The Executive Unbound: Politicized Bureaucracy and Partisan Procurement under DOGE*

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Abstract

The establishment of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) during the second Trump administration marked a significant expansion of presidential control over federal agencies and offers an opportunity to examine whether presidents can leverage politicized agencies to simultaneously pursue policy and electoral goals. Drawing on detailed federal procurement data and contract terminations during the first nine months of DOGE operations, we find patterns consistent with politically motivated terminations across multiple dimensions of the president's objectives. Republican donor firms were less likely to have contracts canceled, whereas firms donating to Democrats were more likely to lose contracts. Cancellations were concentrated in districts won by Democratic candidates within blue states and in liberal agencies ideologically misaligned with the president. These patterns did not emerge under the first Trump or Biden administrations, suggesting that DOGE served as an important institutional mechanism through which the administration pursued multiple political goals simultaneously and at scale.

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Introduction

A longstanding argument in the literature on the American presidency is that presidents seek to run bureaucracies "through hands-on management and control" (Moe 1989, 280). To that end, presidents attempt to centralize power inside the Executive Office of the president, and choose political appointees who are willing to follow the president's leadership and implement their policy agenda (Heclo 1977; Moe 1985; Rudalevige 2002). Agencies created as a result of these efforts are generally considered more responsive to the policy preferences of presidential administrations (e.g., Nathan 1976; Moe 1982; Wood and Waterman 1991; Lewis 2008; Bolton, Potter, and Thrower 2015).

Besides helping presidents achieve their policy goals, scholars have long raised concerns that bureaucratic agencies may be used to advance presidents' own electoral goals. Presidents can direct agency resources toward key electoral constituencies and political supporters (e.g., Berry, Burden, and Howell 2010; Rogowski 2016; Kriner and Reeves 2015; Krause and Zarit 2022; Lee 2025), especially when agencies are led by political appointees co-partisan with the president (Berry and Gersen 2016; Dahlström, Fazekas, and Lewis 2021).

The presidency literature tends to treat these objectives in isolation, yet in practice, they are deeply intertwined, requiring presidents to navigate competing political considerations and complex trade-offs. This source of complexity is exacerbated by the limited ability of presidents to steer the bureaucracy even in politicized and centralized agencies–whether due to bureaucrats' resistance (Nou 2019), limited investments in administrative capacity (Bednar and Lewis 2024), or the limited scope of government resources that agencies can deploy as particularistic benefits (Gordon 2011).

Building on the large literature on presidential control over the bureaucracy, we contend that, by employing a centralized, politicized agency, presidents can systematically manage the competing political objectives they pursue. We articulate our argument by focusing on the second Trump administration, which offers a notable example of how presidents can ex-

pand their authority over the bureaucracy. By tightening control over government employees through a mix of bureaucrats' removals and civil service reforms, the administration pushed forward significant change to trade and immigration policy while simultaneously signaling responsiveness to a coalition organized around economic and cultural nationalism (Howell and Moe 2025; Resh 2026). The most consequential administrative vehicle for these efforts was arguably the establishment of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE).

DOGE represents a case of presidential expansion of control over the federal bureaucracy and a vigorous effort to circumvent the constraints of a professionalized civil service. It was built on two strategies: staffing the organization with private-sector employees ideologically aligned with the administration's goals–most prominently its leader, Elon Musk–and deliberately designing it as a novel organizational form, often implementing changes faster than Congress or the courts could intervene. While many commentators have emphasized the unprecedented scope of DOGE, its creation resembles earlier instances in which presidents have sought to establish or repurpose agencies unilaterally (Howell and Lewis 2002). In this respect, DOGE may be compared to Ronald Reagan's transformation of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) into a presidential instrument for overseeing agency rulemaking (Haeder and Yackee 2018), or Franklin D. Roosevelt's creation of the Works Progress Administration to control the allocation of employment programs during the Second New Deal (Wright 1974).

Using detailed procurement data, we assess whether, and how, contract cancellations during the first months of DOGE operations were consistent with politically motivated actions aimed at consolidating the president's electoral support–by rewarding allies and penalizing opponents at various levels–while advancing a conservative policy agenda. In our analyses, we focus on the universe of active contracts as of January 20, 2025. To identify contract terminations, we scrape the DOGE website on a semi-daily basis. Recognizing that DOGE may selectively disclose a biased subset of its overall cancellation activity, we integrate this data with official records from the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS). While DOGE

reports having terminated 1.6% of all active contracts, FPDS records indicate a larger number of discretionary terminations by agencies (i.e., terminations for convenience), amounting to approximately 1.9% of all active contracts in our sample, with an even higher rate among contracts with higher dollar amounts. 77% of contracts reported as terminated by DOGE are classified as terminations for convenience in FPDS, suggesting that the majority of DOGE-reported terminations correspond to actual terminations recorded in FPDS.

