

## Presidency and Political Parties

- Nominations and elections
- Symbolic leader of party
- Control over national party organization
- Partisan support in Congress
- Partisan appointments to executive and judicial branches

## President as Symbolic Party Leader

Republican party = President George W. Bush

<http://www.rnc.org>

<http://www.dnc.org>

## President as Symbolic Party Leader

- Platform and webpage contain president's positions
- Public identify president's issues as party's issues
- Executive-centered party versus headless opposition party

## Presidential Control Over National Party Organization

- Past - connections to states
- Today - build support for president's programs
- Problems
  - divided duties of party leaders
  - make president's policies too partisan

## President Selects Party Chair

IN  
(Rep)

OUT  
(Dem)

Ken  
Mehlman

Howard  
Dean

Conflict with  
White House  
staff

## President Major Fund Raiser for Party

- Raises money for national party
- Attends fundraisers for party's candidates

Bush at May 2004 GOP  
fund raiser = \$38.5 million

## Presidents, Congress & Parties

- Divided versus unified government
- Unified
  - innovative policy
    - Roosevelt New Deal
    - Johnson Medicare

## Presidents, Congress & Parties

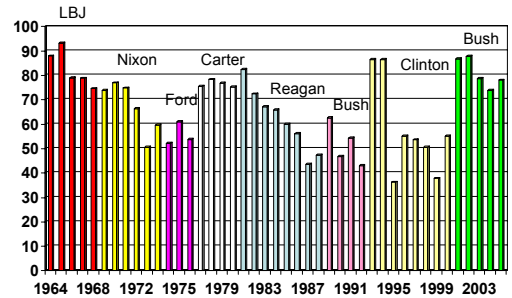
- Divided government
  - stalemate
    - December 1995, January 1996 government shutdown
  - compromise policy

## Presidents Attempt to Set Congressional Agenda

- Speeches
- Bills and budget
  - OMB vs. Congressional Budget Office

George W. Bush  
State of the Union  
January 2001

## Presidential Success in Congress

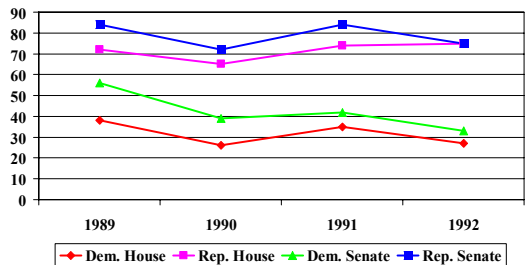


Source: Congressional Quarterly Weekly Reports

## Presidential Success Rate in Congress

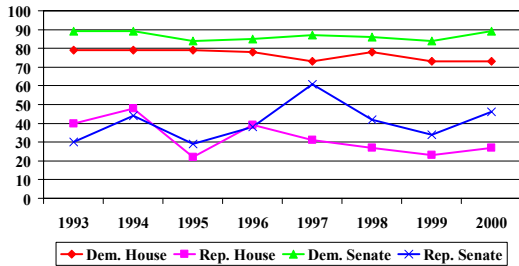
- Partisanship
  - 2/3rds from own party
  - 1/2 or less from opposition party
- Bipartisanship
  - more on foreign than domestic

## Success Rate for George Bush (1989-1992)



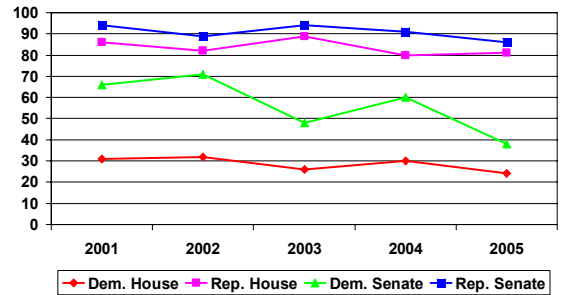
Source: Congressional Quarterly Weekly Reports

## Success Rate for Bill Clinton



Source: Congressional Quarterly Weekly Reports

## Success Rate for George H.W. Bush

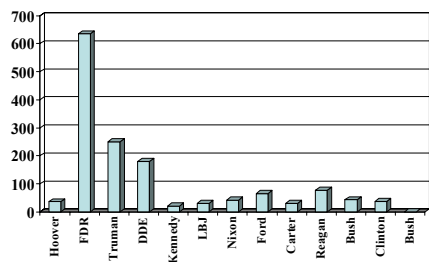


Congressional Quarterly Weekly Reports

## Presidential Vetoes

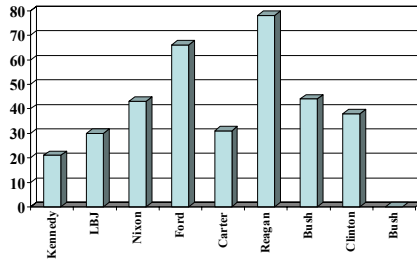
- Regular veto (1,484 - 58%, 1789 to 2001)
  - 10 days to sign, ignore, or return to Congress
  - Weakness or strength?
  - Veto override - 2/3rd vote in both House and Senate (106 total - 7%)
- Pocket veto (1,066 - 42%)
  - Congress adjourns during 10 day period
  - Unsigned bills automatically vetoed

## Number of Presidential Vetoes



Source: Clerk of the House of Representatives

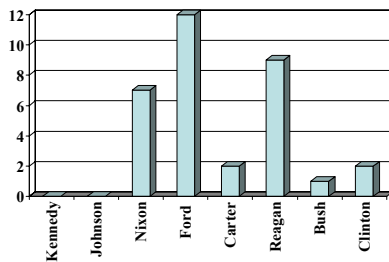
## Number of Presidential Vetoes Since 1960



## Presidential Vetoes

- Number of vetoes unrelated to party size in Congress
- Number of veto overrides is related to party size in Congress

## Number of Vetoes Overridden



106 out of 1484 vetoes overridden = 7%

## Reasons for Presidential Influence on Own Party Members in Congress

- Policy agreement
- Successful president helps party
- Small favors
  - fundraisers
  - photo ops

### Reasons for Less Presidential Influence on Own Party Members in Congress

- No sanctions
- Little personal contact between president and rank-and-file members
- Different constituencies
  - national
  - district/state

### Partisan Appointments

- Presidents appoint less than 10% of executive branch
- Presidents appoint
  - Heads of Department/Cabinet
  - Executive Office of the President
  - About 3,500 people
- 2/3rds along party lines

### Appointment Not Equal Loyalty

- Other reasons for appointment
- Staggered terms of boards
  - Federal Reserve Board
- Some boards require bipartisan members
  - Federal Election Commission, 1/2 from each
- Appointees “captured” by agency