

# Presidential Pork: White House Influence over the Distribution of Federal Grants

John Hudak



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Presidential earmarks? Perhaps even more so than their counterparts in Congress, presidents have the motive
and the means to politicize spending for political power. But do they? In *Presidential Pork*, John Hudak
explains and interprets presidential efforts to control federal spending and accumulate electoral rewards from
that power. The projects that members of Congress secure for their constituents certainly attract attention.
Political pundits still chuckle about the "Bridge to Nowhere." But Hudak clearly illustrates that while
Congress claims credit for earmarks and pet projects, the practice is alive and well in the White House, too.
More than any representative or senator, presidents engage in pork barrel spending in a comprehensive and
systematic way to advance their electoral interests. It will come as no surprise that the White House often
steers the enormous federal bureaucracy to spend funds in swing states. It is a major advantage that only
incumbents enjoy. Hudak reconceptualizes the way in which we view the U.S. presidency and the goals and
behaviors of those who hold the nation's highest office. He illustrates that presidents and their White Houses
are indeed complicit in distributing presidential pork—and how they do it. The result is an illuminating and
highly original take on presidential power and public policy.



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