

**Poverty Reduction, Realpolitik, or Both?
Federal Faith-Based and Community Initiative Funding and the States, 2002-2006***

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We were good people forced to run a sad charade, to provide political cover to a White House that needed compassion and religion as political tools (Kuo 2006, 242).

Entering the White House in 2001 President George W. Bush issued a set of executive orders. The earliest created the Faith-Based and Community Initiative (FBCI) through the establishment of offices in the White House and a set of federal agencies (Gilman 2007; Roberts-DeGennaro 2007). Since then the Bush administration has used its influence over executive agencies and bureaucratic rule regimes to incorporate the FBCI into “virtually every Federal effort to address human need” (White House 2008). A dominant idea behind the FBCI, as political scientist Stephen Monsma (1996, 190) would agree, is to create “new opportunities to privatize the delivery of public services, thereby increasing competition in the delivery of those services and, many are convinced, saving money and improving efficiency.” Expanding opportunities for faith-based organizations (FBOs) to compete for federal funding is a key aspect of the FBCI. That is, distributive policymaking – policy decisions “characterized by the ease with which they can be disaggregated and dispensed by small unit more or less in isolation from other units and from any general rule” – is an element of the FBCI (Lowi 1964, 690). Its opportunity-expansion has permitted an array of FBOs, especially large faith-related agencies like Catholic Charities and Lutheran Family Services, but also congregations, to share in the award of federal FBCI funds among the states (Montiel and Wright 2006). However, the distribution of funds to groups across the states has not been equal, nor should it be.

Bureaucracies implementing the FBCI such as Health and Human Services and Housing and Urban Development exercise discretion in awarding grants. This is a reality of bureaucracies and intergovernmental grant-making (Rich 1989; Wood and Waterman 1991). Many of the grants they administer are discretionary project grants. They are intended to achieve purposes defined by legislators and interpreted by regulators (Arnold 1979; Anton et al. 1980; Stein 1981; Gamkhar 2002). Such grants are allocated based on bureaucratic reviews of formal submissions of proposals that meet objective criteria, and the awards themselves are comprised of “relatively small awards that can be narrowly targeted to specific interests” (Lowry and Potoski 2004; Gamkhar 2002). Additionally, project grants, unlike formula grants, are not necessarily intended for “grand or programmatic redistribution” related to fostering equality among locales or actors in them (Dixit and Londregan 1996, 1132). This is true even if project grants are awarded to “encourage innovation or to target benefits according to extreme need or distress” (Arnold 1981, 109). Furthermore, inequality is inherent in the allocation of project grants. All may make claims on grants but, as Arnold (1981, 109) reminds us, not “all claimants deserve a share of benefits. The concentration of benefits in some areas and the denial of shares for other areas is perfectly legitimate.” Consequently, FBCI grants, either in number or value, are not distributed equally among the states. The variation in FBCI funding that result from the discretionary grant-making process is our specific interest in this paper.

We attempt, within data constraints, to explain the geographic coverage and concentration of federal FBCI grants across the nation. We examine discretionary grant-making by agencies central to the federal FBCI. Our central questions are conventional: All else being equal, do some states get more FBCI funding than other states and, if so, what explains the variation. Guided by the theoretical and empirical literature on distributive politics we theorize that dimensions of demand (e.g., poverty) and supply (especially, partisanship and electioneering) affect the distribution of federal FBCI grants awarded to FBOs across the states between 2002 and 2006.¹ Testing plausible hypotheses derived from the distributive politics and interest group literatures, we specify a set of models that predict the distribution of the annual number of FBCI grants and dollar amount of FBCI grants awarded to

¹ In this paper we do not address the distribution of the total amount of discretionary FBCI that includes secular organizations and municipalities as recipients. Our focus is on faith-based organizations.

FBOs annually. The models control for the institutional environment of states with regard to the FBCI. In particular, we hold constant the effects of state-based efforts to support and extend the FBCI via the creation of state-level offices of FBCI, the appointment of state-level FBCI liaisons, and passage of “faith-friendly” legislation and regulations.

Our tentative findings suggest that both demand-based and supply-oriented factors influence the allocation of FBCI grants. They support and contradict results from the contemporary distributive politics literature. They also extend the work of scholars studying the FBCI, especially those interested in the catalysts and consequences of public funding of faith-based organizations, particularly in terms of electoral, legislative, interest group, and constitutional politics at the national and subnational levels (DiIulio 2007; Owens 2007; Owens & Smith 2005; Formicola et al. 2003; Black et al. 2004; Davis & Hankins 1999; Harris 2001 & 2005; Chaves et al. 2004; Ebaugh, Chafetz, and Pipes 2005; Chaves 1998; Wuthnow 2004; Lupu & Tuttle 2002).

Two Perspectives on the Faith-Based and Community Initiative

There is much God talk in government circles at the start of the 21st century (Owens 2007; DiIulio 2007). In the Washington D.C. and the capitals of the states, policymakers are talking about Jesus and the poor, the Samaritan and Caesar (see Figure 1). The content of the rhetoric includes: A belief that faith matters and it inherently “works” for the poor in terms of fostering self-sufficiency and good life choices; an idea to integrate religious institutions into social welfare policy as agents of the state; wishes to remove barriers to public funding of religious congregations and faith-related agencies; encouragement of religious hiring discrimination by congregations and faith-related agencies, but not religious discrimination of consumers; and rhetoric about funding religious organizations (congregations and otherwise) to deliver social welfare directly via government contracts and grants and indirectly through private contributions and public-funded vouchers (Owens 2004). In the last decade, government officials and political candidates have spoken often and long about these topics, underscoring the potential value religious organizations bring to public-funded social welfare initiatives and the need to elevate the position of churches and faith-related agencies above secular organizations as partners of government in the delivery of social welfare and community development services in poor neighborhoods (Cisneros 1996; Bush 2001; Bush 2003; Gore 2001; Bush 2003; Goldsmith 2000; Ashcroft 2003). The FBCI attempts to “walk the talk.”

