Appealing Politics? Using the Bully Pulpit to Change Opinions and Influence
Policy

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Timothy Herbert Callaghan

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Dedication

For my family. I never would have been able to do this without your love, support, and passion for arguing about politics.

Abstract

Recent political science research demonstrates that American politicians can use speeches to influence the political process. Despite this phenomenon's profound implications, our understanding of it remains underdeveloped in many respects. Most importantly, we lack compelling strategies that can outline the conditions under which speeches are most likely to be given, influence public opinion, and alter legislative behavior. Leveraging the unique variation provided by analysis at the state level, my dissertation does just that by assessing the impact of public statements by governors on the political process. It demonstrates that when governors speak out publicly on a policy issue, the speech can fundamentally alter the political process – influencing the way in which the public thinks about the issue and altering the behavior of legislators working on related public policy.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

In the wake of the passage of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and subsequent

determination that the expansion of Medicaid to all individuals earning less than 138% of

the federal poverty level called for in the law would be optional in *National Federation of*

Independent Business v. Sebelius, states across the nation were left with an unprecedented

choice. On the one hand, they could implement Medicaid expansion and take advantage

of the incredibly generous financing offered by the federal government – full funding for

the first 3 years and then an annual rate of 90% of costs covered by 2020 – to provide

health coverage to millions of poor Americans at a steeply discounted rate. On the other

hand, several states raised concerns about taking on even modest additional costs to cover

the uninsured and the growth in government that the program would represent.

Left with this optional expansion, research by scholars found that early state

decisions were colored by partisanship – every state with full Democratic control of state

government chose to adopt the expansion while most Republican states, citing federal

overreach and cost concerns, chose to sit out the expansion (Oberlander 2011; Jones,

Bradley, and Oberlander 2014). This pull of partisanship was particularly strong in states

with full Republican control of government and a Tea Party presence in the legislature as

many Republican legislators, and Tea Party activists in particular, were elected on a

promise to oppose the ACA.

Given this early research, the state of Arizona was a prime candidate to turn down

the expansion. Not only was the state was led by a fiery Republican governor in Jan

Brewer who had publicly described President Obama as "thin skinned" and "a very big

disappointment" as president, but the legislature was also controlled by a new wave of Tea Party Republicans opposed to the ACA (Merda 2014). In fact, the Senate President in the Arizona legislature had gone so far as to vow that he would do "everything in his power to prevent the Medicaid expansion from even making it to the Senate floor for a vote" (Lavender 2013).

In spite of this harsh climate which scholars had associated with turning down the optional Medicaid expansion, in January of 2013 Governor Brewer shocked her state and the nation at large by not only supporting the Medicaid expansion, but by doing so publicly in her most prominent speech of the year – her 2013 State of the State Address. Citing the tremendous cost savings that the program would bring and the lives the program could save, Brewer publicly urged the legislature to support her proposal. Within weeks of giving the address, a coalition of support among a group of those Republicans legislators who had previously vowed not to implement the expansion under any circumstances had formed, and within months, Arizona formally passed the Medicaid expansion.

Governor Brewer's use of a prominent public address as a precursor to policy change leads to several critical question for our understanding of the political process. First, what led Governor Brewer to defy partisan expectations and publicly support the key policy initiative of a President she had openly admitted to disliking? In addition, what impact, if any did the governor's unexpected behavior have on a conservative general public in Arizona which disliked the ACA and the president? Perhaps most importantly, did the governor's surprising public statement actually drive the policy

change that occurred in the state? These research questions fit into a strong research tradition in political science analyzing the influence of the executive over the political process through their use of the bully pulpit.

The Bully Pulpit – Understanding the Phenomenon

What is it?

First introduced by Theodore Roosevelt to describe the power of the presidency but not formally analyzed by political scientists until the late 1980s, the bully pulpit as originally conceptualized refers to the tactic whereby "a president promotes himself and his policies in Washington by appealing directly to the American public for support" (Kernell 1997, 1-2). Instead of focusing their energy on attempting to win policy victories by building a coalition of support among politicians in Washington, presidents using the bully pulpit go over the heads of legislators in Congress to achieve their goals. Specifically, presidents using their bully pulpit use speeches that appeal directly to the American people (often referred to as 'going public' in the literature) in order to generate a critical mass of support for a policy initiative supported by the president among members of the public. This change in public sentiment then forces re-election minded legislators into action to appease the public and results in the policy change pushed for by the president.

Presidential use of this bully pulpit takes many forms in the modern presidency. Perhaps most notably, it is seen through the nationally televised prime-time addresses that presidents give on the State of the Union, important policy changes (like President

Obama's 2014 address on Immigration reform), and even war declarations. These important addresses work to inform the nation about key events but more importantly, help to shape the general public's understanding of the issue and influence debates at the elite level. As important as these addresses are, they constitute only part of executive attempts to 'go public'. Presidents also attempt to influence the public's evaluation of policies through the minor addresses that they give as they stump for important public policies (Kernell 1997). These messages, although aimed at a much smaller audience, can be tailored to the city or state in which they are delivered and resonate equally, if not more, than national addresses. Finally, social media constitutes a modern extension of the bully pulpit. Although only reaching those who 'follow' a given president or who are friends with those who post about key positions, social media provides a new platform for the president to get his message to the American people.

Why Does the Bully Pulpit Matter?

Regardless of the form that it takes, political use of the bully pulpit is an important feature of the modern political landscape. As a result of changing societal norms in the 20th century which made public outreach strategies by politicians socially acceptable and an explosion of technological advancements, presidents today see the use of the bully pulpit as a necessary component of executive leadership. In fact, since at least the presidency of Woodrow Wilson, there has been a steady rise in the usage of direct communication with the mass public with each passing president to the point that today, "all presidents labor under the expectation of great oratory" (Kernell 1997; Tulis 1987, 177).

Critically, the bully pulpit is an important political phenomenon not only because presidents have become increasingly reliant on political strategies that see them 'go public,' but also because the strategy fundamentally alters our traditional understanding of democratic theory and political representation. As a foundational element of American politics, the study of democratic responsiveness has received considerable attention from a diverse set of scholars analyzing the subject from both theoretical and empirical perspectives. Emphasizing the trustee and delegate models of representation, this research has attempted to understand whether or not politicians are responsive to the popular will. The trustee model, which is often attributed to Edmund Burke, argues that political leaders should use the autonomy they have to make decisions based on their own judgments. Alternatively, the delegate model of representation which is perhaps best articulated in the Anti-Federalist papers, argues instead that political leaders should be highly responsive to constituents, tied to their wishes by the desire for re-election (Rehfeld 2009).

Despite the importance of these two perspectives, they fail to capture the realities of the modern political landscape which sees politicians using tactics like the bully pulpit as part of their attempts at influence. Instead of autonomously pursing good public policy or blindly following the whims of the electorate in their roles as representatives of the public will, the bully pulpit shows that reality is far more complex (Jacobs and Shapiro 2000; Lenz 2012). With politicians reaching out to the American public on a daily basis through speeches and public statements, it appears that even as politicians react to popular sentiment, they help to shape it as well. In the case of the bully pulpit, the

president attempts to pull the public to his or her position and then force legislators to pursue that position. By doing so, the president can pursue his preferred policy path while simultaneously 'serving' the public interest – fundamentally altering our understanding of politicians from serving as representatives of the public will to shapers of the public will. This conceptual clarification pushes the bully pulpit from merely a topic of interest to those who study elite influence to a fundamental topic for our broader understanding of representation in a Democratic society.

In addition to its conceptual importance, a growing body of research in political science has helped to bolster the theory and show that the bully pulpit has actual political consequences. When analyzing the influence of presidential rhetoric on the policy attitudes of the mass public, political scientists have found consistent evidence that presidential addresses can influence both the importance that individuals place on a policy issue and the support for a given policy position among the mass public (Druckman and Jacobs 2015; Rottinghaus 2010; Canes-Wrone 2001; Jacobs and Shapiro 2000; Cohen 1995; Edwards 1990). Specifically, a growing literature suggests that even in the face of relatively stable mass attitudes, on many issues presidents can influence public sentiment 'at the margins,' shifting opinions enough so that legislators need to take notice. Additional research on the phenomenon has helped to confirm the second step of political influence through the bully pulpit – the influence of the public on members of Congress. Research has found considerable evidence that legislators respond to a shift in mass attitudes by taking up the issue at hand in Congress and furthermore, have found evidence that executive rhetoric regularly alters the congressional agenda (Edwards and

Wood 1999; Edwards and Barrett 2000; Lovett, Bevan, and Baumgartner 2015; Cummins 2008; Cummins 2010; Canes-Wrone 2001).

While this research has helped to empirically demonstrate the importance of the phenomenon for the political process, it has also complicated our understanding of elite influence. In particular, even as the existing literature suggests that presidential rhetoric can influence public attitudes and subsequent legislative behavior, it also suggests that influence is often conditional in nature. In other words, it has found that although influence can occur through the bully pulpit, it tends to only occur when certain factors in the political environment are present or absent. The existing literature has found for example that public approval, unity of government, the divisiveness of the issue at hand, and whether the issue is foreign or domestic all alter the likelihood of influence through rhetoric (Rottinghaus 2010; Canes-Wrone 2010; Canes-Wrone 2001; Cohen 1995; Kernell 1997; Page and Shapiro 1992)

Advancing Our Understanding of the Bully Pulpit

With important implications for our understanding of the interactions between the executive branch, the general public, and the legislature and with clear evidence for presidential influence over the political process through its use, the study of the bully pulpit represents an important area of inquiry for political science. And yet, this literature remains underdeveloped in a number of important areas. First, although scholars have done a wonderful job of demonstrating that conditionality matters when studying the influence of elite rhetoric, analyzing factors in the political environment that can alter the

influence of the bully pulpit is difficult to do at the national level. Quite simply, the limited sample size of presidents and the lack of variation in institutional circumstances across presidents makes the analysis of conditionality hard to empirically study at the national level. While some scholars have attempted to overcome these inherent limitations by combining multiple presidential administrations in their studies, such efforts result in new questions related to historical period. In other words, to create the sample size needed to explore the bully pulpit empirically, scholars are forced to combine presidential administrations from fundamentally different eras in American politics, raising questions about the inferences generated across these periods. Finally, although the existing literature assumes that 'going public' is a strategy used by presidents to gain legislative influence in the policy process, there is little reason to suggest that the behavior is unique to presidents. With politicians at all levels of government reaching out to the American people through public addresses, it seems likely that successful use of the bully pulpit may be a far more widespread phenomenon than has been reported previously.

Preview of New Approach

My dissertation addresses these inherent limitations of the existing literature by shifting the study of the bully pulpit to the state level through an analysis of governors. In particular, my dissertation explores whether or not governors can successfully 'go public' and influence the policy process like the existing literature tells us that presidents can. In analyzing the bully pulpit by an actor other than the president, this analysis of

gubernatorial rhetoric will inherently provide insight into whether or not the literature's singular focus on presidential attempts to go public is misguided.

Critically however, this dissertation should not merely be considered a test of whether or not governors can 'go public'. More importantly, it will provide the most comprehensive information to date on the conditions that lead an executive to 'go public' and the situations in which those attempts will prove successful. Whereas scholars at the national level have only been able to analyze the tactic on a limited number of presidents – only 17 presidents have served since the pro-rhetoric era began in earnest under Wilson – the state level provides 50 governors at any point in time which can be analyzed. More than just providing an increased sample size, the states provide incredible variation in political, institutional, cultural, and economic contexts which can be tested to explore the conditional influence that has been determined critical to understanding the phenomenon but which remains frustratingly difficult to explore nationally (Ferguson 2003; Kousser and Phillips 2012). Given the similarities between the institutional structures and political dynamics at the state and federal level, these results can then be applied back to the federal level to help inform scholars about the factors that drive the bully pulpit more generally (Kousser and Phillips 2012).

Testing the New Approach

In order to analyze this important topic, my dissertation relies on a time series cross-sectional analysis of gubernatorial use of the bully pulpit on three key policy issues: the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), gay rights, and immigration. I will analyze gubernatorial statements on these public policies made as part of State of the

State addresses from 2010-2014. These addresses represent the most visible speech for governors in each year and provide a consistent set of speeches across states and across years to explore the influence of executive rhetoric on the political process.

My analysis of these speeches in this dissertation will work to answer the three key questions raised in the case of Governor Brewer's unexpected support of Medicaid expansion through the bully pulpit. First, I'll explore why governors choose to use their bully pulpit on certain topics but not others by conducting a comprehensive content analysis of State of the State speeches and then working to determine which conditions in the political environment lead politicians to emphasize each political issue under analysis here. Next, the dissertation will use cutting-edge methodological advancements in the form of multi-level modeling regression with post-stratification (MRP) to generate state level public opinion estimates and then explore the influence of gubernatorial rhetoric on public attitudes about policy issues. In particular, I'll explore how residents of a state react to gubernatorial policy rhetoric – do they increase the importance of the issue personally or do they change their attitudes on the policy altogether? Finally, I'll conclude my analysis of the bully pulpit by investigating policy outputs and exploring how gubernatorial rhetoric and the subsequent change in public sentiment that it causes influences the behavior of state legislators. It is important to note that while I will analyze health reform, immigration, and gay rights when looking at why governors choose to 'go public', data restrictions limit my analysis of the influence of rhetoric on the public and the legislature to just the ACA.

Contributions of Dissertation

Through its analysis of the gubernatorial bully pulpit, my dissertation will make several important contributions to the study of political science. Most prominently, this dissertation will provide important contextual information about the factors in the political environment that alter or constrain executive influence over the political process through rhetoric. With existing research highlighting the importance of conditionality to understanding the influence of the phenomenon on the political process but fundamentally limited in exploring it due to structural limitations at the national level, this dissertation presents a much-needed path forward in our understanding of the bully pulpit. By highlighting the utility of state-level analysis to exploring this conditionality and then analyzing several of these conditioning factors in answering each of my research questions, this dissertation provides the most comprehensive look at the bounds of rhetorical influence to date.

In addition, this dissertation represents an important step forward in our understanding of the political process at the state level. Whereas all aspects of the bully pulpit have received at least some attention in the study of the presidency, an equivalent literature examining the influence of the governor's bully pulpit is practically non-existent despite the fact that governors regularly employ rhetoric in their daily activities. Through its in-depth analysis of the gubernatorial bully pulpit, this dissertation will provide scholars of public opinion with some of the first evidence for the influence of elite actors at the state level on the policy attitudes of the mass public. In addition, this project with provide scholars of state politics with important new information about how

public addresses influence the state legislative process and highlight the need for scholars of state politics to more carefully consider the implications of speeches by state level elites on the political process.

Plan for Dissertation

This dissertation will explore the influence of gubernatorial rhetoric on the political process through a comprehensive approach that investigates the existing literature on the bully pulpit, analyzes why governors choose to 'go public' on some public policies but not others, studies the influence that these elite appeals actually have on the attitudes of the general public, and concludes by investigating what influence, if any, gubernatorial use of the bully pulpit has on policy outcomes.

In Chapter Two of this dissertation, I begin my exploration of the bully pulpit by detailing the existing literature on elite influence and laying out the theoretical contribution of this project. The chapter begins with a historical overview of the relationship between the executive and the public; detailing the differing views of the founding fathers on the role of the public in government, discussing changing norms over time related to presidential public appeals, and the growth of appeals afforded by technological advancement. I then discuss the development of the bully pulpit in the political science literature; beginning with the foundational work of Samuel Kernell and then discussing advancements in the literature over the last twenty years. Next, I discuss the transition of the study of the bully pulpit to the states and justify the need for this transition. Finally I conclude the chapter by discussing my expectations for the analysis

and the implications of my results for the literature, politicians, and democratic responsiveness.

After discussing the literature and the theoretical contribution of my project, Chapter Three of my dissertation begins to answer my key research questions by exploring the conditions in the political environment that make governors more likely to discuss health reform, gay rights, and immigration as part of their State of the State addresses. Specifically, it will explore the factors that make a governor more likely to make any public statement about each of these policy issues using gubernatorial approval, party control of state government, state economic conditions, demographic characteristics, and factors unique to each policy issue as potential explanatory variables. In addition, I will analyze direction of the speech (for or against the policy) and the amount of time devoted to the topic in the speech to determine how the conditionality might vary based on tone and time. The analysis in the chapter finds that governors discuss key political issues when they are particularly relevant for a state. For example, having a large uninsured population increases rhetoric on the ACA while a large Hispanic population does the same for immigration rhetoric. In addition, other factors influence the decision to go public including party control of state government and the gender of the governor.

After determining the factors that lead governors to use their bully pulpits to address key public policies, Chapter Four of the dissertation explores the influence of gubernatorial rhetoric about health reform on public support for and the policy salience of the ACA. The chapter begins by discussing my choice to focus the analysis on the

Affordable Care Act and why it provides an ideal test case for studying the influence of the bully pulpit in the modern era. It then details my use of multi-level modeling regression with post-stratification (MRP) to obtain state level public opinion estimates. Next, I show a surprising set of findings for the influence of the bully pulpit on the public at the state level. I find that the bully pulpit has no direct influence on changes in ACA salience or support however; rhetoric can influence policy support when key conditions are met in the political environment. Specifically, popular governors and governors speaking during election years appear to be more likely to influence ACA support than other governors.

The last empirical chapter of the dissertation transitions from the study of the influence of gubernatorial statements on mass attitudes to the influence of gubernatorial statements on policy outcomes. Here, I rely on a content analysis of every single ACA bill introduced in every single state legislature from 2011-2014 –roughly 3,000 bills in all – to determine whether or not state legislative leaders are responsive to bully pulpit use. My analysis of the topic finds that when governors speak out on health reform and are able to alter the way that the public thinks about the ACA, legislators take note and increase bill introduction on health reform. With that said, while rhetoric is often quite successful at getting issues onto the legislative agenda, my research also demonstrates that subsequent bill passage rarely results from gubernatorial rhetoric.

Finally, I conclude my dissertation by summarizing the key findings of the project and emphasizing conditionality, discussing the implications of these findings for the state

politics and presidency literatures, and acknowledge the limitations of my analysis that

will need to be addressed in future work.

Chapter 2. Theory and Literature Review

As President Andrew Johnson was sworn into office after the assassination of President Lincoln, he was immediately faced with a monumental political task unmatched in difficulty in the history of the United States – he was responsible for stitching the nation back together in the wake of the American Civil War. Following the strategy laid out by President Lincoln before his death, Johnson worked to execute a "plan of reconstruction that would be lenient toward the defeated South as it rejoined the Union" (The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson 2016). In his efforts however, Johnson was confronted by Radical Republicans in Congress who opposed his efforts at every turn and argued that severe punishment was needed for the rebel states before they could rejoin the union (General Article: The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson 2013; The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson 2016)

Recognizing the importance of the issue at hand and the utility of public support, President Johnson undertook the first effort at rhetorical influence in American history. On a nineteen day tour designed to win public support for his Reconstruction policy, Johnson delivered roughly 60 public speeches where he derided the Radical Republicans and accused his "congressional opposition of being just as treasonable as the Davises and Tombeses, the Slidells, and a long list of others from the South during the war" (Tulis 1987, 89). Undertaking a strategy which wouldn't be formalized as the bully pulpit by President Roosevelt for another three-plus decades, Johnson violated political norms of the time in the hopes of generating public support to force the Radical Republicans into supporting his Reconstruction agenda.

Unfortunately for President Johnson, the strategy did little more than to inflame

tensions with Congressional Republicans and on February 24, 1868, he was formally

impeached by the House of Representatives. While most of the articles of impeachment

pertained to a prolonged and related conflict over the Tenure in Office Act of 1867, the

tenth article of impeachment was based on Johnson's use of the bully pulpit (Tulis

1987).[1] Johnson was charged with making and delivering "with a loud voice certain

intemperate, inflammatory, and scandalous harangues, and did therein utter loud threats

and bitter menaces as well against Congress as the laws of the United States" (Tulis 1987,

91).

While President Johnson was ultimately acquitted, with the Senate vote falling

just short of the required threshold needed for conviction, the event remains a remarkable

episode in our understanding of public rhetoric. President Johnson nearly lost his

presidency for his strategic decision to 'go public' in order to carry out the wishes of his

fallen predecessor. Just a century later, the bully pulpit had become an instrumental part

of presidential strategy on a variety of public policies carrying far less significance than

the fate of the nation. How did this dramatic change in the norm of public rhetoric come

about? In addition, what makes the bully pulpit a useful tactic for politicians in their

attempts at influence over the public and the legislative process? This chapter will

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[1] The use of rhetoric was certainly a factor in Johnson's impeachment but it would be unfair to categorize it as the main driver of his impeachment. Johnson's impeachment occurred due to his response to the passage of the Tenure in Office Act by the Radical Republicans. Johnson thwarted the bill designed to require senatorial approval for the removal of officials confirmed by the Senate by replacing Edwin Stanton with Ulysses S. Grant as Secretary of War without senatorial approval ("President Andrew Johnson Impeached 2010).

investigate these questions in-depth; it will develop a comprehensive understanding of the historical development of the bully pulpit, detail existing research in the field on strategies for presidential power, explore the influence of elite rhetoric on the public and the legislative process, and conclude by arguing that we can advance our understanding of the phenomenon by expanding our study of the bully pulpit to the state level.

The History of the Bully Pulpit

The Founding Fathers and Public Opinion

Dating back to the foundation of the United States, one of the central debates in American politics has focused on the extent to which public opinion should dictate governmental action. While the founding fathers agreed that as a democracy "the only legitimate fountain of power" derived from the American public, many early leaders feared that following or inciting the passions of the citizenry would be detrimental to the public interest (Federalist 49). This viewpoint, which is today best exemplified in political science by the trustee model of representation, argues that the public is not well enough informed to make good political decisions and as such, politicians should represent their constituents without being responsive to popular will. Using their unique knowledge, skills, and expertise; founding fathers arguing this perspective expected politicians to serve the best interests of those that they represented, even if it meant going against their short-term wishes.

This perspective on leadership can be seen throughout the federalist papers and is perhaps best exemplified through the views of Alexander Hamilton. Arguing for a

submissive citizenry and an independent political elite, Hamilton believed that a permanent barrier was needed between government and the citizens in order to prevent majority tyranny and to differentiate between public passions and the public good (Sheehan 2004). For example, in Federalist 71, Hamilton argued that "when occasions present themselves, in which the interests of the people are at variance with their inclinations, it is the duty of the persons whom they have appointed to be guardians of those interests, to withstand the temporary delusion, in order to give them time and opportunity for more cool and sedate reflection."

Even as many early leaders feared the consequences of majority tyranny, other founding fathers argued for a more engaged role for the citizenry in public affairs. Perhaps best exemplified in the early Republic by James Madison and understood today as the delegate model of representation, this perspective argues that political leaders should be highly responsive to their constituents, tied to their wishes by the desire for re-election (Rehfeld 2009). Calling on representatives to "stand before the bar of public opinion," Madison pushed for representatives to carefully consider public sentiment before making political decisions (Sheehan 2004). These differing perspectives helped to shape political discourse early in the Republic and remain vital to our understanding of representation today.[2]

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[2] Sheehan (2004) makes clear that this debate led to the foundation of the first political parties in the United States as Madison and Hamilton could not agree on the capacity of the public to govern itself.

The Historical Development of 'Going Public'

In addition to helping us understand how our founding fathers viewed the role of citizens in the American political process, these two perspectives on public opinion are critical to understand for the part that each played in the historical development of the bully pulpit. Early on in the American Republic, most elites took a Hamiltonian perspective and were concerned about the danger that a powerful president would pose to their new democracy, especially if that power were to be derived through popular appeals (Tulis 1987). In fact, "for most Federalists, demagogue and popular leader were synonyms, and nearly all references to popular leaders in their writings are pejorative" (Tulis 1987, 27). Throughout the 19th century, the president was expected to be a representative of the American people, but not responsive to the popular will – avoiding any language in public speeches which could be construed as pushing the public into action. This norm is perhaps best exemplified by the impeachment of Andrew Johnson, who nearly lost his presidency in part for his use of 'bad rhetoric' (Tulis 1987).

These negative views of popular leadership held sway throughout the 19th century but underwent a dramatic transformation early in the 20th century that helped to push us towards the modern conception of the bully pulpit we see today. Specifically, the popular rhetoric that "was proscribed in the 19th century because it could manifest demagoguery, impede deliberation, and subvert the routines of republican governance," came into regular use in the 20th century "to contend with these very same political difficulties" (Tulis 1987, 95). Presidents were no longer shackled by the expectation that should represent the masses without taking the public's passions into account and instead,

presidents began to stand before the bar of public opinion to push their case for key

public policies.

