



FINALIST FOR  
AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS SEARCH

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## **ELECTORAL TURNOVER AND GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY: EVIDENCE FROM FEDERAL PROCUREMENT**

Conventional accounts suggest that executive agencies expecting their power to wane due to electoral turnover have incentives to insulate their preferred policies through inefficient bureaucratic procedures. This argument assumes that overturning existing policies is difficult via formal means, but does not consider that Congress has informal means to do so in numerous policy areas. In those areas, forward-looking agencies might rather craft their policies to accommodate the future Congress's preferences so that their policies survive after the electoral turnover. I evaluate these incentives using data on federal contracts in the United States. I find that as the probability of congressional turnover increases, federal agencies under unified government are more likely to award lower-cost contracts through competitive bidding in the expectation that the future Congress might overturn non-competitive contracts given to firms politically connected to the president. My findings challenge the dominant perspective that electoral turnover necessarily degrades bureaucratic performance.

### **TIME**

Friday, Dec. 2, 2022  
12:15-1:45PM

### **LOCATION**

INTN 1020

### **ZOOM DETAILS**

Meeting ID: 964 5512 3986  
Passcode: 126681