The FBCI, according to the Bush administration, “help[s] the Federal Government coordinate a national effort to expand opportunities for faith-based and other community organizations and to strengthen their capacity to better meet social needs in America's communities” (White House, 2001). The coordination takes place by the federal FBCI inducing public-private partnerships, especially church-state collaboration, to foster self-sufficiency among low-income citizens. Although the federal FBCI does not rely solely on money, the award of federal grants and contracts to sectarian institutions, faith-related agencies, and secular organizations (nonprofit and for-profit) to provide social services is a central element of the federal initiative. Funds for grants and contracts to implement the FBCI come from a range of project and formula-based funding programs. The programs are intended to promote work (job preparation, employment training, and vocational education), nutrition (emergency food distribution and subsidized meals), healthy living (drug and alcohol treatment), and human care (adoptions, foster care, orphanages) among the needy, especially working-age, non-disabled, heads of poor households and their children.

Much of the policy foundation for the FBCI rests on a provision in the federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 that encouraged state governments to involve organizations from the faith sector in the administration of public programs for the poor. Section 104 of the law permits – but it does not require – federal agencies and subnational governments to use federal funds to partner with *sectarian institutions* whose primary purposes are

worship and evangelism (i.e., churches, mosques, and temples, etc.) and faith-related agencies (i.e., organizations with “a formal funding or administrative arrangement with a religious authority or authorities; a historical tie of this kind; a specific commitment to act within the dictates of a particular established faith; or a commitment to work together that stems from a common religion”) such as Catholic Charities, Lutheran Family Services, the Salvation Army, and Jewish Family Services to deliver welfare and related services to the poor (Smith and Sossin 2001, 652).

Generally, government encouragement of church-state partnerships has increased the number of public contracts and grants to FBOS. The strongest indication of how bullish policymakers are on “faith-friendly” enterprises is fiscal, and it comes mainly from the federal government.² In 2005, for instance, federal agencies allocated a minimum of \$2.2 billion in funds to faith-based organizations (White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives 2006).³ This was a seven percent increase from the \$1.3 billion the federal government distributed to faith-based organizations in 2004 (White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives 2005).

But what is the true nature of the FBCI and how does it affect the flow of FBCI funding? Does poverty trump politics in the award of federal FBCI grants? Does politics dictate the distribution of FBCI awards? Is it a combination of the two?

Poverty Reduction

Ostensibly, the award of federal funds to faith-based organizations, inclusive of sectarian institutions and faith-related agencies, via the FBCI is to reduce poverty. After all, “[t]he most fundamental basis of President Bush’s compassionate conservatism,” according to a close observer of Bush, “was that he, unlike other Republicans, recognized that government had a big role to play in helping social service groups (Kuo 2006, 241). This is evident in one of the first reports from the White House Office of FBCI:

Government has a solemn responsibility to help meet the needs of poor Americans and distressed neighborhoods, but it does not have a monopoly on compassion. . . . The American people support a vital role for government, but they also want to see their Federal dollars making a real difference in the lives of the disadvantaged. Americans believe our society must find ways to provide healing and renewal. And they believe that government should help the needy achieve independence and personal responsibility, through its programs and those of other community and faith-based groups. (Bush 2001)⁴

² Another sign, albeit a weaker one, is administrative. It is true that the overall level of administrative (and legislative) changes is modest, but many states have long and deep histories of working with faith-based organizations to provide social services. There is no evidence that states are reducing the number of partnerships with faith-based organizations. Instead, all of the evidence seems to suggest that they are increasing them, albeit at a slow rate. Also, a scan of the states in 2005 revealed that 53 percent of state governments are “engaged in significant administrative activities to affect government partnerships with faith-based social service providers,” up from 36 percent in 2003 (Ragan and Wright 2005, 29). Connecticut, for example, established the Governor’s Faith-Based Council to act as an intermediary in developing and improving church-state collaborations. Plus, the same survey of the states found that more than one-half to the states had enacted legislation that improved the environment for church-state collaboration. Additionally, there is evidence that some states have instituted “faith-based organization” quotas for particular programs. Florida, for instance, requires that 15 percent of its federal Workforce Investment Act monies for the labor force development of youth go to faith-based organizations (Montiel 2002, 17).

³ As the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives acknowledges, “These results do not reflect the full extent of Federal funding awarded to faith-based organizations.” This is because the amounts only include nonformula, discretionary grant awards programs administered by the Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, Education, Justice, Labor, Agriculture, and 17 program areas at the Agency for International Development.

⁴ Public support for the broad outlines of the FBCI is high, especially among African Americans (Pew Research Center for the People and the Press 2001; Public Agenda. 2001; Owens 2007).

Thus, on its face, the FBCI is about poverty reduction. That has been a key message of the Bush administration, especially when explaining why some states, regardless of the partisanship of their governors, received more FBCI funding than other states.

On March 20, 2006, the *Boston Globe* reported, “Mass. Loses Ground in Faith-Based Funding”:

Massachusetts has seen its share of faith-based grant funding from the US government plunge by more than a third over the past three years, new federal figures show . . . The 34 percent reduction for Massachusetts from 2003 to 2005, which came as funding to faith-based groups nationwide increased, occurred largely during the tenure of Governor Mitt Romney, a Republican who has touted his ties in Washington, D.C., as a boon for Massachusetts. (Helman 2006)

James Towey, then Director of the White House Office of FBCI, was quoted, “The issue is not about regions [and] it’s not about religions. It’s about results.” Days later in a *Washington Post* article, Wade Horn, then Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services, remarked, “Who ever got these grants wrote the best applications, and the panels in rating these grants rated them objectively, based on the criteria we published in the Federal register. Whether they support the president or not is not a test in any of my grant programs” (Edsall 2006). Moreover, as Karl Rove, the former Deputy Chief of Staff to President Bush, remarked to a group of black clergy: “This initiative isn’t political. If I walked into the Oval Office and said it was going to be political the president would bash my head in. This isn’t political” (cited in Kuo 2006, 240). Nonetheless, critics question the claims of the Bush administration. They do not see the FBCI as just one more item on a long list of federal efforts to combat poverty.