20th Century Growth

This dramatic shift from a president who was expected to only speak out to the

public in very specific circumstances to the world in which we live today where popular

rhetoric is one of the most important feature of political leadership, resulted from several

changes during the 20th century that started under the presidencies of Teddy Roosevelt

and Woodrow Wilson. Specifically, since the start of the 20th century, the bully pulpit has

grown due to key technological advancements, changes in the unity of party government,

and the growth of the incumbency advantage (Kernell 1997).[3]

Technological advancements played a prominent role in the growth of presidential

appeals due to the development of radio and then television as important features of daily

life. These changes allowed for the development of the modern mass media, which has

facilitated the growth of the bully pulpit by giving the president a way to communicate

directly to a large national audience on a regular basis (Tulis 1987). In addition, another

important advancement in technology has been the improvement in presidential travel

over the past century. Specifically, the shift from travel by train to travel by planes and

then later, improvements in the speed of aircrafts and a growth in the number of airports

at which planes can land has given the president more opportunities to take his case to the

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[3] Kernell (1997) adds the partisan composition of the electorate as an additional factor
influencing the growth of the bully pulpit over time. Specifically, he claims that a growth
in Independents in the electorate has made the technique more effective. With that said,
although there is clear evidence for a growth in Independents and Independents may be
more susceptible to elite influence, there is little direct evidence for this relationship
provided in Kernell's work.

nation (Hager and Sullivan 1994). As noted by Hager and Sullivan (1994), technological

advancements improve the bully pulpit with each successive leader. For example,

"President Reagan should pursue more public activities than President Truman simply

because Reagan can travel more places, faster and more comfortably, and receive more

widespread media coverage while doing so" (1085).

As important as technological advancements have been to the growth of the bully

pulpit, they are far from the only advancement that has allowed for the phenomenon's

growth. In addition, the advancement of the bully pulpit has been aided by the growth of

the incumbency advantage and an increase in divided government over time. Kernell

(1997) notes that the growth in the incumbency advantage of politicians played an

important role in bully pulpit growth because it has helped to insulate legislators from

being forced into compliance by party leaders and thus led them to be more responsive to

popular will.

Finally, the dramatic expansion of presidential use of public appeals during the

20th century was aided by changes in the unity of party government over time. The unity

of party government plays an important role in the decision to go public because the

feasibility of alternative leadership strategies depends in large part on whether or not a

president faces united or divided government. Under united government, which was more

common during the 19th and early 20th centuries, presidents often focus their attention on

Washington, convinced they can be successful without the help of the public. Conversely,

when confronted with divided party government and a fragmented power structure in

Congress (as has become more and more frequent in the 20th century), a president forgoes

the power-struggle in Washington and relies on presidential appeals to accomplish his

objectives (James 2005). Popular appeals become more likely under divided government

because the chances for cooperation between the branches of government is low and the

president often has to coerce the legislature into action (Kernell 1993).

Ultimately, these key changes during the 20th century, along with shifting norms

that made public appeals a viable strategy for political leadership, helped to transform the

presidency and make elite appeals to the general public an important feature of the

political environment.

Understanding Presidential Power in Political Science

Early Perspectives – Neustadt

Executive use of public appeals has been an evolving and increasingly important

feature of presidential leadership since at least the presidency of Theodore Roosevelt;

however, the analysis of popular appeals was largely absent from the study of presidential

power in political science for most of the 20th century. Instead, the dominant paradigm

for understanding presidential power came from the work of Richard Neustadt who

examined the personal and informal behaviors of presidents in order to come to broad

conclusions about their differential influence on governmental action. Using prominent

case studies as examples of presidential influence, Neustadt (1980) argued that

presidential power was based in Washington and ultimately derived from the power to

persuade.[4] Through his work, the field came to understand that the "essence of a president's persuasive task [is] to convince [others] that what the White House wants of them is what they ought to do for their sake and on their authority" (Neustadt 1980, 30). Neustadt argues that if a president can appropriately leverage his vantage points so that he has a clear bargaining advantage, has convinced others he's willing to use it and that others will face repercussions from the public if they do not acquiesce to the presidents will; presidential persuasion and thus power is likely.

Although profoundly influential and still a required read for any scholar of American politics, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of Neustadt's work. In focusing on the personal and informal aspect of the presidency in order to develop a wide-sweeping narrative of executive power across presidents, Neustadt misses the changes in the presidency over time. As Moe (2009) notes, the presidency today is a larger, more complex, and more formal institution which Neustadt's analysis fails to capture. More importantly for this dissertation, Neustadt's singular focus on elite interactions misses the changing societal norms that saw presidents look outside of Washington to the general public for a new source of power with increasing frequency during the 20th century.[5]

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[4] Neustadt builds his argument using the dismissal of General MacArthur, the seizure of steel mills, and the dispatch of troops to Little Rock Arkansas as his three key case studies.

[5] While the public does play a role in Neustadt's account, it is fundamentally a secondary one. In the bargaining framework, politicians care about the public insofar as the public influences a president's prestige. As Kernell (1997) notes, "public opinion never does more than passively color the bargaining context." Never does Neustadt "consider that the president might abandon negotiation (or even threaten to) and take his case directly to the American people" (Kernell 1997, 25).

A New Perspective - Kernell

The importance of the bully pulpit to the president's power was first introduced to most of political science by Samuel Kernell's pre-eminent book on the subject – *Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership*. With the growth in the acceptability of reaching out to the public in the 20th century and the growth and professionalization of the media and White House press corps, Kernell argues that the use of public appeals became a key part of presidential politics during the second half of the 20th century. Showing a dramatic rise in the use of public appeals by presidents over time during that period, Kernell introduced the field to the idea that presidents were no longer at the will of a Congress that could dictate what was accomplished, and instead, they could reach out to the public to put pressure on legislators to achieve presidential priorities.

Critically, Kernell's work not only introduced a new perspective, but also made clear that 'going public' is a fundamentally different form of presidential power that violates Neustadt's claim that presidential power derives from the ability to persuade and bargain. Kernell points out that "going public is more akin to force than bargaining," failing to provide the sorts of benefits typical of bargaining while simultaneously imposing costs on legislators for noncompliance in the form of unhappy constituents (Kernell 1997, 3). On a related note, instead of relying on other politicians as would be expected under the dominant paradigm, the use of the bully pulpit undermines the legitimacy of legislators and shifts them from primary actors to secondary players forced by the desire for re-election to listen to constituent attitudes that have been shaped by the president.

Rhetoric in a Post-Kernell World

New Findings

      After its introduction to the field, Kernell's conception of the bully pulpit helped to reshape our understanding of presidential power and today the bully pulpit is understood by political scientists to be a fundamental feature of presidential leadership. With that said, Kernell's original analysis did little more than introduce the field to the concept and illustrate the growth of presidential appeals over time. Since its publication however, scholars have devoted considerable time and attention to better understanding political use of public rhetoric. Research in this area has focused primarily on three key questions about the bully pulpit: when will the executive choose to forgo a legislative solution and appeal directly to the American public, how does 'going public' influence policy salience and support among the mass public, and when will the legislature be forced into action to pursue the executive's preferred policy goals?

Bully Pulpit Issue Selection

      The first of these questions on why some executives choose to 'go public' on a given topic while others avoid the topic altogether has received considerable attention, with scholars noting that one of the primary responsibilities for the executive in the American political system is to set the agenda or set of issues that will define policymaking during a given term. More than just providing a simple list of topics for discussion, this agenda setting, which occurs through the use of the bully pulpit, is an important instrument of power. As noted by Schattschneider (1960), "he who determines

what politics is about runs the country, because the definition of alternatives is the choice of conflict" (68, in Light 1991, 2).

At the national level, the most prominent research to date by Light (1991) tells us that when selecting issues to put onto the agenda, presidents choose public policies based on the goals of re-election, historical achievement, or good public policy. In other words, the president determines which goal is most important to them, and then selects an issue for the agenda accordingly. Of course, all presidents would like to achieve all three simultaneously, but when that is not feasible they must select policies for consideration based on which goal is most important at a given time. Critically however, Light (1991) notes that internal goals are not the only factors that drive decision-making. In addition, issue selection is constrained by internal resources like time, information, expertise, and energy as well as external factors in the political environment which can elevate some political issues and force others to the back-burner.

More recently, research by Canes-Wrone (2001) shows that presidents will choose to 'go public' when certain conditions are met in the political environment. Specifically, Canes-Wrone finds that presidents are more likely to use public rhetoric when the positions they are advocating for are already popular and when the outcome of a policy debate is unknown and thus genuine policy negotiations are at hand. When investigating the potential role for policy popularity in determining presidential strategy, the author strikingly found that of the 88 budgetary proposals under analysis, on only one of the proposals did the president appeal to the public on an issue where the majority of the public disapproved of the president's position. In other words, the president only risks

a public strategy when they are certain that the public is already predisposed to favor the proposal. In addition to popularity, Canes-Wrone also demonstrates that public appeals are not wasted on pre-determined outcomes. If it becomes clear through other aspects of the political process that a policy is doomed or assured to pass, the president will not waste the capital required to go public. If however, the outcome is legitimately up for grabs, the president is far more likely to use public rhetoric.

While most research to date on rhetoric-based agenda setting has occurred in the context of the president, important additional information comes from analysis at the state level. Similar to their presidential counter-parts, governors are a focal-point for policy-based agenda-setting, selecting issues for public attention, focusing them, and then forcing action from the political system (Beyle 1983; Francis and Weber 1980). At the state level, the research of Herzik (1991) suggests that the topics selected for gubernatorial rhetoric and thus placement onto the legislative agenda typically come from three key categories: perennial issues like education and highways which must be dealt with yearly, cyclical issues like taxes which are discussed in peaks and valleys, and transitory issues which erupt onto the political scene and demand immediate attention.

Mass Receptivity to Elite Appeals

While knowing when an executive will choose a public strategy is certainly important, it is just as important to know when these attempts at influence will actually succeed in altering mass attitudes. Within the literature, a growing consensus has emerged that executive appeals can in fact influence the attitudes of the general public; but critically, actual opinion change only occurs at the margins.

Decades of research in political psychology demonstrate that individuals are cognitive misers who have a difficult time understanding the details of political issues and ideological labels (Campbell et al. 1960; Converse 1964; Lavine, Lodge and Jost Forthcoming). Attempting to understand the political world by operating according to three key principles: least effort, sufficiency, and belief perseverance - individuals confront the political environment under normal circumstances with a primary goal of minimizing cognitive effort (Lavine, Johnston, and Steenbergen 2013). In order to accomplish this key objective, when forced to make a policy decision, individuals rely on heuristics that help them to better understand the political task they face. These trusted heuristics, such as party identification, candidate endorsement, and the physical appearance of politicians, help members of the mass public to understand the political world (Lavine, Lodge, and Jost Forthcoming; Sniderman, Brody, and Tetlock 1991; Cambell et al. 1960; Converse 1964).

One of the most prominent heuristics used by members of the public toward this end is information from trusted elites. Instead of taking the time to learn the details of important policy debates, members of the mass public often look to trusted politicians to help them formulate attitudes toward important political issues (Malka et al. 2009; Lewkowicz 2006; Gilens and Murakawa 2002). Thus, when a politician chooses to speak out about an issue, members of the mass public take note, using the stance taken by the official as an indication for the importance of the issue and how the public should view the policy. Of course, not all individuals are equally receptive to these elite signals. The least politically aware are often not exposed to these messages and; therefore, are

uninfluenced; alternatively the most politically aware are more selective with whom they trust and easily filter out information from out-party elites (Zaller 1992; Zaller and Feldman 1992). Even with this caveat, large segments of the general public are open to (and rely upon) signals from elites to help them understand the political world.

One of the most prominent examples of these signals to the general public comes in the form of elite use of the bully pulpit. Even in the face of relatively stable mass attitudes, a growing consensus has emerged in the literature that executive appeals can influence the attitudes of the general public; but critically, opinion change only occurs at the margins (Druckman and Jacobs 2015; Rottinghaus 2010; Canes-Wrone 2001; Jacobs and Shapiro 2000; Cohen 1995; Edwards 1990). Research shows that when presidents speak out to the public about a policy, they are quite successful at raising the salience of the issue at hand to the mass public. Regardless of how popular the president is, when a president highlights an issue in an address, it serves as a useful heuristic for the public about the issue's importance (Cohen 1995).

Although raising the salience of an issue is relatively easy, presidential use of the bully pulpit to alter policy attitudes proves more difficult. Members of the public have a defined set of core values and predispositions that are relatively stable over time and an individual speech by any political actor, regardless of how much trust the public has in the politician, may do little to alter these underlying predispositions (Goren 2013; Jacobs and Shapiro 2000; Feldman 1988). With that said, even if these values and fundamental predispositions are relatively stable, research shows that elite appeals can lead to modest shifts in public opinion on specific policy proposals (Druckman and Jacobs 2015; Jacobs

and Shapiro 2000; Edwards 1990). Research consistently finds that presidents are able to use public addresses (particularly prominent ones) to shift mass attitudes by five to ten percent. That seemingly modest shift can have important implications for the political process. For example, Edwards (1990) rightly points out that even if a president can only shift public opinion by 6 percentage points, that push could be all that is needed to alter the way that an issue is seen nationally.[6] Perhaps more importantly, as representatives are ultimately concerned with the desire for re-election, if that slight shift in attitudes proves to be consequential (i.e. it alters the voting calculus for a non-trivial portion of the electorate), representatives are forced to take notice and take up the cause (Rottinghaus 2010; Kernell 1997).

In addition to emphasizing the modest shift in mass attitudes that can result from presidential appeals, the other major take-away from the existing literature on the influence of rhetoric over the public is the conditional nature of the use and influence of these appeals. Arguing that a comprehensive analysis of political influence must include the conditions that alter or constrain a president's ability to reach the American people, scholars in this area have demonstrated that the president's attempts to 'go public' will be more successful when certain conditions are met (Rottinghaus 2010; Canes-Wrone 2001). For example, existing work demonstrates that popular presidents are more likely to be successful in their use of the bully pulpit and that a public outreach strategy is more likely to be successful when a president has unified government (Rottinghaus 2010; Canes-

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[6] Specifically, Edwards notes that if a proposal starts with 50% support, presidential intervention could push the public to be perceived to dislike the policy (44% support) or favor the policy (56% support).

Wrone 2001; Page and Shapiro 1992). In addition, scholars have found that politicians

will go public on issues where their position is popular with the public but the outcome of

the policy debate is not pre-determined (Canes-Wrone 2001). Finally, more recent work

demonstrates that speeches delivered from more official venues are more likely to be

influential and that the closer a speech is given to the president's election, the more likely

they are to lead public opinion (Rottinghaus 2010).[7] Taken together, these results

highlight that success in using rhetoric to alter public opinion depends in large part on

factors in the environment and that understanding these key conditions is of paramount

importance for understanding whether a given attempt at rhetoric will succeed or fail.

Rhetorical Influence over Public Policy

In addition to establishing a connection between presidential appeals and attitude

change, scholars have also devoted considerable attention to understanding how the use

of the bully pulpit influences the behavior of legislators and subsequent policy change.

Similar to the findings related to the influence of the bully pulpit on the public, the

literature on the influence of public addresses on the legislature remains mixed. On the

one hand, a large body of research demonstrates that the president is often successful in

using public rhetoric to get policies onto the congressional agenda (Edwards and Wood

1999; Edwards and Barrett 2000; Lovett, Bevan, and Baumgartner 2015; Cummins 2008;

Cummins 2010; Canes-Wrone 2001). For example, in her 2001 article on presidential

influence over budgetary policy, Canes-Wrone finds that presidents generate considerable

legislative influence by publicly promoting their proposals. Similarly, Cummins (2010)

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[7] Rottinghaus demonstrates that speeches delivered from the oval office as compared to
other less 'presidential' venues are more likely to be effective.

shows that at low and moderate levels of partisanship, legislative influence through the use of the bully pulpit is strong on domestic policies.

On the other hand, scholars have also shown considerable evidence that successful use of the bully pulpit to influence legislative behavior is not a guarantee. By appealing directly to the American people instead of working with those inside the beltway, the president can sometimes impede legislative progress with a Congress that would otherwise be willing to bargain (Covington 1987; Kernell 1997). In addition, other scholars have found that certain factors in the political environment can make bully pulpit influence untenable. For example, Cummins (2010) shows that at high levels of partisanship and opposition party strength, influence from State of the Union addresses disappears. Furthermore, other research suggests that influence over the legislative agenda through the bully pulpit can vary dramatically from president to president. Fett (1994) while examining the relationship between public addresses and legislative behavior during the Carter and Reagan administrations finds minimal bully pulpit influence during the Carter presidency but a great deal more during the presidency of Reagan.

Research on executive influence over the legislative process has been conducted almost exclusively at the national level; however the work of Ferguson (2003) suggests that this mixed set of findings might extend to the state level as well. In her article Ferguson shows that experience on the part of the governor and having a smaller legislative agenda can increase the translation of rhetoric into policy success. At the same time however, Ferguson demonstrates that influence over the legislative agenda wanes

over time, with lame duck status associated negatively with success. Critically however, although Ferguson explores the link between rhetoric and legislative activity, she fails to account for a key component of the bully pulpit – the attitudes of the public on the issue at hand.

Advancing our Current Understanding of the Bully Pulpit

Research to this point on the use of the bully pulpit has yielded important insight into our understanding of presidential power and elite influence. Even with these advances however, important questions remain.

The 'N of 1' Dilemma and Questions of Historical Period

One key problem with the existing literature on the bully pulpit which has been problematic to the presidency literature more broadly is the fact that the nature of the presidency inherently forces the sample size to 1 at any given time, making drawing inferences incredibly complex (King 1993). In a political science literature that increasingly relies on complex quantitative analysis to answer research questions, the study of the presidency presents a worst case scenario: a single actor who serves for an extended period of time with little variation in variables of interest. In the context of the bully pulpit, this issue has limited the sorts of questions that scholars can answer and left many relevant research questions related to conditionality unexplored. Of course, scholars of the presidency have attempted to overcome the "N of 1" problem in a variety of ways, and yet none of them provides a satisfactory solution for the study of the bully pulpit.

Cameron (2000) suggests that the "N of 1" problem can be overcome by shifting focus from the study of the presidency to an exploration of specific decision tasks by presidents. For example, in analyzing the Obama presidency you may only have one man to analyze, but you have hundreds of executive orders to exploit. Unfortunately in the case of the bully pulpit however, there are only so many speeches within a presidency on which 'going public' can be analyzed. While there are hundreds of minor addresses that can be explored, scholars studying the bully pulpit are most often interested in the major prime-time addresses that are most likely to influence the mass public. Even if we were to combine all of these major speeches over an eight-year presidency, a scholar would be hard pressed to get a sample size large enough for complex quantitative analysis.

Alternatively, some scholars have tried to overcome the "N of 1" problem by examining presidents over time. By combining all presidents together, scholars can build a sample size large enough to answer many research questions and avoid the issues that arise when studying a single administration. For example, in his recent study of the bully pulpit Rottinghaus (2010) used an analysis that covered 1953-2001 in order to explore conditional influence from presidential rhetoric. Despite the utility provided by this approach, many scholars have called it into question. Gary King (1993) for example notes that even if we used every existing president in our analysis, we would not obtain a sample size sufficiently large to make reliable inferences until sometime between the years 2193 and 4378. In addition, combining presidents over time raises important questions about the validity of the inferences made due to differences in historical period (Ferguson 2003). In other words, the political landscape into which Barack Obama was

thrust was so fundamentally different than the one that Millard Fillmore faced for example, that analyzing them in the context of the same research question is methodologically questionable.

Expanding our Understanding of Conditionality

In addition to questions of sample size and historical period, a more significant but related issue with the existing literature on rhetoric focuses on conditionality. When analyzing existing work on the bully pulpit to this point, what stands out above all else is that the bully pulpit can only be effectively used to influence the attitudes of the public under specific conditions. Scholars have provided crucial insight into some of the factors affecting the influence of the bully pulpit; however, many questions still remain. Specifically, although we know about some of the factors that can alter influence, a lack of clarity about the specific bounds within which executive appeals matter remains. For example, how might common political and institutional factors like the media environment or the electoral implications of an address alter when a politician 'goes public' or the influence of the bully pulpit on the public and the legislature?

While the existing research in the field has answered some important questions about this conditionality, exploring many conditional factors is incredibly difficult to do at the national level. There is simply not enough variation in relevant variables to explore many of these complex questions when studying the bully pulpit in the federal context. Peterson (1990) notes, for example that "testing theories of chief executive leadership success at the national level has always been problematic because of the small number of presidents over time and the lack of variation in many variables of interest, particularly

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institutional variables" (Peterson 1990 in Ferguson 2003; 166). As a tactic that only came

into regular use during the 20th century, this problem has been compounded in the study

of the bully pulpit with only 17 presidents to analyze in the modern era.[8] Simply put,

even though several scholars have devised important studies to investigate aspects of this

conditionality, there is just not enough variation in many variables of interest to perform

the analyses necessary to come to useful conclusions about several contextual variables

that might alter elite influence.[9]

Moving Beyond the President

Finally, another issue which needs more careful consideration is the assumption

that 'going public' is a strategy used by presidents to gain legislative influence over the

policy process. While emphasizing presidential use of the bully pulpit is certainly

warranted, presidents are far from the only politicians in the American political system to

rely on the bully pulpit. Even a cursory look at the news on television or the internet

makes clear that politicians at all levels of government reach out to the American people

through public statements. Jacobs and Shaprio (2000) perfectly articulated this point

when they argued that public appeals "are no longer the tool of presidents alone. The

combination of polarization, the emphasis on policy goals, the rise of political

consultants, and the emergence of…media-savvy political leaders have dramatically

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[8] This figure is based on Tulis' assertion in his 1987 book that the norm of 'going public' only really began under the presidency of Woodrow Wilson.

[9] It is important to acknowledge that several scholars have made inroads on some of these difficult conditional features with cases studies on specific presidents, however case studies are not a reasonable strategy for most aspects of this conditionality. For example, it is impossible to use a case study of President Clinton in order to understand the influence of control of the executive branch by each political party on the successful use of the bully pulpit.

widened the use of opinion manipulation strategies" by political leaders (46). Regardless

of the size of the constituency that they serve, politicians today see public appeals as a

viable strategy that helps them to influence the general public and to shape the policy

debates that they care about. The case of Jan Brewer is a perfect example. She regularly

addressed her state through public rhetoric and gave yearly State of the State addresses

similar to the State of the Union addresses which have been synonymous with the bully

pulpit at the national level.[10] Of course, the president remains the most visible of all

political figures using public appeals, but it is no longer sufficient to focus solely on the

president when attempting to understand the influence of the strategy on mass attitudes.

Developing a More Comprehensive Approach

Scholars have made several crucial advances toward understanding the influence

of the bully pulpit; however, further advances in our understanding will require a new

approach that can simultaneously account for these remaining issues with our current

conceptualization of the bully pulpit. My dissertation will address each of these issues by

analyzing the bully pulpit in the context of another prominent actor in the U.S. political

process – governors.

By transitioning away from the federal level to the state level, this analysis will

have fifty executives on which popular appeals related to policy issues can be explored.

In addition, these fifty observations are available at each time point, avoiding the

questions about historical period and context that studies of the presidency have been

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[10] It is important to note that State of the State addresses are not unique to Arizona or
Governor Brewer and are delivered every year in most states across the nation. This
widespread usage of prominent addresses highlights the fact that prominent public
appeals regularly occur below the national level.

forced to confront. More than just providing a larger sample size for empirical analysis, the real advantage of shifting to the state level comes from providing the additional contextual variation that is missing from studies of the presidency. When analyzing the states, each governor is confronted with unique political, institutional, and economic dynamics that allow for a more complex understanding of the conditionality of executive leadership (Kousser and Phillips 2012; Ferguson 2006, 2003; Beyle 1983; Rosenthal 1990; Schlesinger 1965). In particular, this analysis will rely in the immense variation that is found at the state level but missing at the federal level related to economic circumstances, party control of state government, elite popularity, media environment, electoral status, and demographic characteristics in order to better understand the conditionality that has only been explored in certain contexts at the federal level.

Critically, this analysis should not just be considered a test of whether or not governors can 'go public' and influence the general public and policy process like presidents can. Instead, this project should be viewed as a way to better understand the bully pulpit as a whole. By analyzing gubernatorial influence from public appeals, this analysis will provide information about how the use and success of the bully pulpit varies across institutional structures and political dynamics (Kousser and Phillips 2012). The lessons learned from this analysis can then be applied to better understand the political process not only in states, but across levels of government. In other words, the lessons learned here can help us to better understand public appeals by government elites at all levels. As noted by Kousser and Phillips, "states can give us additional empirical traction to expand the presidential literature, providing out-of-sample cases to…explore well-

trodden fields that have yielded mixed [or limited] results" (7). Therefore, this research

should be thought of as a crucial step toward a more general understanding of the use of

the bully pulpit by political elites and executive actors in particular.

Can this Comparison Really be Made?

Acknowledging Key Differences

Despite the importance of this dissertation to our understanding of the bully pulpit

at both the state and national levels, it is important to acknowledge that there are key

differences between governors and presidents when studying executive behavior. First,

there are large differences between governors and presidents with respect to their scope

of power, especially with respect to foreign policy. As commander in chief, the president

possesses a foreign policy prowess that no governor can come close to reaching. They are

responsible for creating alliances with other nations and have the power to go to war

when necessary. With existing literature on the bully pulpit pointing to foreign policy as

the area where a president's influence over public opinion is felt the longest, it is

important to acknowledge that no equivalent policy domain exists for governors (Cohen

1995).

Outside the scope of foreign policy, governors and presidents also differ with

respect to term lengths and limits. While the president can serve 2 four year terms,

gubernatorial terms vary from 2-4 years and term limits vary from 1 term in Virginia to

no term limits in several other states. When exploring the conditionality of elite appeals,

these differences mean that direct comparisons between the influence of incumbency or

electoral status and elite influence from appeals at the state and national levels may not

be possible.[11]

Finally, and perhaps most obviously, governors and presidents differ with respect

to their constituency size. Whereas a president is responsible for all American citizens

representing an incredible diversity of interests, governors are responsible for only those

in their states. This smaller constituency is likely to share a more unified political culture

and outlook towards the political world. Therefore, when analyzing the bully pulpit a

governor may face an audience with less diverse interests that is more receptive to their

message.

