2 with the full house support model in Table 1. We find that all of the coefficients are statistically different. For example, a t-test of the coefficient for the party margin variable used in Table 2 for models of same-party support and opposite-party support provides a z-score of over 100. The size of the samples (3,710 votes) and the small values of the standard errors of the coefficients explain why the z-scores are so large. For most variables, though, the direction of the relationship does not change depending on the model. However, the sizes of some coefficients are different and the t-tests indicate

that these differences are statistically significant. For instance, the post-reform era has a much stronger impact on opposite-party legislative support than same-party support. The same can be said for final passage and foreign policy votes.

¹⁸We investigated the independent effects of unemployment and inflation on success and support. Unemployment tends to drive the relationship and is more strongly correlated with the misery index than inflation. The relationship between unemployment and success, like the misery index, remains positive and significant. No other coefficients are affected by using unemployment rather than the misery index. Inflation is not statistically significant when used in the success and support models in Table 1. For the models in Table 2, inflation tends to be positively related to support.

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