Practical Political Considerations

A longstanding concern about the FBCI has been that political calculation best explains the award of FBCI funds (see, e.g., Americans United for Separation of Church and State 2002). This make sense given that, “first and foremost, expenditure decisions are political decisions, which answer the question 'who to support' more than they define what to do” (Anton et al. 1980, xvi). Consequently, observers have suggested that the FBCI is a political exercise, not an experiment to foster self-sufficiency among the poor (Formicola et al. 2003; Black et al. 2004; Hutchings et al. 2004; Harris 2001). Bob Wineburg, a scholar of American social welfare policy, put it bluntly, “This is about politics. This is not about effective social-services delivery” (quoted in Helman 2006). Specifically, the argument is that the FBCI is primarily about electoral politics.

For some, the Bush faith-based initiative seemed less a vehicle to implement the philosophy of ‘compassionate conservatism’ and more of a political strategy to attract African-American and Hispanic voters. . . . Strategically, Rove was motivated by the need to enlarge the base of the Republican Party and transform its religious rhetoric. He believed that moving the government to the center through educational reform, tax breaks, and *the faith-based initiative* was the way to do it” (Formicola and Segers 2003, 117 and 125, emphasis added)

This view is echoed by some Bush supporters, including David Kuo (2006, 170), a former Special Assistant to President Bush and a key staffer in the White House Office of FBCI:

At the same time, it couldn’t have been clearer that the White House needed the faith-based initiative because it had the potential to successfully evangelize more voters than any other. The campaign team already knew compassionate

conservatism played to a broad array of members. Now, it was handled correctly, it could turn even more heads. Women would see that this “different kind of Republican” delivered on its promise to help the homeless, build houses for struggling families, and help people find jobs. Hispanic voters, who tend to be pro-life, pro-family, and pro-poor, would see he was a Republican who cared. The black community could even be persuaded that George W. Bush was worth trusting. . . . For evangelical Christians, might not be thrilled with the initiative’s details, it nevertheless reinforced the belief in President Bush’s personal relationship with Jesus. That belief grounded their support of him.⁵

Republican Congressmen too undermine the nonpartisan and apolitical claims of the Bush administration. “Quite frankly,” according to Congressman Mark Souder (R-Indiana), “part of the reason [the FBCI] went political is because we can’t sell it unless we can show Republicans a political advantage to it, because it’s not our base” (Edsall 2006). Thus, journalists like Thomas Edsall (2006, A1) have found cause to report that “[m]illions of dollars in taxpayer funds have flowed to groups that support President Bush’s agenda on abortion and other social issues.”

Determinants of Federal Funding

The flow of federal funds to FBOs among the states remains open to rigorous empirical study. Extant findings from the literature on distributive politics provide useful guides to modeling the FBCI grant-making process, particularly in terms of discerning the effects of poverty-related (demand-side) arguments and realpolitik-oriented (supply-side) explanations for the award of FBCI grants throughout the states.

Supply-Side Hypotheses

Scholars of distributive politics have long held that politics, particularly “political clout,” influences the allocation of federal funding to subnational governments and nongovernmental organizations (Hale & Palley 1981; Shepsle & Weingast 1981; Wallis 1996). Formal models explain and empirical analyses test the intuition of the grantmaking process as a political process, especially as a process intended to increase electoral advantage, preserve partisan power, and reward political supporters (for models, see Cox & McCubbins 1986; Lindbeck and Weibull 1993; Dixit and Londregan 1996 & 1998; McCarty 2000; Volden 2007; for American tests, see Stein and Bickers 1994; Levitt & Snyder 1995; Bickers & Stein 1996; Dahlberg & Johannsson 2002; Gamkhar & Ali 2007; Boex & Martinez-Vazquez 2005; Porto & Sanguinetti 2001; Khemani 2003; Bungey, Grossman, & Kenyon 1991; Pereyra 1996; Veiga & Pinho 2005; Worthington & Dollery 1998). The central theory, call it the political-allocation theory, is that the award of national funds is based on political calculations related to remaining in power.

One variant of the political-allocation theory is that political incumbents with influence over the distributive process direct awards to areas or actors in areas demonstrating the greatest support for their reelection or where their party is already in power. They focus on core supporters (i.e., partisans) and their distributive policymaking emphasizes *vote-maximization*. In line with this position, Cox and McCubbins (1986, 385) contend that “risk-averse candidates will tend to overinvest in their

⁵ Formicola et al. (2003, 180-181) go even further in this vein of analysis: “But it would be naïve to ignore the political reasons that also drive the Bush faith-based policy. Indeed, the faith-based initiative has created a coalition of strange political bedfellows. The White House is attempting to woo certain constituencies – African-Americans and Roman Catholics. . . . Providing governmental assistance to social programs run by small black churches is, presumably, one way for President Bush and the GOP to win more support among black voters. . . . And since the Roman Catholic Church is the largest single nongovernmental provider of social services in the country, providing government funding to faith-based service programs has the potential for generating more support for President Bush and the Republican Party on Catholic voters.”

closest supporters (from the point of view of maximizing their expected vote), just as risk-averse investors will tend to overinvest in low-risk securities (from the point of view of maximizing the expected value of their portfolios).” The group of partisans they focus on is voters that self-identify with the party of national incumbents. Yet the same logic should apply to another group of partisans, namely subnational incumbents of the party of national incumbents. Modeling from this perspective, Grossman (1994; also see Bungey et al 1991; Worthington & Dollery 1998) posits a strategic relationship between national and subnational politicians, whereby fiscal support in the form of federal awards by the former (national incumbents) to the latter (state incumbents) retains or increases electoral support by the latter (state incumbents) for the former (national incumbents). Looking at the influence of presidents, in particular, it is plausible that s/he would use their powers over the bureaucracy to shape funding flows “to favor electorally important districts or legislative allies [ensuring] that patterns of spending across states should reflect electoral and/or legislative support for the president” (McCarty 2005, 125). This is most plausible when presidents acquire greater influence over bureaucratic decision-making, especially through their control of agency heads (Wood & Waterman 1991).