Justifying the Comparison

Even with these many differences between the two levels of analysis, the

exploration of 'going public' at the state level and then drawing connections back to

existing work at the national level appears justified because of the many similarities

between the structure of the political process at each level of government. As pointed out

by Kousser and Phillips (2012), "governors are not exactly like presidents, just as state

legislatures are not perfect copies of Congress." Yet many of these differences provide

the analytic leverage that makes an analysis at the state level so appealing, "and the

similarities are strong enough to make the states fertile ground for exploring more general

theories about chief executives" (8).

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[11] With that said variations in term length and limit are themselves interesting
components of the variation across states and should be explored as potential
conditioning factors for rhetorical influence in future research.

When comparing the two levels of government, the similarities are almost overwhelming. Like the president, the governor holds the top position of power in the state government, serving as both the party head and the head of the government (Morehouse and Jewell 2004). In addition, like presidents, the public expects governors to lead and represent their states, lauding them for state achievements and blaming them for perceived state failures (Kousser and Phillips 2012). Furthermore, just as they do for presidents, voters demand policy leadership and results on important policy issues from their governors (Kousser and Phillips 2012). Additionally, as discussed in Salmore and Salmore (1996), state politics has become presidentialized over the past few decades so that the political landscape itself has become more similar between the state and national levels. For example, since 1955, the number of governors able to serve four year terms instead of two year terms has nearly doubled, the number of governors limited to one term has decreased from 17 to just 1, and several state governments have been re-organized in ways that consolidate powers under the governor (Beyle 1988 and 1983; Bowman, Woods and Stark 2010; Abney and Lauth 1983).

Finally, research by Squire and Fastnow (1994) reports that as many as four-fifths of the public can identify their governor, second only to the proportion who can identify the president. This identification results in large part from the fact that governors get extensive media coverage which often outpaces the coverage for other politicians at the state and federal levels (Squire and Fastnow (1994). Notably, governors are seen by the public not as unknown representatives, but critical parts of the fabric of a state, with the public developing an understanding of the unique personalities of the leaders and their

families (Adams and Squire 2001). Critically, the degree of public recognition for governors appears to be sufficiently high for the public to be aware of and respond to gubernatorial addresses in a manner similar to the way in which they respond to presidential public appeals.[12] Taken as a whole, it appears that there are clear differences between the presidency and governors that need to not only be acknowledged, but accounted for in this analysis. With that said, there is sufficient evidence suggesting overlap between the levels of analysis to connect research at the state and national levels in my investigation of the bully pulpit.

What Do We Already Know About the Gubernatorial Bully Pulpit?

What We Know

In examining the research to this point on the influence of gubernatorial rhetoric on the political process, what is particularly striking is how limited the literature actually is. To this point, no work has been done on the specific focus of the analysis here – the influence of gubernatorial use of the bully pulpit. More surprising, minimal research has been done on gubernatorial agenda setting or the broader topic of elite influence over the mass public at the state level. With that said, extensive work has been done on the relationship between American governors, the mass public, and state legislatures which will inform this analysis.

The most relevant research from the state level related to the bully pulpit focuses on rhetoric-based agenda setting. This work has found that similar to their presidential

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[12] The next highest recognized public official was the states US Senators which only half of state residents could name.

counter-parts, governors are a focal-point for policy-based agenda-setting (Beyle 1983; Francis and Weber 1980). Governors carefully consider the goals they would like to achieve and the factors in the political environment and then select policy issues from the set of potential perennial, cyclical, and transitory issues available for discussion (Herzik 1991).

Other relevant research at the state level helps to establish a link in states between public preferences and legislative action. Establishing this link is of particular importance because for the bully pulpit to have actual political consequences, it is necessary to establish that state legislators respond to public sentiment. Although early work found minimal influence of public preferences on elite behavior at the state level (Dye 1966; Plotnick and Winters 1985; Treadway 1985), the past two decades has seen a large body of research develop showing that state policy is responsive to mass preferences. Beginning with Erikson, Wright and McIver (1993) who showed that increasing state liberalism is associated with more liberal state policies, a flurry of research has shown that state policies reflect citizen preferences (Pacheco 2012; Brace et al. 2002; Shaw 2000; Hill, Leighley and Hinton-Andersson 1995; Arceneaux 2002; Mooney and Lee 2000; Gray, Lowery, and Goodwin 2007; Haider-Markel and Kaufman 2006). Taken together, these articles across issue areas like welfare, abortion, the death penalty, health care, gay rights, and the environment all show that state legislators are responsive to public opinion and that the laws that are enacted at the state level often reflect the wishes of those living in each state (Pacheco 2012).

Theoretical Expectations for Dissertation

Building on our extensive knowledge of rhetoric and its influence at the national level, as well as the limited work that has been conducted to this point at the state level on the relationship between governors, the public, and the legislature, I have several general expectations which will guide this project. Broadly, I anticipate that the gubernatorial bully pulpit will operate quite similar to the manner in which the bully pulpit was first described by Kernell (1997) in his landmark book on the presidential bully pulpit.

Just like their presidential counterparts, when a governor is confronted with a policy issue which she believes needs to be addressed for the good of the state, she is first left with a crucial decision – should I work with legislators in the state capitol to achieve policy change or should I reach out to the public to persuade them to lead the charge for change? When the governor believes that they can achieve policy change independent of the public as in the case of an uncontroversial policy problem or where bargaining seems realistic, the governor will focus their efforts on building a coalition of support among legislative leaders. If on the other hand, a path to legislative policy victory seems more difficult, the governor will behave like presidents and use the bully pulpit to achieve their goals. Critically, certain factors in the political environment may enhance or limit the likelihood of rhetoric based success and therefore alter gubernatorial strategy. For example, if there is a perceived policy need among the public or if the governor is popular with the public, they may see a public path as more tenable. This is similar to the national level where Kernell notes that the decision to go public often hinges on the

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president's prestige and reputation (Kernell 1997). Alternatively for example, if the economic situation in a state makes policy change too costly or other factors limit the likelihood of success, they will avoid using the bully pulpit to discuss the topic.

If upon deciding to pursue policy change, the governor determines a rhetoric-based approach to be the best course of action, influence over both the public and the state legislature will similarly depend on factors in the political environment. As noted in the literature on mass receptivity to elite appeals, I expect that gubernatorial influence over the public through the use of the bully pulpit will depend in large part on whether or not the public is paying attention to what the governor has to say and whether or not the governor is viewed as a trusted elite. In order for the public to be persuaded to change their policy views, they first must be paying attention. Thus, factors in the political environment which heighten political interest like electoral campaigns as well as attention to media sources that convey information from elites to the public should help to increase the likelihood of gubernatorial influence over the public through the bully pulpit. Notably however, a key moderator of this influence should be in the public perception of the governor delivering the message. If the governor is popular, the public might be more predisposed to trust their judgment and opinions, and they should generate more policy influence over the public than when they are unpopular.

Finally, I expect that state legislators, driven by the desire for re-election will take up the cause pushed for by the governor in their rhetoric if the governor is first able to change public sentiment on the issue. In other words, I expect to find that members of the state legislature will see changes in public sentiment as a signal of constituent pressure

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and pursue policy change in the direction of that sentiment change. Such a finding would comport well with the existing literature where an influential body of literature demonstrates both that legislators are driven by the desire for re-election (see Mayhew 1974; Fenno 1973) and that state legislators are responsive to constituent preferences and pressure (Pacheco 2012; Brace et al. 2002; Shaw 2000; Hill, Leighley and Hinton-Andersson 1995; Arceneaux 2002; Mooney and Lee 2000; Gray, Lowery, and Goodwin 2007; Haider-Markel and Kaufman 2006).With that said, it is important to point out that while rhetoric driven constituent pressure should regularly force an issue onto the agenda through bill introduction, bill passage will generally be more difficult to achieve due to the varied institutional actors in place in the legislature and limits on the time and resources of legislators to push bills through committees, each chamber, and onto the governor's desk to be signed into law.

Implications of Project

Through its analysis of the gubernatorial bully pulpit, this dissertation will have several important implications for our understanding of elite influence at the state and national levels. At the most basic level, this project will provide scholars of state politics with crucial information about the role of public appeals by governors in influencing the mass public and policy outcomes. It will highlight the importance of the bully pulpit to the political process at the state level and open avenues for future research exploring the phenomenon at the state level. More than just helping to inform the state politics literature however, this dissertation will also provide important new information to

scholars of the presidency about the bully pulpit. By exploiting the variation at the state level that is so severely lacking at the federal level and overcoming the methodological problems that have limited the sorts of research questions that can be asked, this project will provide scholars of the presidency with new information about the bully pulpit. In particular, it will provide crucial new information about the conditions that alter or constrain which policies make it onto the rhetorical agenda and the influence that the bully pulpit has on the mass public and legislative behavior. Finally, this dissertation will help to push political science to start thinking more holistically about the bully pulpit. With politicians at all levels of government reaching out to the American people with increasing frequency, more research is needed on the influence of these appeals and this research will serve to highlight both the influence that these appeals can have on the political process and the need for further research on sub-national appeals.

Chapter 3. The Decision to Speak Publicly

When Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin started his fourth year in office in early 2014, he was quickly confronted with a public health crisis unlike anything his state had seen before. Since the start of the new century, treatment for opiate addiction in the state had increased a jaw-dropping 770% and in just the past year, it was reported that twice as many people had died from heroin overdoses as the year before (Seelye 2014). Opioid abuse was so widespread in the state and demand was so high that a $6 bag of heroin in New York City was worth an estimated 30 to 40 dollars in the Green Mountain State (Seelye 2014). This health crisis had wide-reaching consequences for businesses and governmental organizations in the state – dramatically increasing workloads for social workers, treatment centers, hospitals, and the criminal justice system where 80% of Vermont's inmates were jailed on drug-related charges (Associated Press 2015; Seelye 2014). As described by Politico's Gina Tron (2014), the 'idyllic' state of Vermont was quickly becoming the Heroin Capital of America.

Faced with this alarming set of facts and with no end in sight for the perilous hold that opiates had on his state, Governor Shumlin decided that the only reasonable course of action was to confront the issue head-on. Specifically, he chose to speak out to the general public and make opioid addition the focus of his most prominent speech of the year – his 2014 State of the State Address. In lieu of discussing opiates as one of several topics during the address, Shumlin made national headlines by doing something that was virtually unheard of in the context of the state-level bully pulpit – devoting his entire 34 minute speech to the issue. He pushed state residents to stop averting their eyes to a

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problem that was occurring in their own front yards and to take an active role in

removing the scourge of addiction from their state (Shumlin 2014).

Governor Shumlin's decision to speak publicly on opioid addiction during his

most prominent address of the year leads to an important question for our understanding

of the political process: what led him to the decision to devote his entire speech to the

subject? More generally, why do political leaders use rhetorical strategies to address

some policies issues but not others? This research question is of fundamental importance

to our understanding of the bully pulpit. If politicians can use rhetoric to influence public

sentiment and legislative behavior as the literature has shown at the national level and as

I will show here for governors in Chapters 4 and 5, it is also important to know why

politicians choose to focus their rhetoric and thus, political influence, on some policy

issues but not others. This chapter will explore that question in depth, studying the factors

in the political environment that lead governors like Peter Shumlin to prioritize some

issues over others in prominent public addresses. It will also analyze the conditions in the

political environment that lead governors that do focus on a given topic to devote more or

less time in their speech to the subject. In other words, this chapter will also differentiate

the singular focus of Governor Shumlin's speech on health from other addresses that

might only mention public health issues briefly.

To evaluate the conditions in the political environment that lead politicians to

highlight the policies that they do when they speak out publicly, this analysis will explore

gubernatorial rhetoric during yearly State of the State addresses. Specifically, it will take

advantage of the unique variation provided by analysis at the state level in key

institutional, economic, political, and cultural conditions analyze differential

gubernatorial rhetoric on three of the most prominent policy issues of the past decade: the

Affordable Care Act (ACA), gay rights, and immigration. Through this chapter I

demonstrate that while certain political and institutional factors like party control of state

government and gubernatorial gender often influence the rhetorical agenda, the most

consistent predictor of issue attention is the relative impact that the policy has on the

state. For example, I demonstrate that governors with large populations of uninsured

individuals are more likely to discuss health reform and that governors with large

Hispanic populations are more likely to emphasize immigration. Critically, I also

demonstrate that this rhetoric represents true agenda-setting instead of merely following

the public will, with public opinion never significantly impacting the decision to speak on

a topic or the amount of rhetoric devoted to it.

In the discussion below, I begin by briefly reviewing the existing literature on

rhetoric-based agenda setting and how this analysis will help us to better understand issue

selection during bully pulpit use. The next section presents the data and methods before

discussing the results and the conclusion

Bully Pulpit Issue Selection

As the first step in understanding the influence of elite rhetoric on the political

process, scholars have devoted a considerable amount of attention to understanding why

executives focus their use of the bully pulpit on some topics but not others. Critically, this

research shows that the items that are emphasized publicly by politicians are often

selected based on the goals of the executive delivering the address. For example, Light (1991) argues that when 'going public' the president chooses policies for discussion based on the goals of re-election, historical achievement, or good public policy. The politician chooses which goal is most important to them and their constituents at that time and then selects an issue for the agenda accordingly. While these goals are the underlying motivation for executives using the bully pulpit, the literature also suggests that internal goals are not the only factors that drive decision-making (Light 1991). External factors in the political environment as well as perceived need or importance of the policy can force an issue into the executive's rhetoric regardless of whether or not it furthers the executive's goals (Light 1991; Herzik 1991). Critically, given the political capital that public rhetoric requires, additional research finds that executives often select issues for the bully pulpit when an appeal is most likely to matter and influence the political process; choosing other venues when the outcome will not be altered by the use of rhetoric (Canes-Wrone 2001).

While this existing research provides important detail about some of the factors that drive agenda-setting and subsequent rhetoric on policy issues, there are important limitations to the existing literature which necessitate additional research. The first issue with the existing literature is that although scholars have done a wonderful job detailing the internal motivations that drive executive behavior and have acknowledged a role for external forces, very little research has been done on those external factors that drive some political issues to the top of the agenda and force other issues off of the agenda. In other words, although scholars readily admit a role for environmental factors and note

that transitory issues often reach the top of the agenda quickly and force a yes/no response from executives, little is known about which environmental factors drive an issue to the top of the agenda.

Second, another issue with the existing literature is the lack of information about the policy issues of the modern era. While the existing literature provides crucial information about agenda-setting in general at the state and national levels, the most seminal works in the field were published over 25 years ago and more recent empirical studies like Canes-Wrone (2001) are over 15 years old. Of course, time in and of itself is not problematic, but the policy environment has changed dramatically over the intervening years with the rise of partisan polarization and a new set of policy topics. Prominent perennial policy topics like health care, law-enforcement, and welfare have become far more polarized and the list of transitory issues has changed dramatically from topics like the drinking age and AIDS to topics like health reform and gay-rights (Herzik 1991). More research is needed that can explore agenda-setting in this newly polarized era and analyze the new set of transitory topics which has reached the top of the political agenda.

Finally, the study of rhetoric-based agenda setting suffers from many of the same issues that plague the study of the bully pulpit more generally. The limited analysis of environmental factors that force an issue onto the agenda is fundamentally linked to questions of conditionality. Additionally, the vast majority of the research has been conducted at the national level with a limited sample size despite the fact that other politicians regularly 'go public' and are easier to analyze empirically.

In order to overcome these limitations, this analysis studies rhetoric-based agenda-setting at the state level by exploring gubernatorial State of the State addresses from 2010-2014. An empirical analysis of gubernatorial agenda-setting can resolve the first issue with the existing literature because the states provide the necessary variation in environmental/political factors to determine how external forces can drive some issues onto the agenda and force others off. Second, by analyzing three policy issues (health reform, immigration, and gay rights) from 2010-2014, I can simultaneously explore important new policy issues in an era of heightened partisan polarization. Finally, by conducting this analysis of rhetoric at the state level, I can overcome the difficulties of conducting empirical research on agenda-setting at the presidential level. With 50 governors to explore at any given time, a sample size of just one year provides as much data as an analysis of every state of the union address from 1966-present at the national level. More dramatically, to get a sample size equivalent to the 231 State of the State addresses under analysis here, you would need to explore every state of the union from 1785-present, quite problematic since George Washington took office in 1789. Ultimately, this chapter will provide crucial new information about using the bully pulpit to set the political agenda and help us to understand why politicians choose the issues they do when attempting to influence public policy sentiment and subsequent legislative behavior.

Research Design

Issue Selection

In order to understand the conditions in the political environment that influence both which issues governors choose to 'go public' on and the amount of time that governors devote to the topic in their address, this analysis will rely on the study of three key policy issues – the ACA, gay rights, and immigration. All three issues represent prominent public policies that have been at the top of political agendas at the state and national levels over the past decade. Critically, each issue was chosen for analysis not only because of its prominence, but also because the frequency with which each issue was discussed in public addresses varied dramatically. Of the 231 addresses given by governors from my first year of analysis in 2010 to 2014, governors addressed the ACA 91 times or in roughly 39% of speeches while the other two issues received far less attention, with gay rights and immigration addressed 26 and 24 times respectively.

The Dependent Variable: Gubernatorial Addresses

To understand the factors that drive gubernatorial decisions to address key public policies in their use of the bully pulpit, this analysis relies on two key sets of dependent variables. The first set of dependent variables are simple dummy variables designed to capture whether or not governors chose to discuss either the ACA, gay rights, or immigration in a given State of the State address. These dummy variables were developed from a content analysis of every State of the State address in each U.S. state from 2010-2014. These addresses, which typically come at the start of each legislative session, contain specific plans related to the programs that a governor hopes to pursue in

the coming year (Herzik 1991; Light 1982). State of the State addresses are best described as "the vehicle that announces to all what policies and programs that the governor will pursue and gives the legislature its first strong indication of what the governor has in mind" (Rosenthal 1990, 7). Analyzing the bully pulpit in the context of State of the State addresses provides a realistic test of the power of the state executives to influence public attitudes and alter policy outcomes and for that reason, State of the State addresses will be the primary focus of the study of gubernatorial rhetorical activity throughout this dissertation. For this study, in addition to including a dummy variable for whether or not the governor chose to discuss the issue, I also include dummy variables for whether or not the governor was for or against the policy (i.e. pro vs. anti-gay rights, pro vs. anti-immigrant/immigration).

It is important to note that while the dummy variables for whether or not a governor discussed each of the key public policies during their State of the State addresses does provide some useful information, these measures fail to account for the relative importance placed on the issue by the governor in the address. In other words, the dummy variables would fail to capture the distinction between Governor Shumlin's radical 34 minute address on opioid abuse from another governor who might only devote a sentence or two to the subject. For that reason, I also include a second set of dependent variables in this analysis designed to capture the amount of time devoted to each policy topic in a given address. Specifically, I counted the number of words devoted to the ACA, gay rights, and immigration in each speech as well as the number of words in each entire speech and then created a measure which captures the percentage of time that a

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governor devotes to the topic in a given address. This measure resulted in dramatic variations in time devoted to a topic across issues with issue attention ranging from 0-31% for the ACA, 0-5% for gay rights, and 0-13% for immigration.

Independent Variables

In order to understand the factors in the political environment which may influence the policy issues highlighted by governors when they 'go public,' this chapter includes several independent variables it its analysis which could influence bully pulpit issue selection. The first two independent variables included in the analysis account for party control of state government. One variable is a dummy for whether or not each state has a Republican governor in a given year and the other is a three point measure which accounts for full, partial or no Republican control of the state legislature. Party control of state government is crucial to include in this chapter because all three policy issues under analysis here are highly partisan with Democrats more supportive of the ACA, gay rights, and immigration than Republicans.[13] Separate measures are used for each branch of government because prior research suggests that state officials can have different strategic interests related to public policy and the ACA in particular (Callaghan and Jacobs 2014; Rigby and Haselswerdt 2013).

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[13] While all three policies under analysis being prominent and highly partisan is inherently a limitation of the analysis (which is discussed in more depth in the conclusion chapter of the dissertation), it is important to note that most prominent addresses in the modern era focus on these types of issues. In my content analysis of the State of the State addresses I found that although non-partisan and low-profile issues receive occasional attention, most speeches are devoted to topics like education, health care, gay rights, immigration, and the economy; all of which are prominent and partisan issues.

The next two control variables included in this analysis account for the economic circumstances within each state. The first variable accounts for the affluence of each state, which is measured by real, price adjusted estimates of personal income across states. This yearly data was obtained from the Bureau of Economic Analysis. The second variable accounts for the percentage of individuals who are unemployed in each state in each year. This measure, which was taken from the National Conference of State Legislatures, is calculated as the average unemployment for a given state for all months in a year. Measures of the economy are important to include in this analysis because the economic circumstances in a state might make the governor more or less likely to promote a given public policy. For example, governors in poorer states might be more likely to support the ACA to obtain the substantial financial incentives being offered by the federal government (Bacharach and Jacobs 2012). Alternatively, anti-immigrant rhetoric might be higher in states where unemployment is high and residents are concerned about immigrants taking their jobs.

The fifth control variable included in this analysis accounts for the public approval for the governor in the state. Gubernatorial approval in this study is measured using a unique dataset, which combines data from the job approval ratings of Niemi, Beyle, and Sigelman; FiveThirtyEight.com, the Washington Post, Public Policy Polling, and websites from individual states to generate a comprehensive dataset accounting for the percentage support for each governor from 2011-2014.[14] Approval for the governor is

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[14] Where multiple measures of approval were available for a governor in a given year, they were averaged together. With this type of measure some missing data is

important to include in this analysis because the literature suggests that popular governors have larger legislative agendas and might be able to use their political capital to pursue controversial public policies (Kousser and Phillips 2012; Canes-Wrone 2010; Rottinghaus 2010; Canes-Wrone 2001).[15]

Next, this analysis includes a dummy variable in order to capture whether or not the governor giving the address is a woman. This variable is important to include in the analysis because the existing literature on descriptive representation and women in politics suggests that female politicians often emphasize a different set of political issues than their male counterparts (Bratton 2005; Herrnson et al. 2003; Swers 1998). For example, the existing literature suggests that female politicians might be more predisposed to focus on health related issues and thus emphasize the ACA. The sixth independent variable included in my analysis accounts for the percentage of state residents who are white. This variable is included in the analysis because the racial make-up of a state might influence the public policies that governors choose to highlight.

This study also includes several independent variables which are unique to the issue under analysis. Specifically, the analysis of the ACA includes a measure that accounts for the percentage of individuals in each U.S. state who are uninsured and the analysis of immigration includes a variable capturing the percentage of Hispanic residents in each state. The measure of percent uninsured was collected from the Kaiser Family Foundation and Gallup, and is important to include here because governors could

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unavoidable. However by combining sources, this analysis uses one of the most comprehensive sets of approval estimates for 2011-2014 to date.
[15] Kousser and Phillips (2012) note for example that popular governors anticipate a 'friendly reception' from their state legislature and pursue more ambitious agendas.

see a larger uninsured population as a sign that health reform is particularly important to

the state and thus be more likely to discuss the ACA. Similarly, a measure of percent

Hispanic is important to include because the size of the Hispanic population is a rough

proxy for the immigrant population and a larger immigrant population could

fundamentally alter the frequency with which governors use public rhetoric to address the

subject.

Finally, an important consideration when studying the bully pulpit is the question

of endogeneity and whether or not rhetoric leads to subsequent opinion change as

hypothesized by the bully pulpit, or if conversely, opinion change drives the governor to

speak out on a subject. With that in mind, it is important to include a measure of public

support for each policy as an independent variable. With that in mind, the ACA analysis

presented below includes a measure of the level of public support for the ACA in each

U.S. state in the December of the year before the State of the State addresses are given.[16]

This measure captures public opinion on the subject before the governor has spoken and

thus will be a good indicator of whether or not prior public opinion drives the governor's

message. The measure of ACA support was developed using multi-level modeling

regression with post-stratification (MRP) from the Kaiser Family Foundation's monthly

opinion polls on ACA support. This methodology is discussed in depth in Chapter 4.

While yearly measures of public support are available prior to gubernatorial addresses for

the ACA, no equivalent measures are available for gay rights or immigration and

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[16] While the analysis here focuses on public support for the ACA, I have also tested
public salience of the ACA and find the same result as the one presented here – it has no
significant influence on gubernatorial behavior. Models run with this alternative
specification are available upon request.

therefore no opinion measures are included in these models. With that said, more general measures of state-level public support for each issue were available from the Public Religion Research Institute for 2014. These measures were tested for inclusion in gay rights and immigration models respectively but were ultimately excluded from the final analysis because they never reached statistical significance and were a crude gauge that lacked the time specificity of the ACA opinion measure. These results are available in Appendix B limiting the analysis to 2014 – the only year for which the opinion measures are available.

Theoretical Expectations

In this study of issue selection during public rhetoric, I have several theoretical expectations which will be investigated. First, I expect to find that governors will be more likely to highlight a given policy issue when the issue is particularly important in their state (Hypothesis 1). In other words, governors will be more likely to discuss the ACA when the state has a large population of uninsured individuals and governors will be more likely to discuss immigration when the state has a large Hispanic population. Next, I expect party control of state government to condition rhetoric such that states with Republican control of government will be more likely to talk negatively about the ACA, gay rights, and immigration and states with Democratic control of state government will do the exact opposite (Hypothesis 2). This hypothesis is important to include due to the partisan nature of the issues under analysis. On all three issues each party has staked clear and consistent positions and this hypothesis accounts for that fact. Third, I expect to find

that popular governors will be more likely to discuss each policy issue because they are more likely to have the political capital to take on prominent policies like those under analysis here (Hypothesis 3). With the existing literature suggesting that popular governors pursue more ambitious agendas, accounting for approval is important for developing a comprehensive understanding of issue selection (Kousser and Phillips 2012; Canes-Wrone 2010; Rottinghaus 2010; Canes-Wrone 2001). I also expect to find that economic circumstances will influence gubernatorial decisions. Specifically, I expect that more affluent states will be more likely to support policy expansion like the ACA while increased unemployment could increase negative rhetoric about immigration (Hypotheses 4 and 5). These variables are important to include because economic circumstances might make putting certain policy topics on the agenda more or less feasible and thus impact issue selection. Next, I expect to find that having a female governor will increase gubernatorial rhetoric on health reform but have no impact on the other two policy areas under analysis here (Hypothesis 6). This would comport well with the existing literature on female politicians emphasis on health issues and provide some initial clarification of the role of female politicians using the bully pulpit, a topic that has received surprisingly little attention (Bratton 2005; Herrnson et al. 2003; Swers 1998). Lastly, I expect that these trends will hold not just for getting an issue onto the agenda, but also for the amount of time devoted to each issue in a given address (Hypothesis 7).

Method of Analysis

For this analysis of gubernatorial issue selection during bully pulpit use, I focus

on yearly State of the State addresses over a five year period from 2010-2014. I rely on

traditional logit models with year fixed effects to examine whether or not a given issue

made it onto the agenda as well as ordinary least squares regression with year fixed

effects to study the percentage of each speech devoted to a given issue. Logit models are

used study whether or not an issue reached the agenda because those dependent variables

were dummy measures. It is important to note that for these models, I also ran time-series

cross-sectional logistic regression with random effects for state but ultimately chose not

to use these models because testing indicated that that random effects specification fit no

better than a standard logit model.[17] Ordinary least squares regression was used for the

percentage of attention models because the dependent variable is an interval measure.

Results

What factors in the political environment lead some governors to highlight a

given issue in their use of the bully pulpit while other governors avoided the issue

altogether? The results of this analysis suggest that certain factors play a consistent role

across political issues. In Table 1, which focuses on the ACA, it appears that party

control of state government, the number of uninsured individuals in the state, and

whether or not the governor is female are all consistent predictors of gubernatorial

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[17] I also tested a time-series cross-sectional logistic regression with fixed effects but it
was deemed inappropriate because it dropped too many cases from the analysis as
compared to all other methodologies.

rhetoric on the ACA across models. In model 1, which focuses on all ACA-related addresses, having a female governor is the only positive and significant measure at p<.05, with female governors 209% more likely to discuss the ACA than their male counterparts.[18] With that said, percent uninsured, gubernatorial approval and percent white are all positive and marginally significant predictors of giving an ACA-related address. The insignificance of party in model 1 is perhaps at first surprising, but likely results from the fact that the dependent variable in model 1 includes pro and anti-ACA addresses, a fact which becomes clear when looking at models 2 and 3.

[Insert Table 1 Here]

In model 2, which focuses on pro-ACA addresses as the dependent variable, the only significant variable from model 1 which remains significant is percent white – all other formerly significant variables are no longer significant. Instead, the main driver of pro-ACA addresses appears to be party. Having a Republican governor is a strong, negative, and statistically significant predictor of giving a pro-ACA address with Republican governors 97.6% less likely to give a pro-ACA address. In addition, I also find that having a Republican legislature shockingly appears to increase pro-ACA addresses, but the measure is only marginally significant. In model 3, which uses anti-ACA addresses as the dependent variable, it appears that having a Republican governor makes a state 32.7 times more likely to speak negatively about the ACA, while having a female governor makes a state 392% more likely to speak negatively about the ACA, and

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[18] Substantive interpretations are based on odds ratio results which are available upon request.

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having a large pool of uninsured individuals makes a governor 25% more likely to give an anti-ACA address.

Lastly, model 4 uses the second type of dependent variable based on the amount of time devoted to the ACA in gubernatorial addresses and here, a similar set of results is found with one surprising exception. Once again, having a female governor is a positive and significant predictor of increased attention to health reform but now, having a Republican legislature is a strong, positive, and significant predictor of increased ACA attention. In other words, female governors spend 1.93% more time discussing the ACA and increased Republican control of the state legislature increases the time devoted to the ACA by 1.59%.[19] This could potentially result from the fact that any sort of ACA action in the face of a Republican legislature takes more persuading, and thus, a larger percentage of time devoted to the ACA.

After exploring the conditions that lead governors to emphasize the ACA in their public rhetoric, I then moved on to study the factors that lead governors to focus on gay rights in Table 2 of my analysis. Here, model 5 which uses a dummy for whether or not a speech discusses gay rights as the dependent variable finds that governors are 4.2% more likely to emphasize gay rights as a policy issue in their rhetoric when they are popular. Conversely, having a Republican legislature makes rhetoric on gay rights 87.5% less likely. Model 6 focuses on pro-gay rights addresses and once again finds that a Republican legislature decreases the likelihood of giving a pro-gay rights address. In addition, Model 6 finds that having a Republican governor decreases the likelihood of

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[19] These substantive effects are determined based on the OLS regression output.

giving a pro-gay rights address while affluence increases the likelihood of giving one.[20]

Finally, Model 7 looks at the amount of time that governors devote to gay rights in their

rhetoric and shows that states with Republican legislatures devote less time to gay rights,

but this measure is only marginally significant.

[Insert Table 2 Here]

Finally, I concluded the analysis for this chapter by investigating the factors that

lead governors to emphasize immigration in their public rhetoric. Model 8 of Table 3

shows that having a large Hispanic population is a strong, positive, and significant

predictor of giving an address with a 1 percent increase in Hispanic population increasing

the likelihood of an immigration address by 7.3%. In addition, having a female governor

is also a positive and marginally significant predictor of discussing the subject. When

looking at directionality in Models 9 and 10, it appears that wealthier states and states

with higher unemployment are more likely to see governors give pro-immigration

addresses while a large Hispanic population, a Republican legislature, and being less

affluent as a state increase the chances of an anti-immigration address. It is crucial to

point out however that the results from Model 9 related to pro-immigration addresses

should be analyzed cautiously as the model has an insignificant F-test. Lastly, when

looking at the amount of time devoted to immigration in public rhetoric, the only

predictor appears to be the size of the Hispanic population. Specifically, having a large

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[20] A model using anti-gay rights speeches was also tested but ultimately excluded from the final analysis because there were significant convergence problems caused by the fact that only 3 of the 231 addresses were anti-gay rights and they were all given by Republican governors.

Hispanic population increases the amount of time devoted to immigration in gubernatorial use of the bully pulpit.

Discussion/Conclusion

The use of public rhetoric to generate influence over the political process has become an increasingly common tactic used by politicians at the state and national levels over the past century. Despite the importance of this rhetoric for public attitudes on political issues and subsequent policy outcomes, important questions remained about why politicians choose to highlight the issues they do when they use the bully pulpit and why they vary so dramatically in the amount of time devoted to a given topic. This chapter provides the most comprehensive analysis of these questions to date – detailing the political, economic, and institutional factors that drive public rhetoric on some of the most important policy topics of the early twenty-first century.

When analyzing the results, it appears that there is strong support for several of my theoretical expectations. First, I find consistent evidence that governors discuss political issues when they are particularly relevant for a state. Governors were more likely to discuss the ACA when they had a large uninsured population and were particularly prone to do so in a negative manner – potentially out of concern for what adding a large pool of uninsured to state-run health programs would do to state finances. Similarly, governors were more likely to discuss immigration and do so in a negative manner when they had a large population of Hispanics, which I have argued serves as a rough proxy for the size of the immigrant population. Second, I find strong support for

hypothesis two and the idea that party control of government matters – the party of the governor and the party of the legislature regularly condition gubernatorial decisions to use public policy rhetoric. Lastly, being a female politician seemed to condition the issues highlighted by politicians, although not in the direction expected by my hypothesis. Although my findings do comport with the existing literature and show that female politicians are more likely to emphasize certain issues and health in particular, they surprisingly did so in a negative manner. In other words, female governors were more likely to discuss the ACA in negative terms.[21]

Other hypothesized factors seemed to play little role in bully pulpit decisions. First, I find no evidence that public opinion drives governors to speak out on a topic. The measure of public support for the ACA prior to gubernatorial addresses never reaches statistical significance and other measures tested for immigration and gay rights in Appendix B saw the same pattern of results. Next, I find no evidence that gubernatorial approval drives governor's decisions to speak out about the ACA, immigration, or gay rights at standard levels of statistical significance. Similarly, I find little support for the influence of economic circumstances on rhetoric. The percent of individuals unemployed in a state is only a significant predictor of bully pulpit rhetoric in 1 of 11 models and that model has an insignificant F-statistic. State affluence fares slightly better – positively influencing the number of pro-gay rights addresses and influencing directional

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[21] While the results related to female governors are intriguing, it is important to note their relative scarcity in the dataset. Only 10 female governors served from 2010-2014 with 6 serving from 2010-2012 and 5 serving from 2013-2014. Of these female governors, 6 out of 10 were Republicans and of the 28 state-years with female governors, 19 had Republican governors. This relative partisan balance could explain the negative rhetoric that does not comport well with past literature.

immigration addresses, but it never reaches statistical significance for the ACA and does so only once for gay rights.

Finally, what about the amount of time devoted to the topic? In other words, are their certain factors that lead some governors like Peter Shumlin to devote considerable rhetoric-based attention to a topic and others that lead governors to decrease the amount of time they devote to a given topic? Although I expected the same factors that controlled an issue making it onto the agenda to control the amount of time devoted to the issue, I found a unique pattern of results when analyzing issue discussion length. Specifically, I found that the most consistent predictor of time spent was party control of the legislature – with a Republican legislature increasing the amount of time spent discussing the ACA and decreasing the amount of time spent discussing gay rights. Other variables mattered occasionally, with having a female governor increasing rhetoric on the ACA and having a large Hispanic population increasing immigration discussion, but several other variables found to matter for making it onto the agenda like party control of the governor fail to reach statistical significance when looking at the amount of time devoted to the topic.

Taken together, these results help to explain the factors that drive rhetoric by political elites in the modern era. Politicians are most commonly driven by the twin pillars of partisanship and constituency, selecting policies that comport both with personal partisan identity and the unique needs and concerns of constituents. These results fit quite well within the growing research tradition highlighting the importance of partisanship in the modern era while also demonstrating that decisions by elites do extend beyond partisanship to other factors like state need and gender. Critically, this chapter is

equally important for what it doesn't find: an influence for public opinion. With public

opinion never reaching statistical significance in Table 1 or Appendix B, it appears that

as governors attempt to shape public opinion, they are not induced into rhetoric by public

opinion themselves, eliminating an important endogeneity concern from this project.

Table 1. Indicators of Gubernatorial Rhetoric on the Affordable Care Act (2010-2014)

VARIABLES	(Model 1) ACA-Related Speech	(Model 2) Pro-ACA Speech	(Model 3) Anti-ACA Speech	(Model 4) ACA Speech Percent
Republican Governor	-0.004	-3.73***	3.49***	-0.51
	(0.386)	(0.806)	(0.847)	(0.645)
Republican Legislature	0.54	1.26*	0.20	1.59**
	(0.451)	(0.728)	(0.619)	(0.773)
Percent Uninsured	0.09*	-0.04	0.23***	0.12
	(0.053)	(0.088)	(0.078)	(0.084)
Governor Approval	0.03*	0.02	0.01	0.03
	(0.015)	(0.022)	(0.021)	(0.025)
State Affluence	-0.0000007	-0.00002	-0.00002	0.0000009
	(0.00003)	(0.00005)	(0.00005)	(0.00005)
Female Governor	1.13**	0.67	1.37**	1.93**
	(0.497)	(0.904)	(0.634)	(0.835)
Percent White	0.04*	0.05*	0.04	0.02
	(0.020)	(0.032)	(0.028)	(0.029)
Percent Unemployment	-0.06	-0.02	-0.10	0.02
	(0.122)	(0.202)	(0.158)	(0.201)
Public Support ACA	0.03	0.04	-0.03	-.02
	(0.030)	(0.049)	(0.045)	(0.048)
Constant	-8.03*	-8.41	-8.46	-5.38
	(4.143)	(5.919)	(6.384)	(4.364)
Observations	212	211	212	212
R-squared	0.148	0.323	0.366	0.212

Standard errors in parentheses

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.10$

Notes: Models 1-3 obtained from logit models with year fixed effects, Model 4 obtained from OLS regression with year fixed effects. Year dummies excluded from output but are available upon request. R-squared represents pseudo R-squared for Models 1-3.

Table 2. Indicators of Gubernatorial Rhetoric on Gay Rights (2010-2014)

VARIABLES	(Model 5) Gay Rights Speech	(Model 6) Pro-Gay Rights Speech	(Model 7) Gay Rights Word Percentage
Republican Governor	-0.98	-1.99**	-0.01
	(0.625)	(0.874)	(0.111)
Republican Legislature	-2.08**	-2.58**	-0.23*
	(0.815)	(1.148)	(0.131)
Governor Approval	0.04*	0.04	0.0004
	(0.023)	(0.026)	(0.004)
State Affluence	0.00005	0.0001**	0.000006
	(0.00004)	(0.00004)	(0.000008)
Female Governor	0.14	0.68	-0.09
	(0.850)	(0.922)	(0.144)
Percent White	0.01	0.01	0.0006
	(0.017)	(0.018)	(0.003)
Percent Unemployed	0.21	0.24	0.01
	(0.183)	(0.207)	(0.032)
Constant	-8.71**	-10.28***	-0.20
	(3.487)	(3.885)	(0.694)
Observations	212	212	212
R-squared	0.255	0.362	0.061

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Notes: Models 5 and 6 obtained from logit models with year fixed effects, Model 7 obtained from OLS regression with year fixed effects. Year dummies excluded from output but are available upon request. R-squared represents pseudo R-squared for Models 5-6. Anti-Gay Rights speeches also tested as DV but excluded because only 3 of 231 speeches were anti-gay rights and all were by Republican governors.

Table 3. Indicators of Gubernatorial Rhetoric on Immigration (2010-2014)

VARIABLES	(Model 8) Immigration Related Speech	(Model 9) Pro-Immig. Speech	(Model 10) Anti-Immig. Speech	(Model 11) Immigration Word Percent
Republican Governor	0.39	-1.58		0.12
	(0.661)	(1.132)		(0.195)
Republican Legislature	0.58	1.19	2.09*	0.26
	(0.777)	(1.509)	(1.209)	(0.231)
Percent Hispanic	0.07***	-0.10	0.13***	0.06***
	(0.022)	(0.075)	(0.036)	(0.009)
Governor Approval	-0.01	-0.004	-0.001	-0.003
	(0.025)	(0.037)	(0.042)	(0.007)
State Affluence	-0.00002	0.0001*	-0.0004**	-0.00002
	(0.00005)	(0.00007)	(0.0002)	(0.00001)
Female Governor	1.13*		0.85	0.23
	(0.636)		(0.956)	(0.259)
Percent White	-0.01	-0.04	-0.05	0.01
	(0.022)	(0.034)	(0.043)	(0.006)
Percent Unemployment	0.19	0.89**	0.07	-0.04
	(0.180)	(0.379)	(0.306)	(0.058)
Constant	-3.83	-13.69**	10.77	0.08
	(4.100)	(6.097)	(8.273)	(1.206)
Observations	212	213	213	212
R-squared	0.241	0.228	0.554	0.220

Standard errors in parentheses

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.10$

Note: 8-10 obtained from logit models with year fixed effects, Model 11 obtained from OLS regression with year fixed effects. Year dummies excluded from output but are available upon request. R-squared represents pseudo R-squared for Models 8-10. Female governors excluded from Model 9 because only male governors gave pro-immigration addresses. Republican governors excluded from Model 10 because only Republican governors gave anti-immigration addresses. Model 9 has an insignificant F-Test.

Chapter 4. The Bully Pulpit and the Mass Public

One of the most common features of the modern political landscape is politicians reaching out to the American public through speeches or public statements. Presidents regularly address the nation on important issues in prime-time national broadcasts; US representatives can be heard on a daily basis on Fox News or MSNBC arguing for their preferred policy position and even local politicians can be seen on the nightly news discussing important debates from the State Capitol. We are inundated with these messages from political elites but it is important to ask whether these speeches really matter to the public. In other words, as the public encounters these messages from politicians on television, the internet, or even social media, do they respond by increasing the importance of the issue to them personally or by changing their attitudes about the policy in question?

This chapter examines this question by analyzing the influence of politicians over the mass public through their use of the bully pulpit. Specifically, I report on the results of a study conducted on gubernatorial influence over the general public's attitudes toward the ACA from 2010-2014. Leveraging the unique variation at the state level in key economic, institutional, and political variables, I evaluate whether a governor's message of support or opposition toward the ACA during yearly State of the State addresses influence how individuals within a state view the policy. In particular, I assess the influence of these statements on the salience and favorability of the ACA within each state. I also assess the potential for conditional influence from a variety of sources including the media environment, electoral status, the prominence of the governor, and

the level of public support for the governor (Druckman and Jacobs 2015; Canes-Wrone 2001; Cohen 1995).

This chapter's analysis makes several important contributions to the study of elite influence over the mass public. First, the findings here suggest that even in the highly polarized context of health reform, elite attempts to influence the mass public can change the way that the public evaluates key public policies. I find that gubernatorial statements about the Affordable Care Act can influence how favorably individuals within a given state evaluate the ACA. Critically however, and in support of past work on the conditionality of elite influence, I find that this influence only occurs in certain situations. In particular, the level of public support for the governor and whether or not the statement is given in an election year are strong moderators of ACA support within a state, while other potential conditioning factors – like media coverage of the address and the national prominence of the governor are not found to influence attitudes. Given that past work at the national level on conditionality has been limited by the constraints imposed by the level of analysis, this study provides the most comprehensive investigation of the conditions affecting the influence of the bully pulpit to date and offers a methodology by which scholars can overcome the limitations inherent in the study of elite influence at the national level.

While I find strong evidence that governors can exert influence within states on the favorability of the ACA, I also find that governors exert little influence over the salience of the public policy. This finding directly conflicts with past work on elite influence that suggests that politicians should be *more* successful at manipulating

salience than favorability (Druckman and Jacobs 2015; Jacobs and Shapiro 2000; Edwards 1990). I argue that due to the protracted and highly polarized dispute over the ACA, which began in 2009 and continues to this day, public salience of the ACA peaked prior to gubernatorial involvement and that there was little that elites highlighting the policy could do to increase ACA salience. As such, this study is the first to demonstrate that elite attempts to use the bully pulpit can run into ceiling effects in the context of polarized party disputes.

In the discussion below, I begin by briefly reviewing relevant literature in the field and discussing how this literature can benefit by moving to the state level and taking advantage of the unique variation provided by the analysis of governors. The next section presents the data and methods before turning to the analysis and conclusion.

Advancing our Understanding of Bully Pulpit Influence over the Public

When attempting to change public policy through the bully pulpit, a necessary first step for politicians is to change the way that the public thinks about the policy issue at hand. If the executive can change public sentiment, legislators will follow suit and push for policy change in the direction of the executive's rhetoric due to their desire for re-election. Given the importance of this changing public sentiment then, scholars have devoted considerable attention to understanding rhetoric-based influence over the mass public as a necessary step in understanding the influence of the bully pulpit on the mass public. Broadly, research in political behavior has demonstrated that individuals rely on heuristics to help them understand the political world and that information from trusted elites – as is found through bully pulpit use – can help individuals to formulate attitudes

toward important political issues (Malka et al. 2009; Lewkowicz 2006; Gilens and Murakawa 2002).

Research on the bully pulpit has found that even as the attitudes of the general public are generally stable on most policy issues, executive appeals can influence public opinion at the margins (Druckman and Jacobs 2015; Rottinghaus 2010; Canes-Wrone 2001; Jacobs and Shapiro 2000; Cohen 1995; Edwards 1990). Scholars have demonstrated that presidents are quite successful at raising the salience of an issue when they speak out publicly, but changing policy support is more difficult (Cohen 1995). Dramatic swings in public opinion following public rhetoric are rare, but bully pulpit use can result in modest changes in policy support (a 5-10% change) on specific policy proposals (Druckman and Jacobs 2015; Jacobs and Shapiro 2000; Edwards 1990). Critically, influence is often altered or constrained by conditions in the political environment. In other words, research has found that influence is more or less likely depending on key characteristics of the politician delivering the address, structural features of the political environment, and other circumstances which might alter the general public's receptivity to the politician's message (Rottinghaus 2010; Canes-Wrone 2010; Cohen 1995; Kernell 1997). For example, research has found that individuals are more likely to be persuaded by the president's message when the president is popular, focusing on foreign policy, and has unified government (Rottinghaus 2010; Canes-Wrone 2010; Cohen 1995; Kernell 1997).

Scholars have made several crucial advances toward understanding the influence of the bully pulpit over the general public; however, this line of research suffers from the

same limitations as other existing research on elite rhetoric – issues related to conditionality, sample size/historical period, and a singular focus on the president. To confront these issues, this chapter explores gubernatorial influence over the policy attitudes of state residents through State of the State addresses.

Research Design

Selecting an Issue

In order to study how gubernatorial use of the bully pulpit impacts public evaluations of policy issues, this analysis will investigate the influence of gubernatorial attempts to 'go public' on the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA). The ACA was selected for this analysis of the gubernatorial bully pulpit for several reasons that make the ACA a uniquely advantageous test-case. First, since its passage in March of 2010, the ACA has been the most prominent policy issue at the state and federal levels, and thus, the ACA provides an issue governors have felt compelled to address publicly. Similarly, since the issue is also prominent at the national level, the findings here should also be applicable to the use of the bully pulpit on health reform at the national level as well. Next, the ACA presents a good test-case because governors have relied on State of the State addresses to speak out about the issue. With the analysis of the bully pulpit limited largely to these major addresses at the state level (a comprehensive collection of minor gubernatorial addresses is simply not feasible), finding an issue spoken about primarily during these major addresses is crucial. Finally, the ACA presents a strong test case for the gubernatorial bully pulpit because the highly polarized nature of the issue

makes the ACA a conservative issue on which to analyze the subject. As of April 2015,

70 percent of Democrats had a favorable attitude toward the ACA while only 16 percent

of Republicans had a favorable attitude (Kaiser Family Foundation 2015b). This

polarization, which started at the elite level and at this point has clearly permeated the

mass public, has pushed large portions of the public to learn about the ACA and develop

crystalized attitudes. Therefore, if this analysis is still able to find an influence from the

bully pulpit, it would suggest that the bully pulpit will also be successful in less polarized

settings where attitudes are less crystalized.

Data and Methods

Measuring Public Attitudes

The investigation of gubernatorial influence over mass attitudes necessitates a

research strategy that both accounts for dynamic opinion change over time and sees

governors speak out over a similar time frame. In this analysis, I account for both of these

features by using public attitudes toward the ACA after gubernatorial State of the State

addresses as my dependent variable while simultaneously controlling for attitudes before

the governors' addresses to the public. In other words, since the vast majority of

governors deliver their State of the State speeches in January or early February, my

dependent variable accounts for attitudes after this period while also controlling for

attitudes in December of the prior year before these speeches begin.[22]

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[22] For the favorability dependent variable, a November control was needed for the 2012
speeches because Kaiser conducted a large study during the election and did not poll
individuals during December. Additionally, while the dependent variable relies on

In the analysis I account for two potential sources of attitude change, each of which will serve as a dependent variable in the models that follow – the salience of the ACA and the favorability of the ACA within each state. The salience dependent variable was developed from Gallup's monthly Most Important Problem time-series which asks a nationally representative sample what they think the most important problem facing the country is today, allowing up to three open-ended responses. If a respondent listed a health-related issue as one of the three most important issues to them, they were coded as viewing health as salient.[23] The favorability dependent variable was developed from the Kaiser Family Foundation's monthly health tracking polls which ask a nationally representative sample of respondents whether they have a generally favorable or unfavorable opinion of the health reform law, providing four response options for respondents.[24] This question was then collapsed into whether each respondent had a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the ACA.[25]

February data for ACA favorability, the salience dependent variable uses March data because Gallup data for February 2014 is not available.

[23] Although it is important to acknowledge a degree of slippage from the concept ACA salience to the operationalized salience of health, no specific health reform category was included in Gallup's results. With that said, only the categories health care/hospitals, Medicare Increases, and the costs associated with health insurance were included in the measure used here. Therefore, the vast majority of the change in salience can safely be assumed to derive from the political environment surrounding the ACA.

[24] The survey question was worded as follows: "As you may know, a health reform bill was signed into law in 2010. Given what you know about the health reform law, do you have a generally (favorable) or generally (unfavorable) opinion of it? (GET ANSWER THEN ASK: Is that a very [favorable/unfavorable] or somewhat [favorable/unfavorable] opinion?)." This resulted in four responses: very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, and very unfavorable as well as a don't know/refused option.