Another variant of the political-allocation theory is that political incumbents with influence over the distributive process direct awards to areas or actors in areas characterized by greater political competition for moderates (i.e., swing voters). This *vote-production* perspective addresses the dynamics of a particular group of voters that may determine elections, “the relatively many moderates, nearly indifferent between the parties on the basis of policy position and traditional loyalties, and more likely to switch their votes on the basis of particularistic benefits” (Dixit & Londregan 1996, 1148; also see Lindbeck & Weinbull 1993; Bickers & Stein 1996).

Although the differing political-allocation perspectives are not mutually exclusive (McCarty 2005), empirical analyses have sought to determine which has greater validity and effect. Perhaps unexpected, the findings reveal that politicians employ one over the other. Generally, political actors use resources (i.e., federal grants) to induce prospective supporters, not reward extant supporters (Johansson 2003; Dahlberg & Johansson 2002; Stuti 2003). But there is some evidence that when political actors use their resources to reward core supporters, the supporters that matter are subnational politicians of the same party as the national politicians, not core voters (Grossman 1994).

The findings, as well as the broader theories, yield a set of expectations relevant to empirically observing the flow of FBCI funds (Figure 2). Regarding the *vote-maximization* perspective (Cox and McCubbins 1986; Grossman 1994), we would expect states with Republican governors and states with legislatures controlled by Republicans will receive more FBCI funding for faith-based organizations than states with Democratic governors and Democratic-controlled legislatures. We also would anticipate that funding flows to faith-based organizations flows more heavily to states where Bush won the majority of votes cast in the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections. Additionally, we should see faith-based organizations in states with ideological policy orientations closer to the Republican Party receive greater FBCI funding than in states with orientations closer to the Democratic Party. Furthermore, states that adopt policy decisions reflective of the federal executive branch in terms of the FBCI should receive more funding than states that do not adopt them. As for the *vote-production* perspective (Dahlberg & Johansson 2002; Johansson 2003; Dixit & Londregan 1996; Lindbeck & Weinbull 1993), we would expect states where no candidate has overwhelming support and where either major candidate has a chance of winning Electoral College votes (i.e., swing or battleground states) will receive more funding than states where a particular candidate has overwhelming support. Additionally, states with higher proportions of valuable voters beyond swing voters (i.e., racial and ethnic minority voters) are likely to receive more funding than states with lower proportions.

Demand-Side Hypotheses

Much attention has been directed at supply-side explanations of funding. Arguably, however, “discretionary grant programs are perhaps unlikely places to find strong supply-side effects since these awards are made in the byways of bureaucracies, insulated to some degree from congressional and presidential political pressures” (Lowry & Potoski 2004, 517; Arnold 1979). Furthermore, a conventional expectation is that discretionary awards will be made in accordance with the latent and effective demands of a polity. “Latent demands [are] the underlying, unarticulated dimensions of need that exist within a community. Effective demands [or “organized interests”] are other needs within the community that have been articulated and formal applications for government assistance” (Bickers & Stein 1996, 1304; Lowry & Potoski 2004, 516). Both types of demands are broad enough conceptually to account for “community needs” and “local demands,” whereby the former accord with latent demands and the latter fit with effective demands (Rich 1989, 201).

Demand-side arguments predict that the coverage and/or concentration of funds will overlap the preferences of the majority and organized interests, as well as match merit, as much as possible. Accordingly, scholars have examined whether public preferences and interest group demands affect federal spending (Stein and Bickers 1995; Lowry & Potoski 2005). Their studies explore how the attributes of the polity predict the allocation of federal funding down the intergovernmental ladder. The explorations are based on econometric analyses that equate “demographic and economic profiles of jurisdictions' citizens” with constituent demand for federal spending, whereby “higher spending is correlated with higher demand in different policy areas” (Lowry and Potoski 2004, 515). Empirical evidence supports arguments for demand-oriented allocations of funds between national and subnational governments. The findings generally demonstrate that effective demands significantly predict funding allocations while the effects of latent demands are mixed (Lowry & Potoski 2004; Dahlberg & Johansson 2002; Gamkhar & Ali 2007).

Using the findings on demand-side explanations of funding flows, we identify a set of expectations for FBCI funding. One, states with greater community needs in relation to socioeconomic inequality will receive more FBCI funding than states with lesser community needs. Two, states with a greater presence of key organized Republican constituencies (i.e., evangelical Christians) will have more FBCI funds than states with a lower presence of such organized constituencies.

Methods

Much of the extant research on distributive politics examines noncompetitive, formula-based intergovernmental grants. Such grants are allocated by mathematical formulas agreed upon by legislators that include a variety of factors like population size, attributes of subpopulations such as income, and revenue availability (Gamkhar 2002). When they are not focused on formula-based grants, scholars tend to examine demonstration grants in the form of earmarks (i.e., nonformula-driven grants directly authorized and allocated to a specific local by Congress) (e.g., Gamkhar & Ali 2007). Or scholars focus on the federal budget in its entirety by looking at general outlays (Larcinese, Rizzo, and Testa 2006). Our study of FBCI funding, however, focuses on competitive project grants awarded to subnational organizations and agencies by the federal bureaucracy.

Our analyses rely on an original data set of competitive project grants constructed from public data available from the White House Office of FBCI and the Roundtable on Religion and Social Welfare Policy at the Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government. We obtained the data by downloading public reports from their websites and direct requests to the White House FBCI Office and the Roundtable for missing data. The data include all competitive non-formula grants (number and dollar amounts) awarded by eleven federal agencies through 134 programs from FY 2002 through FY 2006

to faith-based organizations.⁶ The inclusion of these competitive non-formula grants is appropriate given that their nature makes them most open to direct influence by the president. Because our data exclude awards made to faith-based organizations through formula-based grants-making readers are cautioned that our results do not reflect all federal funding received by faith-based organizations across the fifty states over the five years in question. Beyond data on the awards of discretionary grants to faith-based organizations, the data include a set of variables that permit tests of the effects of supply-side and demand-side explanations for the distribution of the discretionary FBCI grants.