[25] The four point ordinal measure was collapsed into a favorable/unfavorable dummy to allow for the use of MRP and the creation of a single aggregate state estimate of the percentage of the public with a favorable attitude toward the ACA. Individuals with a

After collecting each of these variables, they were then transformed into more representative state level estimates using multi-level modeling regression with post-stratification (otherwise known as MRP). MRP models opinion data as a function of the demographics available to a researcher as well as state specific information. Critically, MRP uniquely allows for the analysis of short term temporal dynamics like those expected from a gubernatorial statement toward a policy position by giving researchers accurate state level data from as little as a single national opinion poll on 1,000 respondents (Lax and Phillips 2013). In addition, this method has consistently outperformed the aggregation techniques previously used to generate state opinion estimates from national data, yielding smaller standard errors, higher correlations, and more reliable estimates and has become a prominent technique for the study of state-level public opinion (Pacheco 2011; Lax and Phillips 2009; Park, Gelman and Bafumi 2006; Park, Gelman and Bafumi 2004).

In this case, I transformed the national monthly salience and favorability data for 2010-2014 by modeling each individual's response as a function of their demographics (age, race, gender, and level of education) as well as their census region and state. State effects were modeled as a function of the region in which each state resided and state-level approval of President Obama[26]. Post-stratification data for relevant demographic-

very or somewhat favorable view of the ACA were coded as 1 and those with a somewhat or very unfavorable view of the ACA were coded as zero. Alternative MRP tests were done focusing on only very favorable and unfavorable attitudes but were ultimately excluded due to a limited sample size and lack of interesting results.

[26] State-level public approval of President Obama is used in the estimation here because President Obama was so synonymous with the program (i.e. Obamacare). With that said, its inclusion in the modeling strategy here precludes its use in subsequent models due to

geographic population frequencies were obtained from the 2010 Census using the Census

DataFerrett. After running MRP on each relevant dataset, I was left with monthly

aggregate state level estimates for the level of salience for health care in each state and

state favorability toward the ACA (More information about the MRP methodology can be

found in the Appendix).[27]

Critically, the measures of state-level ACA support appear to have a high degree

of face validity. Figure 1 presents ACA support across states over the five year period of

my analysis and demonstrates the pattern of results we would expect to see if MRP was

producing accurate state level estimates. States with Democratic control of state

government consistently have a higher degree of support for the ACA over time than

states with Republican control of state government. Just as important, states with mixed

party control of state government (i.e. a state like New Jersey with a Republican governor

and Democratic state legislature) consistently fall between states with full Republican or

full Democratic control of state government.

[Insert Figure 1 Here]

Gubernatorial Addresses

After collecting and transforming the monthly opinion data for salience and

favorability, I next collected information on the content of State of the State addresses.

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concerns about using the measure twice if it is already baked into opinions measures. For
that reason state-level support/electoral margin is never used in any models throughout
the dissertation although it is often theoretically relevant.

[27] It could be argued that the opinion estimates produced via MRP are inexact as they rely
on pooling across states to generate estimates. With that said, this strategy should make it
harder as opposed to easier to find evidence of gubernatorial influence over the public in
a given state and as such, any evidence of gubernatorial influence should be seen as a
strong indication of its importance at the state level.

These addresses are identical to those used in Chapter 3 for the analysis there and rely on a similar set of independent variables. Specifically, I rely on State of the State addresses from 2010 when the law was first passed until 2014 and developed three identical dummy variables: whether or not the speech was related to the ACA, whether the speech was pro-ACA, and whether the speech was anti-ACA.

Building on the existing literature related to elite influence from the bully pulpit, I have several theoretical expectations for my study. In the analysis, I expect to find that when a governor discusses the ACA as part of their State of the State address, it will increase the salience of the ACA within that state (Hypothesis 1). This hypothesis fits in well with the existing literature which has previously found that presidents are often successful at raising issue salience in the mass public (see Cohen 1995) and is important to test here to determine whether or not governors can influence the public in a similar manner. In addition, in my analysis I expect to find that when a governor speaks out in favor of the ACA, it will increase the favorability of the ACA in the state while a governor's statement of disapproval will decrease ACA support (Hypothesis 2). This hypothesis is included in the analysis because the existing literature on the bully pulpit has found some limited evidence of rhetorical influence over policy attitudes, with elite appeals occasionally leading to modest changes in public opinion on specific policy proposals (Druckman and Jacobs 2015; Jacobs and Shapiro 2000; Edwards 1990). With that said, given the consistency of past findings suggesting that influence will only occur at the margins, I expect these effects to be conditioned by several variables.

Assessing Conditionality

This analysis will utilize the unique variation at the state level in institutional and political dynamics to investigate the conditional influence from speeches by running interactions between the speech variables and conditioning variables to see if a variety of factors influence whether or not the public is responsive to gubernatorial attempts to 'go public'. I will analyze the potential for gubernatorial approval, the media environment, the national prominence of the leader, whether or not it is an election year, and the incumbency status of the governor as potential factors conditioning elite influence over the mass public.

The first conditioning variable, gubernatorial approval, is important to include given past work on the conditioning role of approval at the national level and research on trusted elites in political psychology. With research in political behavior highlighting the fact that individuals rely on information from trusted elites as a heuristic when confronting the political world, accounting for approval seems crucial because elites with higher public approval are more esteemed in the public's eyes and might be more likely to be trusted. In addition, accounting for public support is important because existing research at the federal level suggests that it conditions the bully pulpit at all stages – determining which issues executives go public on, how receptive the public is to the message, and whether or not the legislature acts on the issue (Canes-Wrone 2010; Rottinghaus 2010; Canes-Wrone 2001). In this analysis, gubernatorial approval is measured using the unique dataset of gubernatorial approval described in Chapter 3. When accounting for the conditional influence of elite approval, I expect to find that as the governor becomes more popular, individuals will become more responsive to the

governor's message and become more or less supportive of the ACA based on the governor's position (Hypothesis 3).

The second conditioning variable, media mentions of the address is important to include because the media serves as a primary mechanism through which information about addresses is delivered to the public. Even if an individual doesn't tune in to watch the speech, the media helps to ensure that they are exposed to the governor's message; with the addresses leading off the nightly news and receiving front page coverage in local newspapers. With a steady stream of research from political behavior highlighting the role that the news media plays in raising the salience of key issues, critically evaluating elite messages, and in some cases altering mass attitudes themselves, the inclusion of this conditioning variable seems necessary for any comprehensive analysis of the bully pulpit (Feldman, Huddy and Marcus 2013; Lenz 2012; Miller and Krosnick 2000; Iyengar, Peters and Kinder 1982). The media environment surrounding each address in this analysis is measured based on a total count of the number of media stories mentioning a given State of the State address. This data is based on coverage in print media and was obtained through Lexis-Nexis. For this conditioning variable, I expect to find that individuals will become more responsive to the governor's message when the media provides more coverage of the address (Hypothesis 4).

The next conditioning variable included in this analysis is the prominence of each governor. Unlike the national level where the president is widely regarded as the most prominent politician in the political process, analysis at the state level provides unique

variation in the prominence of each governor.[28] For example, New Jersey's Chris Christie

and Wisconsin's Scott Walker are far more prominent/visible players in the political

process than Idaho's Butch Otter or North Dakota's Jack Dalrymple. This variation could

have important implications for the public's receptivity to the governor's message as

governors with a larger voice could reach more citizens within a state. This variable is

measured based on the total number of media mentions of a governor within each year of

the analysis across platforms (print and TV), and was obtained from Lexis-Nexis. When

accounting for national prominence of the governor, I expect to find that more prominent

governors will prove to be more influential in altering ACA salience and attitudes

because a larger segment of the general public will know who the governor is, view them

as a trusted elite, and follow the signals that they provide (Hypothesis 5).[29]

The final two aspects of conditionality explored in the analysis account for

whether or not the address was given during an election year and whether or not there

was an incumbent running for re-election. Accounting for electoral status in the study of

the bully pulpit is important because a governor's address may be more salient/reach

more ears when an election is near and thus the importance of politics is heightened. As

an election approaches, the media devotes more attention to the executive's message in

important addresses and for incumbents, the growing campaign apparatus serves as an

echo chamber that can carry messages from the addresses on key issues to the voters

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[28] Although this aspect of conditionality is arguably irrelevant at the national level where presidents are always prominent, it is important to include in a complete analysis of executive influence from the bully pulpit because it could influence not only governors, but executives at lower levels of government as well.

[29] With that said, visibility can also be a double edged sword. Increased public awareness could lead some to trust the politician less and make elite influence less likely.

(Rottinghaus 2010). Each of these variables was obtained from Carl Klarner's data on gubernatorial elections (Klarner 2015). In my analysis I expect to find that during election years and when the incumbent is running for re-election, gubernatorial statements will be more influential with the public responding by increasing the salience of the issue and changing their attitudes toward the governor's position on the ACA (Hypothesis 6).

Control Variables

In addition to accounting for the content of the governor's speech and key conditioning variables, my analysis of gubernatorial influence also includes control variables which could influence attitudes toward the ACA in each state. The first set of control variables accounts for party control of the governor's office and state legislature. One is a dummy variable for whether or not the state has a Republican governor; the other is a three point variable capturing full, partial or no Republican control of the state legislature. Accounting for party control of state government in the context of public opinion attitudes toward the ACA is important given the strong link established between health attitudes, state health reform decisions and partisanship (Rigby and Haselswerdt 2013; Jacobs and Callaghan 2013; Oberlander 2011). Individual measures for each branch are necessary given the different strategic interests of political actors in each branch and the use of split party measures is supported by prior research (Callaghan and Jacobs 2014; Rigby and Haselswerdt 2013; Ferguson 2003; Miller and Blanding 2012).

The next necessary control variable in this analysis of ACA attitudes accounts for the affluence of each state which is measured by real, price adjusted estimates of personal

income for states. This yearly data was obtained from the Bureau of Economic Analysis.

Including affluence in this analysis is important because the wealth within a state could

alter how individuals see health reform. The ACA was designed to provide health

coverage to low income individuals who would otherwise be unable to afford coverage

and as such, poorer states could be more receptive to health reform, regardless of elite

rhetoric.

The final control variable in my analysis accounts for the percentage of

individuals in each state who are uninsured.[30] This data, which was collected from the

Kaiser Family Foundation and Gallup, was important to include because states with

higher percentages of uninsured individuals should be more receptive to the ACA.

Method of Analysis

In order to analyze the influence of the gubernatorial bully pulpit, this analysis

relies on panel corrected standard error models which pool results across years from

2010-2014.[31] Although some information could be gleaned by examining each year

individually, this chapter's focus on conditionality requires a large sample size and thus

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[30] The percentage of white individuals within each state was tested as a potential control
to account for demographic characteristics within each state. Unfortunately, when this
variable was included, the models sometimes had difficulty obtaining standard error
estimates due to the highly singular nature of the data matrix for the variable. For that
reason, I chose to exclude the control from the analysis. Where the models did converge
with appropriate standard errors for the variable, it was rarely a significant predictor of
opinion change.
[31] The models used in this analysis exclude any state in which the governor has not given
an address at the time of the second opinion poll (i.e. the dependent variable opinion
poll). These states are excluded from the analysis because if a governor has not yet given
their address, there is no chance for their use of the bully pulpit through the State of the
State address to alter mass attitudes.

pooling across years is necessary.[32][33] While aggregated state salience and favorability are

technically interval measures, the use of traditional OLS is inappropriate due to the

heteroskedasticity that results from pooling states across years. In other words, there is a

shared error structure across units that result from estimating the same state at multiple

time points (Beck and Katz 1995; Johnson 2004). Whereas Huber-White robust errors are

the traditional fix for heteroskedasticity in IID data, the panel structure of my dataset

suggests that a more accurate error-correction scheme could be undertaken by

incorporating the actual group level information that is available for my panel into

account. For that reason, panel corrected standard errors are used to analyze the influence

of the gubernatorial bully pulpit. These models still compute coefficients using OLS,

however the standard error estimates are corrected to account for heteroskedasticity

caused by a common variance structure within state clusters (Johnson 2004).

Results

       Can a governor's message of support or opposition toward the ACA during yearly

State of the State addresses influence the way in which individuals within a state view the

policy? In analyzing the results from this study, the answer appears to be yes, but only

under specific conditions. When analyzing the results from Table 1 which presents the

main effects of each speech variable on favorability change, it becomes clear that

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[32] In addition, pairwise deletion was used instead of listwise deletion to limit the loss of
power resulting from missing data.
[33] Although it would be interesting to break down the results and compare findings across
governors based on partisanship or other factors, I chose not to do that in this chapter due
to the need for a large sample size to account for the high but necessary number of
explanatory variables.

gubernatorial speeches themselves have no direct effect on ACA favorability. Regardless of whether the analysis focuses on ACA-related speeches (Model 1) or speeches that are pro or anti-ACA (Model 2); gubernatorial statements never reach statistical significance in shifting favorability. Instead, favorability change seems to be driven by gubernatorial approval, the Republican governor variable, and the percentage uninsured in each state.

[Insert Table 1 Here]

When analyzing the main effects of each speech variable on health salience in Table 2, the same pattern of results is also seen. ACA-related speeches and speeches that are pro or anti-ACA are once again insignificant predictors. In the models pooling across all years, being in an election year and the percent uninsured are positive and significant predictors of salience while the party control variables are marginally significant and negative predictors of salience.

[Insert Table 2 Here]

With prior research at the national level on the bully pulpit arguing that influence occurs at the margins and that successful use of the bully pulpit is conditional, these findings are not entirely surprising. If we expect the influence of the bully pulpit to be conditional in nature, we need to explicitly model this conditionality. Tables 3A and 3B do just that for ACA favorability. In Table 3A, which models the influence of ACA-related speeches as a function of media mentions of the address, electoral status, governor approval, the prominence of the governor, and whether or not the governor is an incumbent running for re-election, the importance of analyzing conditionality comes into focus. Specifically, the interactions between a speech being related to the ACA and

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election year status and gubernatorial approval are positive and significant predictors of favorability. In other words, a governor speaking out about the ACA in their State of the State address during an election year or when they are viewed more positively by the public results in an immediate positive change in ACA attitudes in that state.

[Insert Table 3A Here]

This finding serves as the first signal of support for conditional influence from the bully pulpit, but it's important to ask, does the direction of the speech matter for favorability? In other words, are we missing important variation by aggregating speeches for and against the ACA? Analyzing the results in Table 3B appears to suggest that we are, and that important conditionality exists on the pro-ACA side. Specifically, the interactions between a pro-ACA speech and the election year and gubernatorial approval variables were positive and highly significant but the anti-ACA equivalent variables were insignificant.

[Insert Table 3B Here]

Even though the significant interactions in Table 3B show the conditional influence of the bully pulpit over ACA policy support, the importance of the bully pulpit is better demonstrated in Figures 2 and 3 which graphically represent these relationships. Figure 2 shows that when a governor delivers a pro-ACA address and gubernatorial approval is high, support for the ACA is dramatically higher than when the governor gives a pro-ACA address and approval is low. Similarly, Figure 3 shows that when a governor gives a pro-ACA address the predicted level of public support for the ACA is

dramatically higher if that address is given in an election year as opposed to a non-election year.

[Insert Figures 2 and 3 Here]

While there appears to be clear support for conditional gubernatorial influence over ACA favorability through the use of the bully pulpit, analyzing conditionality in the context of changes in ACA salience produces a more complex pattern of results. In Table 4A, which once again interacts the conditioning variables with the ACA-related speech variable, the gubernatorial approval and incumbent running variables are negative and significant predictors of change in ACA salience These results would appear to suggest that under these conditions, a governor speaking out about the ACA actually decreases the salience of the ACA. Although these findings are seemingly counter-intuitive based on past research on elite influence, they make sense in the context of health reform. As the most prominent public policy in America since it was enacted, the lack of positive and significant effects for salience results from ceiling effects on ACA salience. The policy was so prominent in American discourse that there was little that governors could do to heighten the salience of an already prominent topic.

[Insert Table 4A Here]

This same general pattern of results holds when analyzing conditionality in the context of speech direction in Table 4B. Most interactions fail to reach statistical significance and those that do – pro-ACA speech and anti-ACA speech with gubernatorial approval – are negative predictors of salience change.

[Insert Table 4B Here]

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Discussion

The results of the analysis provide general support for my theoretical expectations and suggest that even in the context of massive partisan polarization; elected officials can lead, rather than follow public opinion. Specifically, a governor's use of their bully pulpit to address the ACA can influence the way in which individuals within a state view the policy, but only under specific conditions. When analyzing the influence of gubernatorial addresses on changes in ACA favorability, I found that although there were no main effects of speeches on attitudes, there were conditional influences. In particular, gubernatorial approval and election year were significant conditioning factors such that governors proved to be more successful in shifting mass attitudes when they were more popular and during an election year. Conversely, the other conditioning variables – media coverage of the address, prominence of the governor, and incumbent status were rarely significant.

While the analysis provides clear evidence that governors can exert influence within states on the favorability of the ACA, I also find that influencing the salience of the ACA proves difficult. Across specifications, gubernatorial addresses rarely influence ACA salience and when they do, they are unable to increase the perceived importance of the issue. Past work would suggest that governors should be more, as opposed to less successful in raising the salience of a policy (as compared to favorability) through the use of the bully pulpit (Jacobs and Shapiro 2000; Edwards 1990). However, as the most prominent public policy at the state and national levels since it was enacted, public salience of the ACA has been universally high and thus, the fact that an individual speech

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by a politician cannot increase this salience is not entirely surprising. To my knowledge, this study is the first to demonstrate that elite attempts to use the bully pulpit can run into ceiling effects in the context of highly polarized party disputes and points to the need for further research on the bully pulpit in this context.

Conclusion

These findings provide key lessons that will help researchers and political strategists alike moving forward in their study of the bully pulpit and its influence over the general public. First, given the conditional nature of gubernatorial influence in this analysis, it appears that like their presidential counterparts, when the conditions are right, governors can use a public outreach strategy to accomplish their policy objectives. On the other hand, when conditions are unfavorable, governors should look toward a legislative solution to their policy goals. Second, the findings here show that if actors at the national level have raised the profile of an issue through partisan debate (and even misinformation in the case of the ACA), the governor's voice can still be heard above the partisan shouting. Governors can do little to increase the salience of polarized issues but as the most influential political actor representing the specific interests of a given state, individuals see their governor as a trusted elite whose opinion matters to state residents.

Figure 1. Change in ACA Support over Time by State Partisanship
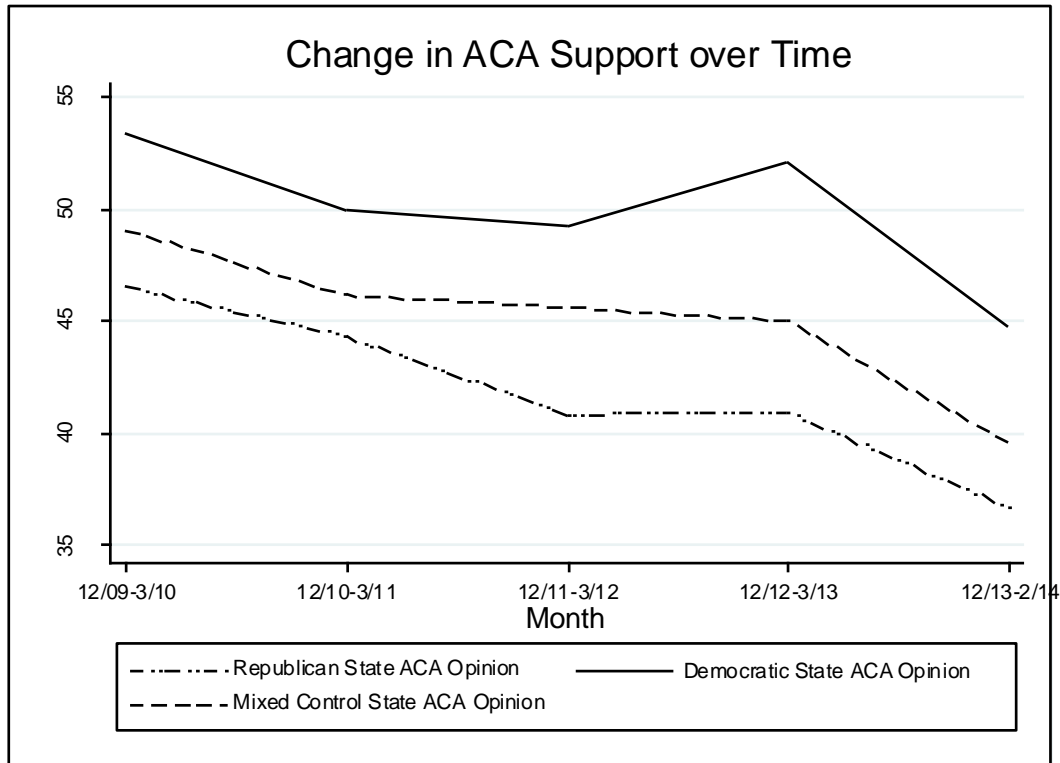
Figure 2. Conditional Influence of Approval when Speech is Pro-ACA
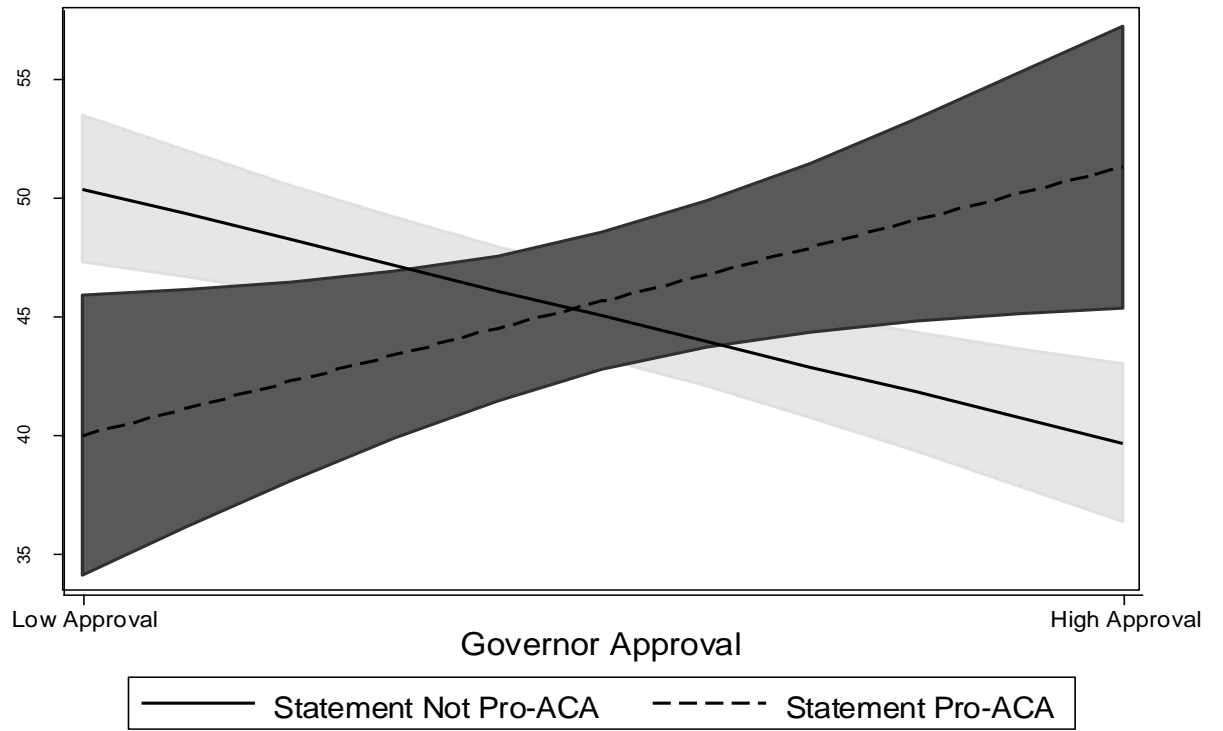
* 95% Confidence Intervals

Figure 3. The Impact of Elect. Status on ACA Support when a Speech is Pro-ACA

Election Year
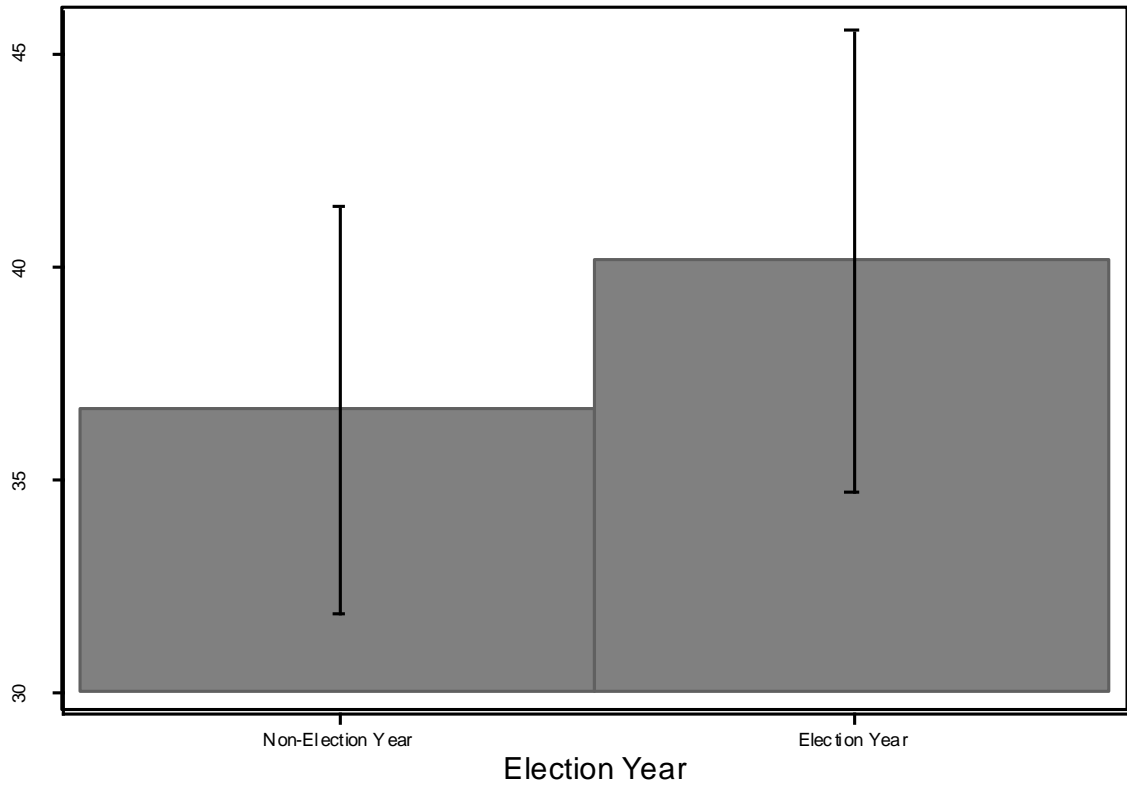
* 95% Confidence Intervals

Table 1. Main Effect Models of Speeches on ACA Favorability

VARIABLES	(Model 1) ACA_Fav	(Model 2) ACA_Fav
December Opinion	0.68***	0.68***
	(0.098)	(0.098)
Speech ACA-Related	-0.17	
	(0.968)	
Speech Pro-ACA		0.23
		(1.271)
Speech Anti-ACA		-0.91
		(0.997)
Governor Approval	-0.07***	-0.06***
	(0.024)	(0.024)
Republican Governor	2.04***	2.37**
	(0.714)	(1.016)
Republican Legislature	-1.01	-0.98
	(1.016)	(0.955)
State Affluence	0.00	0.00
	(0.000)	(0.000)
Uninsured	-0.30**	-0.28**
	(0.124)	(0.127)
Election Year	0.53	0.60
	(1.651)	(1.634)
Constant	16.31**	15.76**
	(6.938)	(7.018)
Total Observations	187	187
R-squared	0.78	0.78
Number of States	47	47

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10
Note: Models analyzed using panel corrected standard errors.

Table 2. Main Effect Models of Speeches on ACA Salience

VARIABLES	(Model 3) ACA Salience	(Model 4) ACA Salience
December Salience	0.56**	0.56**
	(0.244)	(0.245)
Speech ACA-Related	-0.91	
	(0.755)	
Speech Pro-ACA		-1.05
		(0.975)
Speech Anti-ACA		-0.12
		(0.829)
Governor Approval	-0.01	-0.01
	(0.016)	(0.016)
Republican Governor	-1.48*	-1.78*
	(0.875)	(1.034)
Republican Legislature	-1.72*	-1.78*
	(0.999)	(0.977)
State Affluence	-0.00	-0.00
	(0.000)	(0.000)
Uninsured	0.21*	0.19
	(0.125)	(0.123)
Election Year	2.84**	2.72**
	(1.234)	(1.162)
Constant	9.77	10.23
	(6.690)	(6.870)
Observations	199	199
R-squared	0.55	0.55
Number of States	49	49

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10
Note: Models analyzed using panel corrected standard errors.

Table 3A. ACA-related Speech Interactions

VARIABLES	(Model 5) ACA_Fav
December Opinion	0.69***
	(0.100)
Speech ACA-Related	-5.92**
	(2.427)
Governor Approval	-0.11***
	(0.024)
Republican Governor	1.93**
	(0.952)
Republican Legislature	-0.87
	(1.072)
State Affluence	0.00
	(0.000)
Uninsured	-0.29**
	(0.126)
Media Mentions of Address	0.03**
	(0.015)
Election Year	-1.13
	(1.759)
Governor Prominence	-0.00
	(0.001)
Incumbent Running	2.06
	(1.338)
Spch ACA-Rel*Med. Mentions	-0.01
	(0.029)
Spch ACA-Rel*Elec Yr	2.39*
	(1.418)
Spch ACA-Rel*Incumb Run	-1.59
	(2.252)
Spch ACA-Rel*Gov. Prom.	0.00
	(0.002)
Spch ACA-Rel*Gov. Approval	0.10***
	(0.036)
Constant	19.07***
	(7.210)

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10
Note: Model analyzed using panel corrected standard errors. Total Observations: 187;
Number of States: 47; R-Squared: 0.79.

Table 3B. Speech Direction Interactions

VARIABLES	(Model 6) ACA_Fav	Standard Errors
Speech Pro-ACA	-10.34***	(3.066)
Speech Anti-ACA	-4.09	(3.034)
Governor Approval	-0.11***	(0.027)
Republican Governor	2.68**	(1.306)
Republican Legislature	-1.18	(0.976)
State Affluence	0.00	(0.000)
Uninsured	-0.27**	(0.131)
Media Mentions of Address	0.03**	(0.015)
Election Year	-1.33	(1.625)
Governor Prominence	-0.00	(0.000)
Incumbent Running	2.89**	(1.347)
Spch Pro-ACA*Med. Mentions	-0.01	(0.024)
Spch Anti-ACA*Med. Mentions	-0.06	(0.051)
Spch Pro-ACA*Elec Yr	4.84***	(1.825)
Spch Anti-ACA*Elec Yr	2.04	(1.954)
Spch Pro-ACA*Gov. Prom.	-0.00	(0.002)
Spch Anti-ACA*Gov. Prom.	0.00***	(0.001)
Spch Pro-ACA*Gov. Approval	0.22***	(0.050)
Spch Anti-ACA*Gov. Approval	0.06	(0.052)
Spch Pro-ACA*Incumb Run	-5.79**	(2.419)
Spch Anti-ACA*Incumb Run	-2.48	(2.466)
Constant	18.78***	(7.182)
Total Observations	187	
Number of States	47	
R-squared	0.81	

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10
Note: Model analyzed using panel corrected standard errors.

Table 4A. Influence of ACA-Related Speech on ACA Salience – Interactions

VARIABLES	(Model 7) ACA Salience
December Salience	0.61***
	(0.217)
Speech ACA-Related	3.00
	(2.755)
Governor Approval	0.03
	(0.026)
Republican Governor	-1.51*
	(0.856)
Republican Legislature	-1.52
	(0.970)
State Affluence	-0.00
	(0.000)
Uninsured	0.20*
	(0.113)
Media Mentions of Address	-0.03*
	(0.015)
Election Year	4.61***
	(1.047)
Governor Prominence	0.00
	(0.001)
Incumbent Running	-3.23***
	(0.753)
Spch ACA-Rel*Med. Mentions	0.01
	(0.028)
Spch ACA-Rel*Elec Yr	0.91
	(1.358)
Spch ACA-Rel*Incumb Run	-1.62***
	(0.611)
Spch ACA-Rel*Gov. Prom.	0.00
	(0.001)
Spch ACA-Rel*Gov. Approval	-0.08*
	(0.042)
Constant	5.98
	(6.487)
Total Observations	199
Number of States	49
R-squared	0.60

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10
Note: Model analyzed using panel corrected standard errors.

Table 4B. Influence of Speech Direction on ACA Salience – Interactions

| | (Model 8) | |
VARIABLES	ACA Salience Coefficient	Standard Errors
December Salience	0.61***	(0.213)
Speech Pro-ACA	4.41	(4.086)
Speech Anti-ACA	2.85	(2.468)
Governor Approval	0.02	(0.024)
Republican Governor	-2.07**	(1.009)
Republican Legislature	-1.36	(0.858)
State Affluence	-0.00	(0.000)
Uninsured	0.18	(0.112)
Media Mentions of Address	-0.03*	(0.015)
Election Year	4.86***	(1.008)
Governor Prominence	0.00	(0.001)
Incumbent Running	-4.35***	(0.719)
Spch Pro-ACA*Med. Mentions	0.04	(0.030)
Spch Anti-ACA*Med. Mentions	0.00	(0.028)
Spch Pro-ACA*Elec Yr	-2.40	(1.871)
Spch Anti-ACA*Elec Yr	2.07	(2.321)
Spch Pro-ACA*Gov. Prom.	0.00	(0.001)
Spch Anti-ACA*Gov. Prom.	0.00	(0.001)
Spch Pro-ACA*Gov. Approval	-0.12*	(0.070)
Spch Anti-ACA*Gov. Approval	-0.06*	(0.036)
Spch Pro-ACA*Incumb Run	0.56	(2.058)
Spch Anti-ACA*Incumb Run	-0.20	(2.193)
Constant	6.23	(6.261)
Total Observations	199	
Number of States	49	
R-squared	0.62	

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10
Note: Model analyzed using panel corrected standard errors.

Chapter 5. Legislative Responsiveness to Gubernatorial Appeals

As Governor Brewer was shocking her state and the nation at large in January of 2013 by publicly pushing for the Medicaid expansion laid out in the Affordable Care Act, another Republican governor over 1,800 miles away in Columbus Ohio was debating the same political issue as he prepared his own State of the State address. John Kasich, a conservative stalwart who led his state on the tenants of faith and fiscal responsibility was expected to follow other Republican governors from across the nation and reject the Medicaid expansion. On the surface, all of the conditions were right for rejection: Kasich was a Republican governor, leading a Republican legislature, and the state had a large uninsured population that would be expensive to cover and increase the size of government. Governor Kasich however, had other ideas.

When he stepped to the podium to deliver his State of the State address roughly a month after Governor Brewer, he followed her path and publicly endorsed the coverage expansion in his most prominent address of the year. Citing the "unprecedented opportunity to bring 13 billion of Ohio's tax dollars back" to the state and that he couldn't "accept the fact that the most vulnerable in [his] state should be ignored," Governor Kasich devoted a large portion of his address to try and sell his state on Medicaid expansion (Kasich 2013). Just like in Arizona, within weeks a coalition of support formed among legislators and within months, Kasich's plan received support from a legislative Controlling Board which allowed the expansion to commence.[34]

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[34] Unlike in Arizona where the expansion was passed by the entire legislature, in Ohio there was little hope of passage in the legislature. With that said, the approval of a legislative board made up of six lawmakers and an administrative official was necessary

The use of prominent public addresses as precursors to policy change by both John Kasich and Jan Brewer leads to a critical question for our understanding of the political process – did the governors' statements actually drive the policy change that occurred in Arizona and Ohio? This question fits into a strong research tradition by scholars of the bully pulpit analyzing the influence of executive rhetoric over policy outcomes in the legislature. With that said, while we know a great deal about when presidents can successfully influence the legislative process at the national level through their use of the bully pulpit, the extant literature in political science has largely ignored the question of whether or not other actors in the political system who address the public on key policy issues can wield similar influence over public policy. This chapter does just that – examining whether or not public addresses by governors on key policy issues can influence public support and, in turn, legislative behavior in the US states.

Leveraging the unique variation at the state level in key economic, institutional, and political variables, as well as variation in public opinion, this chapter evaluates whether a governor's public message of support or opposition toward the ACA during yearly State of the State addresses influences both how individuals within a state view the policy as well as subsequent bill introduction and passage in the state legislature. This analysis makes several important contributions to our understanding of the policy process. First, the findings here demonstrate that even in highly polarized policy disputes like health reform, use of the bully pulpit by the chief executive can have important implications for the policy process. Specifically, I find that gubernatorial statements

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for implementation and highlights the necessary role of the legislature in turning executive rhetoric into policy change.

about the Affordable Care Act can influence the number of ACA bills introduced in state legislatures. Critically however, not all addresses prove equally influential and the relationship between rhetoric and bill passage is tenuous at best. Second, by directly modeling the opinion change that results from the executive's address on subsequent legislative activity, my analysis represents the most direct test of Kernell's 'going public' account to date. In other words, instead of including a simple proxy for public policy salience, this analysis represents one of the first attempts to directly test whether the sentiment change among members of the public caused by an executive's addresses can influence subsequent legislative activity.

In the discussion below, I begin by briefly reviewing the existing literature on the influence of executives over the legislature through the use of the bully pulpit and discuss how important new advances can be made by moving to the state level and studying the bully pulpit in the context of governors. The next section presents the data and methods before turning to the analysis and conclusion.

The Influence of the Bully Pulpit on Policy Outcomes

Scholars interested in the influence of the bully pulpit on the political process have spent considerable time analyzing the influence of public addresses on legislative activity. Similar to the findings related to the influence of the bully pulpit on the public, the literature on the influence of public addresses on the legislature shows a mixed record of success. On the one hand, a large body of research demonstrates that the president is often successful in using public rhetoric to get policies onto the congressional agenda

(Edwards and Wood 1999; Edwards and Barrett 2000; Lovett, Bevan, and Baumgartner 2015; Cummins 2008; Cummins 2010; Canes-Wrone 2001). On the other hand, scholars have also shown considerable evidence that successful use of the bully pulpit to influence legislative behavior is not a guarantee – with influence varying dramatically based on who is president and the conditions that they faced in the political environment (Covington 1987; Fett 1994; Kernell 1997; Cummins 2010). For example, Cummins (2010) in his study of State of the Union addresses demonstrates that at high levels of partisanship and opposition party strength influence over the legislature dissipates. With influence dependent on key features of the political environment and varying from president to president, it appears that like other aspects of the bully pulpit, rhetorical influence over the legislature requires a comprehensive understanding of conditionality.

Despite the importance of this research, our current understanding of the influence of rhetoric on legislative behavior remains limited for a number of reasons. First, scholars have focused almost exclusively on the president in the study of the bully pulpit even though the presidency is a very difficult venue in which to explore the topic. Second, there remains a need for studies that directly test the two steps of the 'going public' theoretical account (opinion change and altered legislative behavior) simultaneously. While the problem of focusing exclusively on the president has received considerable attention already in this dissertation, the second issue related to demonstrating the influence of executive rhetoric over the public and the legislative agenda simultaneously is unique to this chapter. As articulated in Kernell (1997), chief executives 'going public' are attempting to influence legislative behavior by altering the way that the public thinks

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about the policy and, in turn, forcing re-election minded politicians into altering the way that they act in the legislature. A comprehensive look at the literature produced thus far on the bully pulpit however, reveals that few studies adequately capture this dynamic. In other words, even as scholars have devoted considerable attention to understanding the link between the executive's speech and subsequent legislative behavior, few studies sufficiently account for the role of the public as described by Kernell. According to Kernell, it is the change in public sentiment that should drive legislative activity; however, few studies actually capture opinion change. Many studies account for the public's views with measures of a proposal's popularity or the prior salience of the issue but do not actually measure the change in salience/support that results from the speech (see Canes-Wrone 2001). Other studies ignore the role of the public altogether, focusing directly on the link between rhetoric and legislative success (Cummins 2010; Ferguson 2003)

By analyzing the influence of executive rhetoric at the state level by governors and by explicitly modeling the relationship between opinion change and policy outcomes, this analysis will be the most comprehensive look at the influence of the bully pulpit on the legislative process to date.

Research Design

Selecting an Issue

For this analysis of chief executive influence over the political process through the use of the bully pulpit, I focus once again focus on the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

The ACA was selected as the issue for this analysis not only because it represents a

uniquely advantageous test-case as was argued in Chapter 4, but also because a large

database of ACA-based legislation has been compiled which will allow for a complex

analysis of the bully pulpit.

Data and Methods

Measuring Legislative Activity

      To understand the influence of a governor's public addresses on the legislative

agenda in the U.S. states, this study uses bill introduction and bill passage as the key

dependent variables in its analysis of the bully pulpit. In particular it relies on counts of

the number of bills introduced and passed in each US state focused on the ACA in every

year from 2011-2014 as dependent variables. These bills were obtained from the National

Conference of State Legislature's state legislative health reform tracking database. For

each bill introduced on the ACA in any US state, this database provides key information

related to the date the bill was introduced, how far it has moved through the legislative

process, and a summary of the legislation. From this, I was then able to content analyze

each bill introduced – 2,995 bills in total and categorize whether the bill was pro-ACA,

anti-ACA, or was ACA-related but was neither positive nor negative in tone. This coding

effort provided key measures which serve as dependent variables in my analysis: the total

count in each state-year for ACA bills introduced/passed, the count in each state-year for

pro-ACA legislation introduced/passed, and the count in each state year for anti-ACA legislation introduced/passed.[35]

Finally, given my interest in how the governor influences legislative behavior, the dependent variables only account for the number of bills introduced or passed after the governor has spoken. In many states, this is quite simple because the legislative session does not begin until the governor has given their State of the State address. In other states however, State of the State addresses are given weeks or even months after the legislative session begins. With that in mind, this analysis also includes a key control variable in all of its models for the count of ACA-legislation, pro-ACA legislation, or anti-ACA legislation introduced before the governor's address.

Gubernatorial Addresses

After content analyzing and aggregating bills introduced to the state-year level, I next collected information on gubernatorial addresses related to the ACA. For my analysis, I rely on the same set of State of the State addresses that I also used in Chapter 4. Unlike Chapter 4 however which included all speeches from 2010-2014, this analysis only includes bills from 2011-2014 as 2011 was when NCSL began tracking ACA legislation. From each of these speeches, two pieces of information were ascertained.

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[35] In addition, I also coded other features of the legislation including whether it discussed health exchanges, Medicaid expansion, abortion restrictions, or emphasized the tax code. These models are not included here due to the primary focus on the simpler categorization of favoring or opposing the ACA but will be explored extensively in future research.

First, I determined whether or not the speech was ACA related. Second, I determined

whether the governor spoke about the ACA in a positive manner or a negative manner.[36]

Measuring Public Attitudes

In the 'going public' account first laid out by Kernell (1997), influence over the

legislature through the use of the bully pulpit should be conditional on whether or not the

executive is first able to influence the way that the public thinks about the policy at hand.

With that in mind, this analysis includes a key independent variable that accounts for

changing public sentiment towards the ACA. Whereas past attempts to account for public

attitudes in the study of the bully pulpit have often used a static measure of policy

salience as a control, this analysis relies on a more complex measure which captures the

change in ACA salience that occurs from before any governor has spoken until after

gubernatorial State of the State addresses.   In other words, since the vast majority of

governors deliver their State of the State speeches in January or early February, my

measure accounts for the change in ACA salience that occurs in each U.S. state in each

year from December of the year before the speech until the following March. The

salience change variable was developed from Gallup's monthly Most Important Problem

time-series as discussed in Chapter 4. While the last chapter demonstrated that governors

were more successful at changing ACA support than salience, I choose to focus on ACA

policy salience here for several reasons. First, when scholars include a measure for the

public in their studies of the impact of rhetoric on the legislature they almost universally

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[36] A third key independent variable – the amount of time devoted to the ACA in each
speech based on word count was also collected and analyzed. This measure never reached
statistical significance and was; therefore, dropped from the primary analysis. This data is
available; however, upon request.

use salience and I'd like to remain consistent with past research. Second, as I'm not looking at conditional effects here and both salience and support were insignificant as main effects, the choice between measures should be driven by theory and past research which consistently finds that executives are more successful when looking at salience than support.[37]

Control Variables

In addition to accounting for bills introduced in state legislatures, the content of the governor's speech and changes in ACA salience, my analysis of the governor's bully pulpit also includes control variables which could influence the behavior of the state legislature towards health reform. The first two control variables included in this analysis account for party control of state government. One variable is a dummy for whether or not each state has a Republican governor in a given year and the other is a three point measure which accounts for full, partial or no Republican control of the state legislature.

The next control variable included in this analysis accounts for the affluence of each state, which is measured by real, price adjusted estimates of personal income across states. This yearly data was obtained from the Bureau of Economic Analysis. Including affluence in an analysis of legislative behavior is crucial because the economic conditions within a state have been suggested as a key factor in determining state activity on the ACA. Many supporters of the ACA argued that the extensive funding offered by the

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[37] With that said models for ACA support can be found in Appendix C and generally demonstrate a weak influence for rhetoric on the legislature. Although perhaps disheartening, finding more significant results when looking at salience but not support comports quite well with the existing literature in the field.

federal government in support of implementing the ACA's programs would drive many poor states to implement health reform (Bachrach and Jacobs 2012).

The fourth control variable in my analysis accounts for the percentage of individuals in each state who are uninsured. This data, which was collected from the Kaiser Family Foundation and Gallup, was important to include because states with higher percentages of uninsured individuals should be more receptive to the ACA.

Next, my analysis includes gubernatorial approval as a key control variable due to research which suggests that public support for the governor can influence the bully pulpit at all stages - determining which issues executives go public on, how receptive the public is to the message, and whether or not the legislature acts on the issue (Canes-Wrone 2010; Rottinghaus 2010; Canes-Wrone 2001). In this analysis, gubernatorial approval is measured using the unique dataset described in previous chapters but now focusing only on data from 2011-2014.

The final control variable included in the analysis accounts for the professionalism of each state legislature. This measure as discussed in Squire (2007) accounts for salary, session length, and staff resources in its determination of a state's professionalism and is updated to 2013. Legislative professionalism is important to include in this study because legislators in less professional legislatures may introduce less legislation on all issues independent of the influence of the bully pulpit or the topic at hand.

Theoretical Expectations

For this study of the influence of the governor's bully pulpit over the political process, I have several theoretical expectations which I will explore in depth. First, I expect to find that when a governor delivers an ACA-related address and increases the salience of the ACA among the residents of their state, the legislature will respond by increasing legislative activity on the ACA (Hypothesis 1). This hypothesis directly tests the influence of the bully pulpit on the legislature as originally conceptualized by Kernell (1997) in reference to presidents and expanded upon here in the context of governors. If I find evidence that the legislature increases legislative activity in response to rhetoric driven increases in policy salience, it would signal strong support for the influence of the bully pulpit on policy outcomes at the state level. I expect this relationship to exist when the governor delivers both pro-ACA addresses and anti-ACA addresses (Hypothesis 2). In other words, when the governor gives a pro-ACA address it will increase pro-ACA legislation and when the governor delivers an anti-ACA address it will increase anti-ACA legislation. This hypothesis is important to test given the large number of both positive and negative ACA addresses and if proven, would illustrate that legislators follow the governor's lead regardless of issue stance so long as the public is paying attention. Finally, given past work at the national level which suggests that unified government can make influence easier (see Lovett, Bevan, and Baumgartner 2015; Cummins 2008; Ferguson 2003; Canes-Wrone 2001), I expect to find that unified as opposed to divided government will increase the likelihood of influence over the political process through the use of the bully pulpit (Hypothesis 3). This finding would help to demonstrate the

consistency between findings at the state and national levels and illustrate that unity in government is important for policy change when using the bully pulpit.

Method of Analysis

In order to investigate the influence of the gubernatorial bully pulpit, this study relies on count (negative binomial) models pooled across years from 2011-2014.[38] To account for some of the heteroskedasticity that results from pooling states across years, this analysis also includes dummy variables for 2011, 2012, and 2013 in its analysis with 2014 serving as the omitted category. To determine the influence of the two steps of the bully pulpit on policies produced, each model includes an interaction between the governor's speech and subsequent changes in policy salience as the key independent variable. Finally, in addition to exploring this topic across all states, the analysis also includes models that separate the results by states with unified or divided government. This is done to account for past research which typically includes the measure and finds that having unified as opposed to divided government can condition the influence of the bully pulpit on the political process (Lovett, Bevan, and Baumgartner 2015; Cummins 2008; Ferguson 2003; Canes-Wrone 2001). In models where unified/divided government status is accounted for, party control of state government is excluded.

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[38] The results from running Poisson and negative binomial regression models found that the data was over-dispersed for most models included in the body of the paper. In these cases negative binomial regression was used. In rare circumstances the data was determined to not be over-dispersed. In these cases Poisson regression is used and noted in notes at the bottom of each table.

Results

Can a governor's message of support or opposition toward the ACA during yearly

State of the State addresses influence policy salience and subsequent legislative

behavior? The results from this analysis suggest that gubernatorial use of the bully pulpit

can have important implications for policy salience and bill introduction in some

circumstances, although the influence of the bully pulpit over bill passage is more

tenuous.

Bill Introduction Findings

In analyzing the results from Table 1, which explores the influence of an ACA-

related speech on ACA salience and the amount of ACA-related legislation introduced, it

appears that the bully pulpit does have an influence on the political process. While there

is no significant interaction term in models 1 or 2, there is a positive and significant

interaction term in Model 3. This suggests that that when a governor speaks out about the

ACA in a state with divided government and policy salience increases, the amount of

ACA-related legislation introduced increases. Interestingly, this finding runs counter to

past research on the bully pulpit which regularly finds that influence over the political

process is more likely with unified as opposed to divided government.

[Insert Table 1 Here]

While it appears that across all ACA-related speeches there is an influence of the

bully pulpit on the legislative agenda, how does the direction of the governor's speech –

either in support of or opposition to the ACA influence the process? In Table 2, the

analysis is re-run replacing ACA-related legislation with pro-ACA legislation as the

dependent variable and by replacing ACA-related speeches with pro-ACA speeches as a

key independent variable. Here, the results are slightly weaker than were seen in Table 1,

but continue to show that gubernatorial statements in State of the State addresses do

influence the political process. While Model 4 shows that there is no effect of the bully

pulpit across all states, Model 5 shows that when looking at states with unified control of

state government, the interaction term capturing the bully pulpit has a positive and

marginally significant influence controlling for other relevant features of the political

process. Finally, it appears that unlike in Table 1 where there was a significant effect

among states with divided government, there is no such effect when focusing only on

pro-ACA legislation.