Dependent Variables. Given the lack of consistency in the literature on grant distribution, we employ two dependent variables. The first dependent variable is an annual count of how many FBCI discretionary grants were awarded to FBOs in each state. These counts cover fiscal years 2003-2006, generating a panel dataset of 200 observations. The counts range from zero to 239, with a mean value of approximately 37 grants per state per year. The second dependent variable is annual FBCI funding awards to FBOs from 2002 through 2006. The White House reports annual funding amounts in aggregate dollars for each state from fiscal year 2002 to 2006, generating a dataset of 250 observations that range from zero dollars to approximately \$152,000,000. Because our first dependent variable is a count of grants and the second one is more consistent with a continuous variable, we use different estimation procedures for the dependent variables. We use a random effects negative binomial model to estimate the model of grant counts (Hausman, Hall and Griliches 1984). This technique treats the dependent variable as an event count and allows for values that are non-negative integers. For the annual funding amounts, we employ a generalized least squares random effects model. Our techniques take into account the repeated measure characteristics of the data.

Independent Variables. We use several indicators for the vote-maximization, vote-production and need-based hypotheses described in Figure 2. Vote-maximization indicators reflect the general expected relationship that states with similar political and policy preferences to the President will received greater numbers and amounts of funding. We capture these ideas using several independent variables. First, we include a variable, *Policy Liberalism Index*, capturing how liberal or conservative a state's policies tend to be. It is a ranking of states based on their composite index scores on five separate issues that routinely divide liberals and conservatives (Gray et al. 2004). Larger values indicate greater policy conservatism.

Next, we consider that states with Republican governors and/or Republican-led state legislatures will receive more grants and greater funding. *GOP governor* is dichotomous, coded as 1 if the sitting governor is a Republican and zero otherwise (Congressional Quarterly, annuals). The second test of this hypothesis considers whether the Republicans control the state legislature. *GOP legislature* is also a dichotomous measure, coded 1 if the Republicans are in control and zero if either the Democrats are in control or the legislature is split (National Conference of State Legislatures, annuals). These variables reflect relationships between national and subnational leaders of the same party.

The national/subnational relationship may also be captured by a measure of support for President Bush in the 2000 and 2004 national presidential elections (*% voting for G. W. Bush*). Moreover, states with more Evangelical Christians among their residents, who favored Bush in 2000 and 2004, should receive more FBCI funding to FBOs. Accordingly, we include a measure of the percent of Christians belonging to churches affiliated with the National Association of Evangelicals, *NAE Affiliation* (Merolla et al. 2007)

⁶ The agencies include: the Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, Education, Justice, Labor, Agriculture, Commerce, Agency for International Development, Small Business Administration, Veterans Affairs, and the Corporation for National and Community Service.

A standard vote-maximization argument would suggest that states with higher vote percentages supporting Bush would receive more and larger grants from discretionary projects initiated by the administration in keeping with the national/subnational relationship argument. Because these measures of vote-maximization are not highly correlated, the effects should be consistent and positive if vote maximization is an objective of the distribution of FBCI grants to faith-based organizations. If, however, FBCI grants are given for the purpose of vote-production, as critics and allies of the Bush administration claim, the expectations would be different. Instead, in an attempt to broaden the appeal of “compassionate conservatism” we should see more grants to FBOs going to states that support Bush while state-level Republicanism would not necessarily result in more and larger grants. Thus, if the state and national level measures are consistent, then we can conclude that vote-maximization is probably a primary motivation behind the allocations of FBCI grant. If the results are conflicting, that would suggest that vote-production is driving some of the distributive policymaking of the FBCI.

We also use demographic measures of historically liberal-leaning constituencies within the states to assess whether the flow of FBCI funding is part of efforts to build support for the Bush administration, make the GOP more competitive, and siphon voters from the Democratic Party. In short, we have specific measures to determine vote-production effects. One measure is the percentage of African Americans in a state (% Black) and another is the proportion of Hispanics/Latinos in a state (% Hispanic), averaged for the period 2002-2006 (Current Population Survey). Additionally, we include a measure of the percent of Catholics among voters in the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections (MSNBC). Finally, we have a dichotomous variable, *Battleground State*, which denotes whether a state was considered a battleground/swing state in the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections.⁷ Looking at battleground states from the view of vote-production we anticipate that more funding would go to them states to elicit support from swing voters within them.

To test the demand-side hypotheses, we include measures of the latent demand for FBCI grant assistance through poverty and inequality. *TANF*, the average annual number of recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, is one measure of latent demand (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, annuals). In our count analyses, we use the natural log of TANF to rescale the values so that they are closer to the count magnitudes. The second measure of latent demand, GINI, is the degree of inequality in the distribution of household incomes (Galbraith & Hale forthcoming). Lower scores equal greater income equality. Turning to the effective demands for FBCI grant assistance, we have measures of organized groups that would be most likely to advocate for FBCI funding. First, states with higher densities of charitable organizations (i.e., the number of active 501c3 nonprofit organizations per 10,000 residents) should receive more awards and financial value than states with lower densities of such organizations (National Center for Charitable Statistics). Our assumption is that greater nonprofit density equals a larger supply of prospective FBCI funding applicants, as well as a greater capacity to promote self-sufficiency by the impoverished. Two, the number registered religious interests organizations in a state may affect the award of FBCI funds; as the number of such groups increases the number and value of FBCI grants may increase.

Controls. We control for a number of factors that may mediate the effects of supply and demand on the allocation of federal FBCI awards. Age should influence the flow of FBCI funding. But the direction of the effect is indeterminate. On one hand, older people are less supportive of public funding of faith-based organizations than younger persons (Pew Research Center for the People and the Press 2001). Therefore, one might expect that states with a higher percentage of senior citizens (i.e., adults 65 years of age or older) will receive fewer awards and smaller dollar amounts of funding

⁷ All measures that include data from national elections are coded based on the 2000 results for 2002-2003 and based on the 2004 results for the years 2004-2006.

than states with percentages of seniors. On the other hand, the elderly are among the core consumers of services provided by faith-based organization, especially affordable housing, weatherization, and nutrition services. Thus, more money may flow to states with greater proportions of elderly persons among their populations (% Seniors).