[Insert Table 2 Here]

After analyzing the influence of pro-ACA speeches on the political process, I then

analyzed the role of anti-ACA speeches on the political process in Table 3. For these

models, the dependent variable is the count of anti-ACA legislation introduced in each

state year and the bully pulpit is captured by the interaction between a governor giving an

anti-ACA speech and the change in policy salience. When analyzing the results for anti-

ACA legislation, it appears that there is no influence of negative bully pulpit addresses

about the ACA on anti-ACA legislation.

[Insert Table 3 Here]

With that said, as can be seen in Table 4, when breaking the results out into a subset of

ACA bills introduced – specifically those that focus on the creation of anti-ACA health

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compacts, there is a strong, significant, and correctly signed influence of anti-ACA

speeches on policy salience and subsequent bill introduction.

[Insert Table 4 Here]

Bill Passage Findings

Although the analysis to this point has shown clear evidence that the governor can

use their bully pulpit to alter policy salience and the legislative agenda, it is important to

ask whether or not this bully pulpit use alters the number of bills passed by the legislature

as well. After all, if our ultimate goal is to understand the influence of rhetoric on policy

change, then we need to look at whether or not the proposed bill is enacted. Tables 5-7 do

just that, replicating the analyses conducted in Tables 1-3 but replacing the dependent

variables which previously had accounted for bills introduced with bills that are passed.

These results show that while the governor has a clear role in altering the

legislative agenda, that power less often extends to public policies produced. The most

promising results come from Table 5 where the same pattern of influence that was seen

for ACA-related bills in Table 1 is once again found in Table 5. Although the relevant

bully pulpit interaction is insignificant for total bills passed and bills passed under unified

government, there is a positive and significant effect when looking at bills passed under

divided government.

[Insert Table 5 Here]

Table 6 replicates the analysis originally conducted for in Table 2 but here, I find

that unlike for bill introduction there appears to be no significant role for pro-ACA

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rhetoric in altering the number of pro-ACA bills introduced in state legislatures. Most notably, the significant finding for pro-ACA rhetoric on bill introduction in states with unified government no longer matters when looking at bill passage.

[Insert Table 6 Here]

Finally, similar to the findings from Table 3 focused on bill introduction in the wake of anti-ACA rhetoric, there is no significant effect for anti-ACA rhetoric on bill passage in Table 7.

[Insert Table 7 Here]

Discussion and Conclusion

Can a governor's public push for policy change like Governor Brewer and Governor Kasichs' pro-ACA messages in their 2013 State of the State addresses influence the political process? Based on these results, the answer appears to be a tentative yes. Even in the fact of massive partisan polarization, I find that gubernatorial use of the bully pulpit alters policy salience and legislative behavior in some cases. In fact, the positive and significant finding for pro-ACA addresses in states with unified government provides direct evidence for the situations in Arizona and Ohio where both states had unified control of state government and the governors delivered pro-ACA addresses in advance of policy change. What is particularly noteworthy about these findings is that they hold up alongside other predictors that have previously been shown to influence the legislative process in general (legislative professionalism) and the ACA in particular (party control of state government). With that said, the results are not

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overwhelmingly supportive – the pro-ACA finding is only marginally significant and most other interactions fail to reach significance at all.

Even though this study provides clear evidence of the agenda setting power of governors through their use of the bully pulpit, I also find some unexpected results that are worth note. First, evidence about the role of unified as opposed to divided government as discussed in hypothesis 3 is mixed. Having unified government appears to matter when looking at pro-ACA speeches but when looking at ACA-related speeches in general, it is divided government status that matters most.

Second, even though I demonstrate the agenda setting power of the governor through the bully pulpit, this study finds limited evidence of the governor accomplishing policy change through their use of the bully pulpit. In other words, the governor can force an issue onto the legislative agenda if they can increase public salience, but the governor was rarely able to increase the number of bills passed by the state legislature. This finding comports quite well with the existing literature on the bully pulpit at the national level. There, the literature finds that presidents regularly are able to get policies onto the agenda using the bully pulpit (see Edwards and Wood 1999; Edwards and Barrett 2000; Lovett, Bevan, and Baumgartner 2015; Cummins 2008; Cummins 2010; Canes-Wrone 2001) but that policy change is harder to achieve. With Cummins (2010) demonstrating that presidents have difficulty influencing legislative behavior at high levels of partisanship, it is perhaps unsurprising that governors rarely changed policy outcomes on one of the more partisan public policies of the past decade.

In the end, existing research in the field as well as the theoretical account laid out in this dissertation argue that politicians using public rhetoric do so in an attempt to change how the public evaluates a key policy and then force the legislature into enacting policy change. The results presented here appear to present a muddled story about the success of that use of rhetoric. If the governor hopes only to get an issue onto the legislative agenda it appears that they will can be successful in their efforts. If, on the other hand, the governor is hoping to actually change public policy, they might be better off pursuing other venues for influence like bargaining with legislative leaders.

Table 1. Bills Introduced with Speeches that are ACA-Related

VARIABLES	(Model 1) Total Bills Introduced	(Model 2) Bills Introduced Unified Government	(Model 3) Bills Introduced Divided Government
ACA-Speech*Salience	0.02	0.03	0.27***
	(0.028)	(0.032)	(0.090)
ACA-Related Speech	-0.11	-0.15	-0.38*
	(0.124)	(0.151)	(0.218)
Salience Change	0.02	0.04	-0.21**
	(0.023)	(0.026)	(0.086)
Republican Governor	-0.33**		
	(0.143)		
Republican Leg.	-0.36**		
	(0.158)		
Percent Uninsured	0.03**	0.03*	-0.10**
	(0.014)	(0.016)	(0.038)
Affluence	0.00001	0.00003***	-0.00004
	(0.00001)	(0.00001)	(0.00002)
Governor Approval	-0.01**	-0.02***	0.02
	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.013)
Leg. Professionalism	0.44	-0.52	2.23**
	(0.505)	(0.602)	(0.914)
Constant	2.72***	2.00**	4.63***
	(0.705)	(0.839)	(1.440)
lnalpha	-0.92***	-0.81***	-1.28***
	(0.140)	(0.157)	(0.297)
Observations	169	125	47
Pseudo R-Squared	0.053	0.046	0.065
Log Likelihood	-572.266	-424.873	-156.759

Standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10
Note: Models include dummies for 2011, 2012, and 2013 as well as the count of the bills introduced before the governor's speech but those variables have been deleted from this table for ease of reading the table. More complete Tables are available upon request.

Table 2. Bills Introduced with Speeches that are Pro-ACA

VARIABLES	(Model 4) Pro-ACA Bills Introduced	(Model 5) Pro-Bills Introduced Unified Government	(Model 6) Pro-Bills Introduced Divided Government
Pro-Speech*Salience	-0.02	0.25*	-0.07
	(0.054)	(0.146)	(0.080)
Pro-ACA Speech	-0.53**	-0.51	-0.65**
	(0.228)	(0.322)	(0.297)
Salience Change	0.05*	0.07**	0.00
	(0.026)	(0.030)	(0.079)
Republican Governor	-0.24		
	(0.198)		
Republican Leg.	-0.64***		
	(0.197)		
Percent Uninsured	0.05***	0.03*	0.03
	(0.018)	(0.020)	(0.047)
Affluence	0.00003**	0.00005***	0.00004
	(0.00001)	(0.00001)	(0.00003)
Governor Approval	-0.01	-0.02**	0.004
	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.015)
Leg. Professionalism	1.50**	0.80	2.19*
	(0.645)	(0.757)	(1.206)
Constant	-0.19	-0.68	-1.56
	(0.884)	(1.048)	(1.843)
lnalpha	-0.76***	-0.66***	-1.01**
	(0.198)	(0.221)	(0.402)
Observations	169	125	47
Pseudo R-squared	0.085	0.091	0.055
Log Likelihood	-376.799	-271.469	-111.937

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Models include dummies for 2011, 2012, and 2013 as well as the count of the bills introduced before the governor's speech but those variables have been deleted from this table for ease of reading the table. More complete Tables are available upon request.

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Table 3. Bills Introduced with Speeches that are Anti-ACA

VARIABLES	(Model 7) Anti-ACA Bills Introduced	(Model 8) Anti-Bills Introduced Unified Government	(Model 9) Anti-Bills Introduced Divided Government
Anti-Speech*Salience	0.03	0.03	-0.00
	(0.039)	(0.040)	(0.110)
Anti-ACA Speech	0.18	0.12	-0.43
	(0.221)	(0.217)	(0.443)
Salience Change	0.02	0.02	0.04
	(0.034)	(0.035)	(0.091)
Republican Governor	-0.48**		
	(0.213)		
Republican Leg.	0.69***		
	(0.230)		
Percent Uninsured	0.04*	0.07***	-0.07
	(0.024)	(0.026)	(0.058)
Affluence	-0.00005***	-0.00008***	-0.00003
	(0.00002)	(0.00002)	(0.00003)
Governor Approval	-0.02**	-0.01*	-0.02
	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.018)
Leg. Professionalism	-0.78	-0.82	-0.79
	(0.804)	(0.820)	(1.664)
Constant	3.48***	4.37***	4.44*
	(1.085)	(1.170)	(2.413)
lnalpha	-0.82***	-1.15***	-0.90
	(0.263)	(0.350)	(0.567)
Observations	169	125	47
Pseudo R-squared	0.088	0.133	0.080
Log Likelihood	-310.824	-218.877	-85.071

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Models include dummies for 2011, 2012, and 2013 as well as the count of the bills introduced before the governor's speech but those variables have been deleted from this table for ease of reading the table. More complete Tables are available upon request.

Table 4. Bills Introduced with Speeches that are Anti-ACA, Compact Bills as DV

VARIABLES	(Model 10) Compact Bills Introduced	(Model 11) Compact bills Introduced Unified Government
Anti-Speech*Salience	0.81***	1.05***
	(0.256)	(0.320)
Anti-ACA Speech	-1.03*	-1.47*
	(0.609)	(0.806)
Salience Change	-0.07	-0.10
	(0.115)	(0.104)
Republican Governor	-0.14	
	(0.446)	
Republican Leg.	2.71***	
	(0.769)	
Percent Uninsured	0.02	0.05
	(0.043)	(0.047)
Affluence	-0.00004	-0.0001**
	(0.00004)	(0.00004)
Governor Approval	0.004	0.001
	(0.014)	(0.015)
Leg. Professionalism	-0.96	-0.94
	(1.784)	(1.820)
Constant	-3.27	1.26
	(2.657)	(2.785)
Observations	169	125
Pseudo R-squared	0.320	0.300
Log Likelihood	-82.229	-67.009

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Models 10 and 11 run using poisson models as they were determined to not be over-dispersed. Models include dummies for 2011, 2012, and 2013 as well as the count of the bills introduced before the governor's speech but those variables have been deleted from this table for ease of reading the table. More complete Tables are available upon request.

Table 5. Bills Passed with Speeches that are ACA-Related

VARIABLES	(Model 12) Total Bills Passed	(Model 13) Bills Passed Unified Government	(Model 14) Bills Passed Divided Government
ACA-Speech*Salience	0.00	-0.01	0.37***
	(0.037)	(0.043)	(0.113)
ACA-Related Speech	-0.02	-0.18	0.72**
	(0.157)	(0.195)	(0.282)
Salience Change	0.02	0.04	-0.33***
	(0.032)	(0.036)	(0.115)
Republican Governor	-0.56***		
	(0.200)		
Republican Leg.	-0.23		
	(0.223)		
Percent Uninsured	0.07***	0.07***	-0.10*
	(0.020)	(0.022)	(0.056)
Affluence	0.00002	0.00005***	-0.00005
	(0.00001)	(0.00001)	(0.00003)
Governor Approval	0.004	0.001	0.02
	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.015)
Leg. Professionalism	0.76	-0.04	2.02*
	(0.652)	(0.796)	(1.173)
Constant	-0.40	-1.71	2.79
	(0.949)	(1.131)	(2.040)
lnalpha	-0.78***	-0.59***	-1.68***
	(0.199)	(0.210)	(0.637)
Observations	169	125	47
Pseudo R-squared	0.055	0.041	0.126
Log Likelihood	-359.568	-274.762	-86.699

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10
Note: Models include dummies for 2011, 2012, and 2013 as well as the count of the bills passed before the governor's speech but those variables have been deleted from this table for ease of reading the table. More complete Tables are available upon request. All models use negative binomial regression.

Table 6. Bills Passed with Speeches that are Pro-ACA

VARIABLES	(Model 15) Pro-ACA Bills Introduced	(Model 16) Pro-Bills Introduced Unified Government	(Model 17) Pro-Bills Introduced Divided Government
Pro-Speech*Salience	-0.03	0.14	-0.20
	(0.075)	(0.161)	(0.124)
Pro-ACA Speech	-0.24	0.24	0.94**
	(0.333)	(0.468)	(0.410)
Salience Change	0.03	0.05	0.29*
	(0.048)	(0.056)	(0.155)
Republican Governor	-0.99***		
	(0.335)		
Republican Leg.	-0.73**		
	(0.344)		
Percent Uninsured	0.05*	0.04	0.02
	(0.031)	(0.036)	(0.073)
Affluence	0.00002	0.00009***	-0.00003
	(0.00002)	(0.00003)	(0.00005)
Governor Approval	0.01	-0.004	0.01
	(0.011)	(0.013)	(0.020)
Leg. Professionalism	1.40	0.61	-3.53
	(1.114)	(1.293)	(2.170)
Constant	-2.02	-5.06***	2.27
	(1.527)	(1.895)	(3.339)
lnalpha	-0.26	0.16	
	(0.293)	(0.281)	
Observations	169	125	47
Pseudo R-squared	0.119	0.086	0.206
Log Likelihood	-201.384	-154.518	-52.720

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Models include dummies for 2011, 2012, and 2013 as well as the count of the bills passed before the governor's speech but those variables have been deleted from this table for ease of reading the table. More complete Tables are available upon request. Models 15 and 16 are negative binomial, Model 17 is poisson.

Table 7. Bills Passed with Speeches that are Anti-ACA

VARIABLES	(Model 18) Anti-ACA Bills Passed	(Model 19) Anti-Bills Passed Unified Government	(Model 20) Anti-Bills Passed Divided Government
Anti-Speech*Salience	0.02	0.05	-7.88
	(0.085)	(0.078)	(1,322.878)
Anti-ACA Speech	0.36	0.88**	-6.52
	(0.387)	(0.394)	(1,611.900)
Salience Change	0.13	0.02	-1.12
	(0.110)	(0.087)	(1.132)
Republican Governor	-0.27		
	(0.492)		
Republican Leg.	4.59***		
	(1.353)		
Percent Uninsured	0.03	0.07	-0.34
	(0.054)	(0.054)	(0.326)
Affluence	-0.00005	-0.00008**	-0.0003
	(0.00004)	(0.00004)	(0.0003)
Governor Approval	0.03**	0.03*	0.16
	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.102)
Leg. Professionalism	-3.55	-2.84	1.44
	(2.296)	(2.198)	(8.275)
Constant	-3.24	0.48	-94.54
	(2.705)	(2.439)	(13,528.200)
Observations	169	125	47
Pseudo R-squared	0.378	0.272	0.406
Log Likelihood	-69.932	-66.754	-11.305

Standard errors in parentheses

*** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.10$

Note: Models include dummies for 2011, 2012, and 2013 as well as the count of the bills passed before the governor's speech but those variables have been deleted from this table for ease of reading the table. More complete Tables are available upon request. Model 20 has an insignificant F-Test. All models are poisson models.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

In the modern political era, any time that a politician is confronted with a policy problem they are forced to make a strategic choice: should they work with other actors within the institutional structure of government in an attempt to resolve the problem or should they look to their rhetoric and the various forms of the bully pulpit in order to achieve needed policy change? This book has examined this choice in depth, focusing on the implications of a rhetoric-based strategy for the attitudes of the mass public, the behavior of the legislature, and ultimately policy change. In particular, it has investigated three key questions: when will a politician choose to 'go public' on a given policy issue, how does the decision to use the bully pulpit influence the way that the public thinks about the issue, and how does that rhetoric influence legislative behavior and subsequent policy change?

Although these questions are relatively simple, coming to an answer that adequately addresses them and advances our understanding of the political process is not. In fact, it would be fair to argue that since the initial research by Kernell on the phenomenon close to two decades ago and the frenzy of methodological tests and clarification that immediately followed, advancement in our understanding of the influence of the bully pulpit on the political process has slowed. The problem, as I have detailed throughout this dissertation, is largely data-driven. Even as scholars have devised important studies that help us to understand the role of elite rhetoric in the political process, their findings are often mixed at best and fundamentally limited by structural features of analysis focused on the president. Specifically, with research on all of the

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questions addressed here emphasizing the conditional nature of influence nationally, and that influence so difficult to explore in the context of the president, our understanding of the bounds within which elite appeals truly matters has remained limited.

To overcome this problem, my dissertation argues for and then uses a state-based approach to studying the bully pulpit that explores gubernatorial rhetoric in prominent public speeches. By doing so, my analysis dramatically increases the sample size available for complex quantitative analysis without creating questions of differences in historical period which past studies have been forced to confront. More importantly, it takes advantage of the variation in political, institutional, economic, and cultural circumstances that is unique to the state level to come to more definitive conclusions about the bounds within which rhetoric influences public opinion, legislative behavior, and public policy.

Findings and Theoretical Implications

My analysis of the gubernatorial bully pulpit finds general support for the theoretical expectations detailed in Chapter 2. When studying the factors that lead governors to pursue a rhetoric-based approach to policy change, I expected the driving force to be policy need, with other factors like the economy playing a secondary role. Looking at the results from Chapter 3, that pattern of results appears to be born out. For both the ACA and immigration, the most consistent predictor of public appeals by governors was policy need. Having a large uninsured population was a consistent predictor of ACA discussion and having a large Hispanic population increased rhetoric

on immigration. While economic circumstances were not a significant secondary force, I did find, perhaps unsurprisingly, that partisanship regularly mattered as well. Specifically, I found that having Republican as opposed to Democratic control of state government fundamentally altered the issues discussed by governors in their State of the State addresses.

For the second key question of my dissertation related to the influence of the bully pulpit over the public, I anticipated that two key factors would drive changes in public attitudes: whether or not the public was paying attention to what the governor was saying and whether or not individuals within a state viewed the governor as a trusted elite. The importance of each of these key factors appears to be confirmed by the data. While there were no significant direct effects of the bully pulpit on the general public, there were conditional effects which comport quite nicely with my expectations related to attention and trust. Related to attention, I surprisingly found that the media, which I expected to be the most important measure of attention, did not seem to matter. Critically however, another measure of attention related to the address being given in an election year did condition influence. Related to trust, I also consistently found that gubernatorial approval served as a key conditioning factor. My analysis showed that the more that individuals liked and potentially trusted their governor, the more likely they were to pay attention to what the governor had to say.

Finally, I found mixed evidence related to my last general expectation that members of the state legislature would see changes in public sentiment as a signal of constituent pressure and increase their legislative activity in the direction of the

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governor's rhetoric. On the one hand, I did find evidence that gubernatorial rhetoric can force issues onto the legislative agenda. When the structural circumstances are right related to party control of state government, governors were generally successful at using their rhetoric to increase policy salience and then force issues onto the agenda. On the other hand, I also found consistent evidence that influencing bill passage is less likely. In only one of nine models of Chapter 5 did the relevant interaction between changes in policy salience and rhetoric reach statistical significance when studying bill passage.

Drawing Lessons

Overall, these findings across chapters provide general support for my expectations for how the bully pulpit influences the political process and provide several important lessons for our understanding of state politics, elite influence more broadly, and even for democratic theory. At the state level, these findings highlight the need to more carefully consider the powers of the governor and to increase attention to public opinion at the state level. Research on governors has devoted considerable attention to the powers that governors derive from the formal powers of their office (i.e. vetoing legislation) as well as informal powers (bargaining skill) (Bernick 1979). Based on the findings from this project, it appears that the bully pulpit serves as an additional key power for governors. By using formal public platforms like the State of the State address

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as well as less formal speaking engagements, governors can regularly address the public and in some cases, influence public sentiment and the political process.[39]

Second, the findings from this dissertation illustrate that public opinion can play an important role in the policy process at the state level and therefore needs to be more thoroughly incorporated into the state politics literature. Looking at the state politics literature, it quickly becomes clear that even as many policy issues that the general public cares about are decided at the state level, little research has been conducted on what the public thinks about state-centric policies and how their attitudes impact political behavior at the mass and elite levels. Partially driven by prior limitations on state-level public opinion data, my dissertation, along with the growing research on MRP, illustrates that the time is ripe for more complex studies of public opinion in states (Enns and Koch 2013; Pacheco 2012; Lax and Phillips 2012; Pacheco 2011; Lax and Phillips 2009; Shor 2015).

In addition to highlighting needed changes at the state level, this dissertation also provides important lessons to scholars interested in elite influence more broadly. For scholars of political behavior, this dissertation should demonstrate that when conducting research on elite influence over the mass public, it is important to look beyond the political actors most often associated with existing research like the president and members of congress. With this project demonstrating that political actors at lower levels of government can wield influence over the public, it should open up new avenues for

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[39] It is important to note that the bully pulpit defies categorization as a formal or an informal power. Governors giving State of the State addresses are likely carrying out a formal power afforded to them by their position but other addresses outside this context are more informal.

opinion-based and experimental research on elite influence. In addition, for scholars of elite influence in general, and the bully pulpit in particular, this research should highlight the utility of state level analysis as a strategy for overcoming the limits of existing empirical research. Using the unique variation provided by the states, the analysis here was able to confirm past findings related to conditionality (i.e. related to the importance of executive popularity) while simultaneously extending the theory of conditional influence to come to new conclusions – for example to show that the role of the media is surprisingly limited. Importantly, while the analysis here focuses on the direct comparison of national level studies of the bully pulpit with its influence at the state level, the shift to the states need not be limited to the study of the bully pulpit. With countless studies of the presidency and elite influence running into the fundamental structural issues highlighted here, a shift to the state level could propel research agendas forward in areas like executive orders, executive interactions with the judiciary, the influence of elite personality and character on politics, and veto use (Chiou and Rothenberg 2013; Howell 2003; Greenstein 1969; Barber 1992; Cameron 2000).

Lastly, the findings here present an important new lesson for our understanding of democratic theory. Traditionally, politicians in a democratic society are understood to serve as representatives of the public will, following the trustee or delegate model of representation as they pursue the 'will of the people.' As I noted in Chapter 1 however, the literature on the bully pulpit has presented the president as behaving in a way that fundamentally defies that traditional understanding. Specifically, it presents presidents as shapers of the public will instead of mere representatives of it. In this dissertation

however, I have shown that the exclusive focus on the president in the study of the bully pulpit has been misguided. With this project clearly illustrating rhetorical influence by governors and arguing that similar influence may extend to other actors in the political system, my dissertation suggests that the caveat to democratic theory presented by existing studies of the bully pulpit does not go far enough. If both presidents and governors can successfully use the bully pulpit to alter the policy process and other actors are known to use rhetoric as well, it would appear that in the modern political landscape few, if any, politicians are satisfied with serving the public will. Instead, politicians at all levels of government attempt to shape public sentiment before following it, fundamentally altering our understanding of political representation in a democratic society.

Limitations of Dissertation

Even as this dissertation has presented important new information about how elite actors influence the political process through their rhetoric, it is important to acknowledge several limitations to this project. Some of these limitations are minor and are limited to a given empirical analysis while others are much larger issues. The first issue with this project is that by focusing on a limited number of political issues – gay rights, immigration and health reform in Chapter 3 and then just health reform in Chapters 4 and 5 – it is unclear how far the results presented here will generalize. While each of the political issues selected for analysis in Chapter 3 was chosen because of its importance to modern policy debates, it could rightly be argued that all of the issues

under analysis are prominent public policies and that other factors might drive bully

pulpit use on less prominent topics. For example, while partisanship matters across all of

the prominent political issues under analysis in that chapter, partisanship seems less

likely to drive rhetoric on topics like transportation, infrastructure, or agriculture. This

issue is even more pronounced in Chapters 4 and 5 where the analysis was limited to just

one key issue. The choice to focus on the ACA was made for several justifiable reasons:

it has been the most important policy of the past decade, it is a conservative test case for

influence, and the data available easily surpasses the quality of data available for all other

issues. With that said, it is necessary to be cautious about the generalizability of my

findings because the public and the legislature could react differently to different policy

issues.

Another limitation to this research has been its emphasis on only State of the State

addresses. Focusing my analysis on prominent public addresses is consistent with the

existing literature at the state and national levels on rhetoric, but by doing so, the

implications of my findings are inherently limited to these major addresses. If we were to

expect the public and the legislature to react similarly to major and minor addresses this

would not be a significant issue but there is little reason to expect that to be the case.

When a governor gives a major public address like the State of the State, the legislature is

inherently paying attention (especially with most governors giving theirs directly to the

legislative body) and the public is likely to be exposed through TV airings and

subsequent media coverage. When a governor gives a minor address on the other hand,

the legislature is less likely to be paying attention to what the governor has to say and the

public audience is far more limited. Of course, my choice to emphasize major as opposed to minor gubernatorial addresses was not arbitrary. In fact, while further studies of the bully pulpit focusing on these minor addresses would be valuable, conducting the relevant empirical analyses would be difficult, if not impossible. Collecting every single minor address for every single governor for one year, let alone several years would be a herculean coding task. Even if it could be accomplished, methods would need to be developed to look at sub-state changes in public opinion, with only those individuals in attendance at a given minor address likely to be influenced by its content.

The next issue that needs to be accounted for before concluding is what at first might appear to be a disconnect between the findings in Chapters 4 and 5. In Chapter 4, I find that conditionality is particularly important when looking at policy support but not salience but conversely, in Chapter 5 and Appendix C I demonstrate that legislators are paying slightly more attention to salience than support. While I do acknowledge that these divergent findings are puzzling, I have some thoughts as to why this may have occurred. First, whereas in Chapter 4 I focus on salience/support at a given point in time while controlling for the same measure before the governor speaks out, in Chapter 5 I explicitly model the change from T1 to T2. Second, in Chapter 4 the way the analysis is constructed I only can determine whether or not opinion change is coming from the governor's speech. In Chapter 5 however, I'm simply looking at whether the combination of changes in salience/support and a governor's public address works together to alter legislative behavior. It is not possible to determine whether said change in salience is caused by the governor's statement; but at a minimum, from Chapter 5 I can say that

regardless of the source of the opinion change, legislators see gubernatorial rhetoric and subsequent salience change as a signal to increase legislative output.

Lastly, one additional issue specific to Chapter 5's analysis of the legislative process is worth note. In particular, it is important to note that all ACA legislation was treated equally in the study. Regardless of the seniority of the legislator introducing the legislation, number of co-sponsors the bill had, or the outrageous or inflammatory nature of the bill, each bill introduced was treated equally here. You could imagine that strong co-partisans of the governor might be especially predisposed to introduce supportive legislation even if it has no hopes of passing. Alternatively, other legislators who opposed the governor could introduce inflammatory legislation out of spite, a possibility that is not accounted for in my analysis that matches pro-ACA rhetoric with pro-ACA legislation and anti-ACA rhetoric with anti-ACA legislation.

Avenues for Future Research

Despite these limitations, this dissertation presents the most comprehensive look at the influence of the bully pulpit on American society to date and provides several potentially fruitful venues for future research. These ideas for potential extensions perhaps unsurprisingly, are connected to the limits of the analysis here, and could propel a second generation of research on rhetoric and its influence. The most obvious direction for future research on the bully pulpit is to expand the study of the research questions under investigation here to other policy issues. When analyzing why governors go public on the topics that they do, future work can move beyond the largely transitory topics

emphasized here to more cyclical or even perennial policy issues. When analyzing the influence of the bully pulpit over the public and the legislature, future work should expand beyond the ACA. In many ways the ACA is an exceptional case – it was the primary policy accomplishment of Obama's first term and still generates heated partisan debate. More research is needed to see if other policy issues with gradations in policy polarization come to the same conclusions about the bully pulpit's effectiveness.

In addition, more research is also needed to explore additional aspects of conditionality. This dissertation has provided the most extensive look at conditionality to date but it is worth noting that the analysis here merely scratches the surface. In other words, the analysis here was fundamentally limited to the conditioning factors that were most theoretically compelling for this study and additional research can explore the complexities of variation in political culture, institutional features like variations in political ideology, and structural differences in the formal powers of governors. By building on my research and exploring these additional factors, political scientists will continue to push towards a more holistic understanding of the boundary conditions of elite influence.

Future research could also extend and enhance our understanding of the governor's bully pulpit by determining which types of legislators are likely to be persuaded by the governor's pulpit and the types of bills that 'going public' produces. If future work can move beyond the granular sort of legislative analysis conducted here to more detailed studies of unique features of legislators and the bills they produce it could greatly expand our understanding. For example related to the ACA, were Tea Party

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legislators more likely to introduce anti-ACA legislation in the wake of an anti-ACA address? More broadly, does gubernatorial rhetoric and subsequent opinion change increase the number of co-sponsors on individual bills? Answering these questions will go a long way towards understanding the impact of rhetoric on individual legislators.

Next, future research can advance our understanding of elite rhetoric by moving beyond the major and minor addresses traditionally associated with the bully pulpit to the modern forms of mass communication now being employed by politicians. By adding Facebook messages and tweets from Twitter into a more modern conceptualization of the bully pulpit, scholars will be able to account for the modern face of the bully pulpit that sees politicians communicating directly with their constituents on a daily or even hourly basis. Specifically, future work could track how the salience and support for key policies changes on a daily basis among a politician's constituents as they are exposed to tweets and messages from that leader lobbying on the topic.

Lastly, a more ambitious extension of this project would be to see how rhetoric influences the public and the legislature in real time. In other words, a scholar with enough resources could conduct a panel analysis in several states that looks at how public attitudes within states evolve from before a governor speaks on a policy, to immediately after a governor speaks, to a few months later. This sort of analysis would allow for the development of a complex understanding of how public attitudes evolve in relation to rhetoric and how long any bully pulpit effects last over time. This more complex opinion data could then be matched with legislative behavior throughout the legislative session to

develop a comprehensive and complex understanding of how the bully pulpit operates

and impacts the political process.

Wrapping it Up

This dissertation has attempted to answer an important question about how public

policy is made in the United States. For scholars who see the bully pulpit as a

fundamental exercise of political power with important implications for the political

process, my results should be seen as encouraging and potentially horizon-expanding.

When we expand our scope of analysis to other political actors who are known to use

public rhetoric, it appears that like the president, they can influence how the public thinks

and the legislature behaves. Critically, this dissertation should be seen as a call to arms by

these scholars to push out to boundaries beyond the presidency to take advantage of the

unique conditionality available when studying other political actors.

For other scholars who are less interested in the bully pulpit, this project still

presents findings that are worthy of note and which should be carefully considered

moving forward. For those who study democratic theory, the findings about the influence

of even sub-national elites on how the public formulates attitudes on key public policies

should push them to reconsider the role of politicians, and in particular, those who use

rhetoric as representatives. For those who study political behavior more broadly, the

findings here point to new avenues for opinion surveys and experimental analysis and

illustrate that when an individual forms a political judgment; there may be more

politicians in an individual's ear than previously realized. Finally for scholars interested

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in legislative behavior, this work should emphasize that the role of rhetoric which has been thoroughly incorporated into our understanding of how members of Congress behave, might need to be more carefully considered in state legislatures or other venues where policy decisions are made.

In the end, regardless of their area of focus, scholars from across political science need to recognize that in the course of their duties, the speeches that politicians give and the words that they choose can have far reaching consequences for individuals and policies that impact the lives of Americans.

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Appendix A: Generating Salience and Favorability Measures through MRP

Original ACA Favorability Question Wording from Kaiser
    As you may know, a health reform bill was signed into law in 2010. Given what you know about the health reform law, do you have a generally (favorable) or generally (unfavorable) opinion of it? (**GET ANSWER THEN ASK:** Is that a very [favorable/unfavorable] or somewhat [favorable/unfavorable] opinion?) (**ROTATE OPTIONS IN PARENTHESES)**
          1   Very favorable
          2   Somewhat favorable
          3   Somewhat unfavorable
          4   Very unfavorable
          9   (**DO NOT READ**) Don't know/Refused

All don't know/refused answers were coded as missing and then this four option ordinal response item was collapsed into a dummy for whether or not individuals held a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the ACA. This ordinal question was collapsed to allow for the MRP methodology which produced aggregate state level estimates of ACA favorability. Please note that an alternative specification where only those who were very favorable toward the ACA were coded as 1's was also tested but ultimately not used in the final analysis.

Original ACA Salience Question Wording from Gallup
What do you think is the most important problem facing this country today? **[OPEN-ENDED AND RECORD FULL VERBATIM RESPONSE. ALLOW UP TO 3 RESPONSES]**
Q4_1. First mention
Q4_2. Second mention
Q4_3. Third mention
1 Other
2 DK
3 REF
4 None
6 Economy (General)
7 Unemployment-Jobs
8 Federal Budget Deficit-Debt
9 Taxes
10 Foreign Trade-Trade Deficit
11 Cost of Living-Inflation
12 Recession
13 Other Economic
14 Crime-Violence
15 Health Care-Hospitals
16 Drugs

17 Poverty-Hunger-Homelessness
18 Ethical-Moral-Religious Decline
19 Access to Education
20 AIDS
21 Medicare Increases-Senior Citizen Insurance
22 International Problems-Foreign Affairs
23 Government-President-Congress-Politicians
24 Foreign Aid-Focus Overseas
25 Race Relations
26 Immigration-Illegal Aliens
27 Welfare
28 Environment-Pollution
29 Iraq-Saddam Hussein

30 Kosovo-Serbia-Yugoslavia-Milosevic
31 School Shootings
32 Gun Laws too Weak-Availability of Guns
33 Gun Control-Gun Laws Too Strong
34 Abortion Issues
35 Social Security Issues
36 Children's Needs
37 Lack of a Military/Defense
38 Fuel/Oil Prices
39 Dishonesty/Lack of Integrity
40 Judicial System/Courts/Laws
41 National Security
42 Gap Between the Rich and Poor
43 Care for the Elderly
44 Wage Issues
45 Fear of War
46 Breakdown of the Family
47 Cancer/Diseases
48 Child Abuse
49 Advancement of computers/technology
50 Lack of energy Sources
51 Gun control/Guns
52 Costs associated with health insurance
53 Overpopulation
54 Way children are raised
55 Presidential choices/election year
56 Lack of respect for each other
57 Poor leadership/corrupt
58 Abuse of power
59 Lack of money

60 Education
61 The media
62 Election/Election Reform
63 Unifying the Country
64 Situation with China
65 Energy crisis
66 Terrorism
67 Feeling of Fear in this Country
68 Corporate Corruption
69 Space Shuttle Disaster
70 Iraq
71 Gay marriage/Homosexual rights
72 Licenses for the Undocumented
73 Natural disaster response
74 Situation with Korea
75 War-Conflict in the Middle East
76 Situation in Afghanistan
96 No other mention

For this dependent variable, if an individual listed healthcare/hospitals, Medicare increases/senior citizen insurance, or the costs associated with health insurance as one of the three issues they believed to be important, they were coded as a 1. All other individuals in the dataset were coded as 0's

MRP Transformation
After generating the two dummy variables, they were transformed into the dependent variables using MRP. MRP was performed following the methodology employed in Lax and Phillips (2009) which is described in detail and for which R scripts are provided on the website of Jonathan Kastellec.
http://www.princeton.edu/~jkastell/mrp_primer.html

First, all individual level datasets were transformed to comply with the coding scheme below:

Gender
Male = 0
Female = 1

Age
18-29 = 1
30-44 = 2
45-64 =3
65+ = 4

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Education
1 = Less than HS
2 = HS Grad
3 = Some College
4 = College Grad

Race
1= Hispanic
2 = White
3 = Black

Region (Based on Census Categorizations)
1 = Northeast
2 = Midwest
3 = South
4 = West

After relevant variable transformations, MRP was performed using age, race, gender, level of education, census region and state to model each individual's response.

State effects were modeled as a function of census region (following the coding above) as well as state-level approval for president Obama in 2011 which was obtained from Gallup:
http://www.gallup.com/poll/146294/hawaii-approving-obama-states-decline.aspx

After relevant estimation, post-stratification was performed using the 2010 Census. Relevant demographic-geographic population frequencies were obtained from the Census DataFerrett. For example, for each state I found the population frequencies for individuals between the ages of 18-29 who were female, black, college graduates. This demographic-geographic population breakdown resulted in 6,401 unique population entries.

Ultimately, this MRP transformation produced unique aggregated public opinion estimates of ACA favorability and ACA salience in each state in the month in which the poll was conducted. This variable transformation and MRP analysis was replicated for each unique monthly dataset used in this paper.

Table AB1. Indicators of Gubernatorial Rhetoric on Gay Rights Incl. Opinion 2014

VARIABLES	(Model 1) Gay Rights Speech	(Model 2) Pro-Gay Rights Speech	(Model 3) Gay Rights Word Percentage
Republican Governor	-1.66 (1.419)		-0.13 (0.426)
Republican Legislature	-0.79 (1.707)	-4.03 (2.580)	0.26 (0.498)
Governor Approval	0.13* (0.070)	0.08 (0.089)	0.03* (0.014)
State Affluence	-0.00005 (0.00009)	0.00009 (0.0001)	-0.00004 (0.00003)
Female Governor			-0.57 (0.453)
Percent White	0.03 (0.033)	0.03 (0.046)	0.00 (0.009)
Percent Unemployment	0.46 (0.561)	0.67 (0.784)	0.00 (0.142)
Same Sex Opinion	0.08 (0.075)	0.04 (0.094)	0.02 (0.022)
Constant	-13.39 (9.267)	-17.52 (12.493)	-0.62 (2.059)
Observations	36	36	36
R-squared	0.268	0.401	0.196

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Analysis limited to 2014 because that is the only year for which public opinion data is available. Female Governor excluded from Models 1 and 2 because it predicts failure perfectly. Republican Governor excluded from Model 2 because it predicts failure perfectly. Anti-Gay Rights speeches also tested as DV but excluded because of a lack of anti-gay rights speeches. Models 1 and 3 insignificant.

Table AB2. Indicators of Gubernatorial Rhetoric on Immigration Incl. Opinion 2014

VARIABLES	(Model 4) Immigration Related Speech	(Model 5) Pro-Immig. Speech	(Model 6) Immigration Word Percent
Republican Governor	0.18		0.22
	(1.989)		(0.358)
Republican Legislature	-0.12	2.05	-0.10
	(2.179)	(8.391)	(0.379)
Percent Hispanic	-0.06	-1.16	0.01
	(0.103)	(1.041)	(0.018)
Governor Approval	0.03	-0.04	0.004
	(0.067)	(0.246)	(0.011)
State Affluence	-0.0001	0.00004	-0.00002
	(0.0001)	(0.0003)	(0.00002)
Female Governor	2.35		0.35
	(1.803)		(0.359)
Percent White	-0.01	-0.01	0.002
	(0.049)	(0.094)	(0.009)
Percent Unemployment	0.96	4.99	0.15
	(0.812)	(5.104)	(0.122)
Immigration Opinion	0.24	1.57	0.02
	(0.239)	(1.756)	(0.028)
Constant	-16.83	-111.43	-1.48
	(15.542)	(124.309)	(2.186)
Observations	36	37	36
R-squared	.267	.507	0.225

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Note: Analysis limited to 2014 because that is the only year for which public opinion data is available. Female Governor excluded from Model 5 because it predicts failure perfectly. Republican Governor excluded from Model 5 because it was needed to allow for convergence. Anti-immigrant speeches also tested as DV but excluded due to the limited number of such speeches in 2014. All models are insignificant.

Table AC1. Bills Introduced with Speeches that are ACA-Related

VARIABLES	(Model 1) Total Bills Introduced	(Model 2) Bills Introduced Unified Government	(Model 3) Bills Introduced Divided Government
ACA-Speech*Support	-0.03	0.004	-0.16***
	(0.022)	(0.027)	(0.041)
ACA-Related Speech	-0.18	-0.14	-0.74***
	(0.132)	(0.161)	(0.215)
Support Change	-0.01	-0.04**	0.06**
	(0.017)	(0.020)	(0.030)
Republican Governor	-0.36**		
	(0.144)		
Republican Leg.	-0.34**		
	(0.158)		
Percent Uninsured	0.03**	0.03*	-0.07**
	(0.014)	(0.016)	(0.032)
Affluence	0.00001	0.00003***	-0.00002
	(0.00001)	(0.00001)	(0.00002)
Governor Approval	-0.01**	-0.02***	0.02
	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.011)
Leg. Professionalism	0.51	-0.55	1.67**
	(0.508)	(0.612)	(0.741)
Constant	2.62***	1.86**	4.57***
	(0.682)	(0.798)	(1.254)
lnalpha	-0.93***	-0.80***	-1.46***
	(0.140)	(0.156)	(0.310)
Observations	169	125	47
Pseudo R-Squared	0.054	0.045	0.084
Log Likelihood	-571.279	-425.100	-153.52

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Models include dummies for 2011, 2012, and 2013 as well as the count of the bills introduced before the governor's speech but those variables have been deleted from this table for ease of reading the table.

Table AC2. Bills Introduced with Speeches that are Pro-ACA

VARIABLES	(Model 4) Pro-ACA Bills Introduced	(Model 5) Pro-Bills Introduced Unified Government	(Model 6) Pro-Bills Introduced Divided Government
Pro-Speech*Support	-0.02	-0.08	-0.05
	(0.038)	(0.064)	(0.053)
Pro-ACA Speech	-0.56**	-0.85**	-0.65**
	(0.249)	(0.418)	(0.298)
Support Change	-0.03	-0.05**	0.01
	(0.019)	(0.023)	(0.031)
Republican Governor	-0.27		
	(0.201)		
Republican Leg.	-0.65***		
	(0.199)		
Percent Uninsured	0.05**	0.03	0.01
	(0.018)	(0.020)	(0.046)
Affluence	0.00003**	0.00006***	0.00003
	(0.00001)	(0.00002)	(0.00003)
Governor Approval	-0.01	-0.02*	0.01
	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.015)
Leg. Professionalism	1.56**	0.59	2.23**
	(0.665)	(0.768)	(1.122)
Constant	-0.49	-1.26	-0.74
	(0.869)	(1.042)	(1.669)
lnalpha	-0.73***	-0.59***	-1.04**
	(0.193)	(0.212)	(0.410)
Observations	169	125	47
Pseudo R-Squared	0.085	0.086	0.055
Log Likelihood	-377.013	-272.846	-111.939

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Models include dummies for 2011, 2012, and 2013 as well as the count of the bills introduced before the governor's speech but those variables have been deleted from this table for ease of reading the table. Model 6 has insignificant F-test.

Table AC3. Bills Introduced with Speeches that are Anti-ACA

VARIABLES	(Model 7) Anti-ACA Bills Introduced	(Model 8) Anti-Bills Introduced Unified Government	(Model 9) Anti-Bills Introduced Divided Government
Anti-Speech*Support	-0.01	-0.01	-0.03
	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.074)
Anti-ACA Speech	0.14	0.08	-0.54
	(0.227)	(0.227)	(0.433)
Support Change	-0.002	-0.01	0.05
	(0.021)	(0.023)	(0.039)
Republican Governor	-0.48**		
	(0.214)		
Republican Leg.	0.67***		
	(0.232)		
Percent Uninsured	0.04*	0.07***	-0.05
	(0.024)	(0.026)	(0.055)
Affluence	-0.00005***	-0.00008***	-0.00002
	(0.00002)	(0.00002)	(0.00003)
Governor Approval	-0.02**	-0.01*	-0.02
	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.017)
Leg. Professionalism	-0.70	-0.75	-0.60
	(0.802)	(0.817)	(1.558)
Constant	3.23***	4.13***	3.63*
	(1.024)	(1.102)	(2.137)
lnalpha	-0.80***	-1.13***	-1.02*
	(0.260)	(0.344)	(0.611)
Observations	169	125	47
Pseudo R-Squared	0.086	0.131	0.086
Log Likelihood	-311.482	-219.455	-84.501

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10
Note: Models include dummies for 2011, 2012, and 2013 as well as the count of the bills introduced before the governor's speech but those variables have been deleted from this table for ease of reading the table. Model 9 has insignificant F-test.

Table AC4. Bills Introduced with Speeches that are Anti-ACA, Compact Bills as DV

VARIABLES	(Model 10) Compact Bills Introduced	(Model 11) Compact bills Introduced Unified Government
Anti-Speech*Support	-0.02	-0.07
	(0.072)	(0.077)
Anti-ACA Speech	-0.27	-0.34
	(0.486)	(0.538)
Support Change	-0.02	0.03
	(0.055)	(0.056)
Republican Governor	-0.11	
	(0.518)	
Republican Leg.	2.73***	
	(0.828)	
Percent Uninsured	0.05	0.09
	(0.054)	(0.059)
Affluence	-0.00004	-0.001**
	(0.00005)	(0.00005)
Governor Approval	-0.002	0.001
	(0.017)	(0.018)
Leg. Professionalism	-1.51	-1.46
	(2.055)	(2.176)
Constant	-2.99	2.13
	(2.790)	(2.901)
lnalpha	-0.23	-0.03
	(0.703)	(0.726)
Observations	169	125
Pseudo R-Squared	0.175	0.133
Log Likelihood	-89.105	-74.739

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Unlike equivalent models in chapter 5, these models analyzed using negative binomial regression based on over-dispersion. Models include dummies for 2011, 2012, and 2013 as well as the count of the bills introduced before the governor's speech but those variables have been deleted from this table for ease of reading the table.

Table AC5. Bills Passed with Speeches that are ACA-Related

VARIABLES	(Model 12) Total Bills Passed	(Model 13) Bills Passed Unified Government	(Model 14) Bills Passed Divided Government
ACA-Speech*Support	-0.02	0.02	-0.12*
	(0.029)	(0.035)	(0.063)
ACA-Related Speech	-0.06	-0.09	0.46
	(0.170)	(0.211)	(0.316)
Support Change	-0.005	-0.02	0.01
	(0.022)	(0.026)	(0.048)
Republican Governor	-0.59***		
	(0.202)		
Republican Leg.	-0.23		
	(0.223)		
Percent Uninsured	0.07***	0.07***	-0.06
	(0.020)	(0.023)	(0.056)
Affluence	0.00002	0.00005***	-0.00004
	(0.00001)	(0.00002)	(0.00003)
Governor Approval	0.01	0.0005	0.01
	(0.006)	(0.008)	(0.015)
Leg. Professionalism	0.80	-0.09	1.21
	(0.655)	(0.804)	(1.100)
Constant	-0.51	-2.16**	3.23
	(0.912)	(1.066)	(2.169)
lnalpha	-0.78***	-0.56***	-1.30***
	(0.199)	(0.206)	(0.505)
Observations	169	125	47
Pseudo R-Squared	0.055	0.039	0.110
Log Likelihood	-359.505	-275.329	-88.286

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Models include dummies for 2011, 2012, and 2013 as well as the count of the bills passed before the governor's speech but those variables have been deleted from this table for ease of reading the table.

Table AC6. Bills Passed with Speeches that are Pro-ACA

VARIABLES	(Model 15) Pro-ACA Bills Introduced	(Model 16) Pro-Bills Introduced Unified Government	(Model 17) Pro-Bills Introduced Divided Government
Pro-Speech*Support	-0.01	-0.07	0.02
	(0.050)	(0.092)	(0.064)
Pro-ACA Speech	-0.23	-0.05	1.01**
	(0.356)	(0.606)	(0.412)
Support Change	0.001	-0.01	-0.01
	(0.030)	(0.038)	(0.045)
Republican Governor	-1.00***		
	(0.337)		
Republican Leg.	-0.75**		
	(0.345)		
Percent Uninsured	0.05*	0.04	0.05
	(0.031)	(0.036)	(0.068)
Affluence	0.00002	0.0001***	0.000008
	(0.00002)	(0.00003)	(0.00004)
Governor Approval	0.01	-0.003	0.01
	(0.011)	(0.013)	(0.019)
Leg. Professionalism	1.46	0.57	-2.38
	(1.132)	(1.312)	(2.143)
Constant	-2.28	-5.69***	-1.36
	(1.443)	(1.826)	(2.456)
lnalpha	-0.25	0.18	
	(0.293)	(0.277)	
Observations	169	125	47
Pseudo R-Squared	0.118	0.083	0.176
Log Likelihood	-201.619	-155.018	-54.749

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Models include dummies for 2011, 2012, and 2013 as well as the count of the bills passed before the governor's speech but those variables have been deleted from this table for ease of reading the table. Models 15 and 16 are negative binomial, Model 17 is poisson.

Table AC7. Bills Passed with Speeches that are Anti-ACA

VARIABLES	(Model 18) Anti-ACA Bills Passed	(Model 19) Anti-Bills Passed Unified Government	(Model 20) Anti-Bills Passed Divided Government
Anti-Speech*Support	0.04	0.01	5.29
	(0.058)	(0.059)	(1,180.147)
Anti-ACA Speech	0.40	0.80**	-11.12
	(0.398)	(0.402)	(3,039.210)
Support Change	-0.04	0.01	0.05
	(0.052)	(0.052)	(0.148)
Republican Governor	-0.16		
	(0.494)		
Republican Leg.	4.23***		
	(1.283)		
Percent Uninsured	0.06	0.09	-0.33
	(0.054)	(0.054)	(0.294)
Affluence	-0.00005	-0.00008**	-0.0003
	(0.00004)	(0.00003)	(0.0002)
Governor Approval	0.03*	0.02	0.13
	(0.014)	(0.015)	(0.083)
Leg. Professionalism	-2.54	-2.61	-2.63
	(2.138)	(2.170)	(8.675)
Constant	-4.95*	-0.14	-34.86
	(2.538)	(2.203)	(8,519.111)
Observations	169	125	47
Pseudo R-Squared	0.367	0.267	0.381
Log Likelihood	-71.145	-67.224	-11.785

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.10

Note: Models include dummies for 2011, 2012, and 2013 as well as the count of the bills introduced before the governor's speech but those variables have been deleted from this table for ease of reading the table. Model 20 has an insignificant F-Test. All models are Poisson models.