Additionally, we control for the amount of federal aid per capita among the states, expecting states that receive more intergovernmental assistance generally will receive more FBCI grants specifically. Plus, given that one would expect states with larger populations to receive more and larger grants than states with smaller populations, we control for population size. Finally, states differ in their receptivity to the FBCI generally, their promotion of church-state partnerships within their borders, and their ability to assist prospective applicants in applying for funds to reduce the scale of social welfare problems among their population (Roundtable on Religion and Social Welfare Policy 2005; Sager 2005 & 2007). Some states have institutions that may ease and influence the ability of FBOS in their jurisdictions to win FBCI grants. In particular, there are states that have state-level agencies that are comparable to the federal offices of FBCI, that have appointed state-level FBCI liaisons to work with faith-based organizations to apply for intergovernmental funding, and that have enacted their own charitable choice legislation and issued new regulations promoting church-state partnerships. We control for each of these characteristics through separate dummy variables: *FBC Office* (presence = 1, absence = 0), *FBC Liaison* (presence = 1, absence = 0), and *Charitable Choice* (presence = 1, absence = 0). The prediction is that states adopting policy decisions that specifically reflect and support the federal efforts at church-state partnerships will see more FBCI funding go to faith-based organizations in their jurisdictions than in states that do not adopt those decisions.

Results

Table 1 presents the results for the random effects negative binomial models. We used a negative binomial model instead of a traditional Poisson model because tests suggested that the data suffer from over-dispersion. Likewise, further testing suggested that the random effects models are necessary to account for between and within panel effects. In interpreting the results, positive coefficients equal increased dollar amounts of FBCI grants awarded to faith-based organizations across the states.

Vote-Maximization (supply-side). The vote-maximization hypotheses produced mixed results. The only indicator for the vote-maximization hypotheses that shows a positive relationship with the flow of FBCI funding is the percentage of voters that supported Bush in the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections, as we predicted. But states with Republican governors appear to have no discernable advantage in the amount of FBCI grants going to faith-based organizations in their jurisdictions. Furthermore, Republican-controlled state legislatures appear to have a negative effect on FBCI grant distribution. Additionally, and remarkably, the results show that the more conservative the policies of a state the less likely additional FBCI grants will go to faith-based organizations within its boundaries. The same result holds for the percentage of Christians attending churches affiliated with the National Association of Evangelicals.

Vote-Production (supply-side). The vote-production indicators suggest that there is a political dynamic to the distributive policymaking of the FBCI. The indicators for the percent of the population that is Black and the characterization of battleground states are positive, as we anticipated. The former is highly significant, while the latter falls just outside the standard threshold for rejecting the null hypothesis. Evidently, more FBCI grants go to faith-based organizations in states with larger black populations and to states with swing voters in the two presidential elections covered by the time period under examination. These results, along with the weak results from the vote-maximization hypotheses suggest that the allocation of FBCI grants may be part of an effort to garner new voters outside of the established conservative base, rather than the maintenance of core support.

Latent/Effective Demand (demand-side). Latent demand may explain how many discretionary grants are awarded from year to year and across states to faith-based organizations. After all, FBCI grants are intended to address social welfare challenges, particularly poverty. Yet, our indicators that measure need produced conflicting results. The GINI measure suggests that the greater the inequality in income distribution within a state, the more FBCI funding flows to faith-based organizations in their state. Nonetheless, the TANF measure is strongly negative: As TANF recipients increase in number, the likelihood of funding for faith-based organizations declines. As for effective demand, the results suggest that it is not influencing the distribution of FBCI grants, at least not as effectively as other factors and it may actually reduce grant awards in terms of number and value.

Controls. Of the set of controls, three variables produced significant results. The proportion of residents who are elderly and the size of the population have positive effects on the distribution of FBCI grants to faith-based organizations across the states. Additionally, and oddly, states adopting policy decisions that specifically reflect and support the federal efforts at church-state partnerships see less FBCI funding go to faith-based organizations in their jurisdictions than in states that have not adopted them.

Table 2 shows the results for the random effects generalized least squares models. Again, positive coefficients equal increased dollar amounts of FBCI grants awarded to faith-based organizations across the states. The most remarkable finding is that most of the vote-maximization and vote-production variables fail to produce significant effects. There are two exceptions. The first is that the percent of Blacks in the population has a significant and positive effect ($p < .05$) on grant amounts as measured in dollars. This finding, when aligned with the similar finding in Table 1 regarding the number of grants awarded, suggest that the distributive policymaking of the federal FBCI is aimed at eliciting support from African Americans. If so, this fits with considerations of the “compassionate conservatism” as an electoral appeal for support from a pivotal constituency of the Democratic Party. However, the variable may also be tapping the reality of the marketplace of applicants. That is, the measure may be capturing the presence of faith-based organizations associated with African American churches, which are more likely than other types of faith-based organizations to apply for public funding (Owens 2006). The second exception is the indicator of Evangelical Christians among the states. It, too, has a significant effect and it remains negative, which was the finding in Table 1. The robust findings imply that funding is not being directed at states to buttress core support from the religious right.

As for why the other vote-related variables failed to yield the expected results, it may be that award amounts are plagued by several intervening variables that we cannot account for in this analysis, including the requested amounts in each proposal or overall availability of funds. Lastly, the results mirror some of the findings from the analyses of the number of FBCI grants awarded between FY2003 and FY2006. In particular, we still see the measure of latent need producing mixed effects, population size having a positive effect, and measures for and Charitable Choice yielding negative effects.

Conclusion

Our objective in this paper was to answer a question: What factors explain the flow of FBCI funds among the states? Following the reasoning and results of the distributive politics literature, as well as reporting about the FBCI from insiders and others, we posited that dimensions of supply and demand influence the distribution of federal FBCI grants awarded to FBOs across the states. After deriving a set of hypotheses and model specifications we examined the distribution of the annual number of FBCI grants and annual dollar amounts of FBCI grants awarded to FBOs. The results were mixed. On the whole, demand-side explanations proved weak while supply-side explanations produced stronger results. But the not all supply-side explanations were found to have an effect on

distributive policymaking in relation to the FBCI. Specifically, arguments drawn from studies of intergovernmental grantmaking as a vote-production process had stronger effects than those drawn from grantmaking as vote-maximization studies. In particular, we found firmer evidence that allocation of FBCI grants is correlated with winning swing voters but softer evidence that it is related to appeasing or rewarding core supporters. Overall, we conclude that the process of distributing FBCI grants may be highly political, but not in traditionally expected ways. The vote-production hypotheses have a great deal of support in our analyses, while the vote-maximization and need-based explanations are weakly supported or even contradicted. We reiterate, however, that our findings are tentative and open to alternative interpretations.

Looking forward, subsequent research on the FBCI as distributive policymaking should refine and improve the models specified in this paper, perhaps by employing supplemental measures of demand (latent and effective) and public ideology. It should also specify and test models that incorporate undetermined factors that may account for the distribution of discretionary grants, especially the influence of congressional committee leadership, the quality of grant applications, and the characteristics of the applicants and recipients of FBCI grants.

Figure 1. God Talk in Government: Federal and State Examples

SPEAKER	MESSAGE
President George W. Bush, Washington, DC, December 12, 2002	“No government policy can put hope in people's hearts or a sense of purpose in people's lives. That is done when someone, some good soul puts an arm around a neighbor and says, God loves you, and I love, and you can count on us both”
Governor Sonny Purdue, Atlanta, Georgia, January 29, 2003	“I believe that the Bible is not a passive book – that it calls us to action, and [federal policy changes provide] a wonderful opportunity for churches to play an important role in building society”

Figure 2. Hypotheses

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE	HYPOTHESES
Vote-Maximization (<i>supply-side</i>)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. States where Bush won the majority of votes cast in the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections will receive more funding than states where a minority of votes were for Bush 2. States with Republican governors will receive more FBCI funding than states with Democratic governors 3. States with legislatures controlled by Republicans will receive more funding than states controlled by Democrats 4. States with demonstrated policy-choices closer to the general policy agenda of the Republican Party will receive greater funding than states with policy-choices closer to the general policy agenda of the Democratic Party
Vote-Production (<i>supply-side</i>)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. States with more swing voters (i.e., battleground states) will receive more funding than states with fewer swing voters 2. States with higher proportions of valuable voters beyond swing voters (i.e., racial and ethnic minority voters) are likely to receive more funding than states with lower proportions.
Latent-Effective Demand (<i>demand-side</i>)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. States with greater community needs (i.e., socioeconomic need) will receive more funding than states with lesser community needs. 2. States with more organized interests and/or capacity relevant to the social welfare aims of the FBCI (i.e., charitable nonprofits and religious interests groups) will be awarded more FBCI funds than states with a lower presence of such constituencies.

Table 1: Random Effects Negative Binomial Count Model of FBCI Discretionary Grants Awarded to Faith-Based Organizations

	(1)	(2)
	Grants to FBOs	Grants to FBOs
GOP Governor	0.0823 (0.132)	0.0755 (0.132)
GOP Legislature	-0.340*** (0.120)	-0.337*** (0.120)
Policy Liberalism Index	-0.0267** (0.0133)	-0.0276** (0.0130)
% Voting for G. W. Bush	0.0890*** (0.0179)	0.0872*** (0.0179)
ln(TANF)	-0.592*** (0.136)	-0.593*** (0.135)
GINI	10.10** (4.046)	10.24** (4.068)
Battleground State	0.376* (0.194)	0.378* (0.193)
% Black	0.0529*** (0.0201)	0.0516*** (0.0200)
% Hispanic	0.00971 (0.0137)	0.00883 (0.0137)
% Catholic	0.00444 (0.0111)	0.00278 (0.0111)
NAE Affiliation	-0.0302** (0.0151)	-0.0305** (0.0152)
Charitable Choice	-0.630*** (0.233)	-0.674*** (0.232)
% Seniors	0.357*** (0.0758)	0.354*** (0.0747)
Federal Aid per capita	0.000134 (0.000280)	0.000109 (0.000281)
Non-profit Density	0.0132 (0.0244)	0.0122 (0.0239)
Religious Interest Groups	-0.0538 (0.0348)	-0.0564 (0.0350)
ln(Population)	1.782*** (0.240)	1.780*** (0.235)
FBC Liaison	-0.00114 (0.137)	
FBC Office		0.123 (0.142)
Constant	-31.23*** (3.448)	-30.95*** (3.370)

Standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1
N = 192, Number of Panels = 48

Table 2: Random Effects Generalized Least Squares Model of FBCI Discretionary Grants Awarded to Faith-Based Organizations

	(1)	(2)
	Grants Amounts to FBOs	Grant Amounts to FBOs
GOP Governor	-1985227 (2585740)	-1780085 (2610167)
GOP Legislature	-2999604 (3288031)	-2929990 (3335835)
Policy Liberalism Index	-76367 (195518)	-81823 (202150)
% Voting for G. W. Bush	132883 (326282)	213513 (326188)
TANF	-94.29*** (22.78)	-98.35*** (23.13)
GINI	151652564* (89574748)	160742396* (91250245)
Battleground State	4776048 (3716369)	4588234 (3775185)
% Black	719379** (328751)	753241** (334709)
% Hispanic	-229172 (249094)	-234328 (257524)
% Catholic	-316978 (237918)	-272507 (249182)
NAE Affiliation	-761071*** (261636)	-764114*** (269910)
Charitable Choice	-6834849* (4059196)	-5915637 (4308458)
% Seniors	2449402* (1319513)	2493530* (1358714)
Federal Aid per capita	3991 (5197)	3994 (5394)
Non-profit Density	-131080 (386436)	-90377 (394073)
Religious Interest Groups	-613997 (612480)	-567669 (635134)
Population	5.173*** (0.680)	5.268*** (0.693)
FBC Liaison	1640263 (3497534)	
FBC Office		-863456 (3604205)
Constant	-81116739* (43466502)	-91814526** (43250738)

Standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

N = 240, Panels = 48

Table 3: Pairwise Correlation Matrix

Variables	ln(Population)	Population	ln(TANF)	TANF	GINI	GOP Governor	GOP Legislature
ln(Population)	1.0000						
Population	0.8344	1.0000					
ln(TANF)	0.8802	0.7483	1.0000				
TANF	0.6143	0.8743	0.6601	1.0000			
GINI	0.5554	0.5001	0.4834	0.3584	1.0000		
GOP Governor	-0.0540	0.0768	-0.0642	0.0496	0.1017	1.0000	
GOP Legislature	-0.0425	0.0088	-0.1735	-0.0923	-0.3490	0.1194	1.0000
% Voting for G. W. Bush	-0.2492	-0.2429	-0.4283	-0.2555	-0.2408	0.0218	0.4297
Policy Liberalism Index	-0.0736	-0.1573	-0.2847	-0.2781	-0.0777	0.0732	0.3864
Battleground State	0.1252	0.0129	0.1466	-0.0276	-0.1427	-0.1506	0.0519
% Black	0.4134	0.2109	0.3042	0.0479	0.4960	-0.0448	-0.1520
NAE Affiliation	0.1882	-0.0134	0.1352	-0.0973	0.3471	-0.0895	-0.1219
FBC Liaison	0.2027	0.1610	0.0131	-0.0362	0.2188	0.1299	0.1914
FBC Office	0.1197	0.0871	0.0113	-0.0456	0.1696	0.0732	0.0815
Charitable Choice	0.3134	0.3115	0.2062	0.2091	0.2160	-0.0675	0.0348
% Seniors	-0.0659	-0.0952	-0.0163	-0.1291	-0.0251	-0.1400	-0.1015
Federal Aid per capita	-0.5123	-0.2402	-0.4103	-0.1035	-0.0813	0.0554	0.0158
Non-profit Density	-0.6340	-0.3831	-0.4755	-0.2162	-0.4979	0.0721	0.0245
Religious Interest Groups	0.4624	0.3426	0.3279	0.1173	0.0858	-0.1072	0.1054
% Catholic	-0.0005	0.0853	0.1228	0.0878	0.1248	0.0679	-0.1651
% Hispanic	0.3642	0.5170	0.3195	0.4483	0.4662	0.0915	-0.0486

Table 3: Pairwise Correlation Matrix continued

Variables	% Voting for G. W. Bush	Policy Liberalism Index	Battleground State	% Black	NAE Affiliation	FBC Liaison	FBC Office
% Voting for G. W. Bush	1.0000						
Policy Liberalism Index	0.7148	1.0000					
Battleground State	-0.1916	-0.1266	1.0000				
% Black	-0.0155	0.2549	-0.2179	1.0000			
NAE Affiliation	0.2779	0.4311	-0.1732	0.7547	1.0000		
FBC Liaison	0.1919	0.1703	-0.1562	0.2152	0.0483	1.0000	
FBC Office	0.1087	0.1769	-0.0603	0.1951	0.1326	0.6672	1.0000
Charitable Choice	-0.0138	-0.0232	-0.0245	0.0348	0.0971	0.2661	0.3419
% Seniors	-0.2486	-0.0436	0.2436	-0.0841	-0.0135	-0.1035	-0.0465
Federal Aid per capita	0.1046	-0.0923	-0.1664	-0.2269	-0.1035	0.0826	0.1667
Non-profit Density	-0.0997	-0.3820	-0.0357	-0.5663	-0.5433	-0.0513	-0.0987
Religious Interest Groups	-0.1213	0.0966	0.4854	0.0640	-0.1346	0.1552	0.1387
% Catholic	-0.6676	-0.5142	0.1116	-0.1961	-0.5559	0.0284	0.0442
% Hispanic	-0.1339	-0.1624	0.0550	-0.1461	-0.2565	0.1121	0.1167

Table 3: Pairwise Correlation Matrix continued

Variables	Charitable Choice	% Seniors	Federal Aid per capita	Non-profit Density	Religious Interest Groups	% Catholic	% Hispanic
Charitable Choice	1.0000						
% Seniors	-0.1087	1.0000					
Federal Aid per capita	-0.0273	-0.1101	1.0000				
Non-profit Density	-0.2527	0.1059	0.5312	1.0000			
Religious Interest Groups	-0.0031	0.2088	-0.3152	-0.1780	1.0000		
% Catholic	-0.1997	0.2511	0.0718	0.2576	0.0375	1.0000	
% Hispanic	0.3903	-0.2334	-0.0924	-0.2663	0.1262	0.1643	1.0000

Table 4: Summary Statistics

Variable	Observations	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min	Max
ln(Population)	250	15.09724	1.015614	13.11676	17.40595
Population	250	5853096	6450549	497204	3.62x10 ⁷
ln(TANF)	250	10.71438	1.257388	6.230482	13.96469
TANF	250	92628.94	162001.7	508	1160882
GINI	250	.420628	.0292342	.369	.502
GOP Governor	250	.556	.4978508	0	1
GOP Legislature	250	.408	.492449	0	1
% Voting for G. W. Bush	250	52.094	8.643502	31.9	72
Policy Liberalism Index	240	24.55	13.84242	1	48
Battleground State	250	.276	.4479135	0	1
% Black	250	9.898974	9.48102	.2	37.4
NAE Affiliation	240	20.08333	14.10486	3	61
FBC Liaison	250	.532	.4999759	0	1
FBC Office	250	.336	.4732864	0	1
Charitable Choice	250	.44	.4973827	0	1
% Seniors	250	12.34	1.7092	6.2	17
Federal Aid per capita	250	1466.077	511.1955	841.8138	3713.078
Non-profit Density	250	30.18	7.535299	18.9	52.4
Religious Interest Groups	250	4.74	3.600591	0	19
% Catholic	250	23.964	11.5231	5	57
% Hispanic	250	8.760074	9.492267	.5722591	44.03394
Number of Grants to FBOs	200	36.95	44.50315	0	239
Grant Amounts to FBOs (US \$)	250	1.83x10 ⁷	2.61x10 ⁷	0	1.52x10 ⁸

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