To examine whether DOGE contract cancellations were in line with Trump's policy and electoral goals, we focus on three layers of political targeting: firms, agencies, and legislators/voters. Our most granular measure is at the firm level and uses firms' campaign donations as a proxy for firms' loyalty to the president's party. Our focus on firms' political giving as a presidential interest is based on a large literature that portrays presidents as chief fundraisers for their party (Jacobson, Kernell, and Lazarus 2004; Doherty 2012), and ample anecdotal evidence that shows how presidents have used campaign donations–which is visible and public information–as a key criterion for distinguishing friends from foes. To capture firms' donations to Republican and Democratic candidates and groups, we match awarded firms with campaign finance records during the 2023-24 election cycle.

We present three sets of results. First, we find that during the first nine months of DOGE operations, contracts awarded to firms that made larger contributions to the Republican Party were less likely to be canceled, whereas those awarded to firms making larger donations to the Democratic Party were more likely to be terminated. The richness of procurement data allows us to make highly stringent comparisons between contracts awarded by the same agency in the same year to firms in the same congressional district with similar observable characteristics, thus addressing alternative explanations centered on the "ideological slant" of the contract, the partisanship of districts and states, and the presidential administration responsible for the initiation of the contract.

Second, we find contract cancellation patterns consistent with an administration weighing complex trade-offs across policy and electoral considerations. Terminating contracts awarded

to Democratic donor firms may be undesirable when those contracts advance policy goals (e.g., instrumental to the activities of ideologically aligned agencies) or benefit politically aligned constituencies. Consistent with this expectation, termination rates were substantially lower in Republican-held congressional districts, in agencies with conservative ideological leaning, and in states favorable to the Republican Party. Firms' political giving is a strong predictor of contract termination only for contracts awarded by liberal agencies and for contracts awarded to firms located in congressional districts won by Democratic candidates within blue states.

Third, we assess whether these patterns are unique to the second Trump administration or reflect broader dynamics of presidential transitions. We compare contract terminations across the first Trump, Biden, and second Trump administrations, constructing analogous datasets for each: the universe of active contracts at the start of each term, their subsequent termination status in official records, and firm-level campaign finance data for the relevant election cycles. While prior research documents partisan favoritism in federal contract awards during presidential transitions (Dahlström, Fazekas, and Lewis 2021; Fazekas, Ferrali, and Waches 2023), we find no comparable patterns in contract terminations under the first Trump and Biden administrations. Discretionary termination rates are six to seven times higher under the second Trump administration, and firms' campaign contributions are far less predictive of termination decisions in both earlier periods, across agency ideological categories, and district and state partisanship.

Taken together, these findings suggest that, compared to prior administrations, the second Trump administration and DOGE employed a more systematic and multidimensional targeting strategy–one in which firms' political giving is associated with termination decisions, and termination rates are lower in electorally favorable constituencies and conservative agencies.

With this paper, we make three contributions to the literature. First, we contribute to the literature on the administrative presidency. The establishment of DOGE represents an

unequivocal context wherein president Trump used a newly created organization to reform the administrative state. Our analysis provides systematic evidence on how swiftly and at scale contemporary presidents can leverage politicized agencies as political instruments to advance their multiple objectives. Second, we contribute to the literature on money in politics and corporate political activity. While most empirical evidence on firms and political favoritism focuses on legislators' behavior (e.g., Fowler, Garro, and Spenkuch 2020), stock market prices (Cooper, Gulen, and Ovtchinnikov 2010), or the awarding of government contracts (Dahlström, Fazekas, and Lewis 2021; Fazekas, Ferrali, and Waches 2023), our analysis shifts attention to the discretionary termination of existing contracts. Because we observe the universe of contracts active at the start of the administration, we can ask not which firms receive government money, but which get to keep it once a new administration takes power. Finally, this paper contributes to the growing body of literature on the policy consequences of populism. While prior research on populism and bureaucracy highlights how populist leaders appoint less competent bureaucrats (Lewis and Richardson 2021), and dismantle civil service protections (Moynihan 2022), our findings suggest that populist leaders can also systematically deploy an unbound bureaucracy to pursue their electoral goals and claim credit for allegedly fulfilled campaign promises (Lowande 2024).

Presidents' Multidimensional Goals and Bureaucratic Control

Presidents are motivated by a combination of electoral, legacy, and good-governance goals (Neustadt 1960; Moe 1990; Doherty 2012). These goals are multidimensional and often involve competing considerations and complex trade-offs. Consider, for example, the case of government contracting. Because procurement is a central instrument of policymaking, presidents pursuing policy priorities–such as strengthening the military–may increase defense spending, with downstream effects on contracting decisions. At the same time, presidents may use government contracts to benefit particular constituencies and consolidate support among co-partisan legislators (Kriner and Reeves 2015). In addition, presidents may have in-

centives to reward politically supportive firms and organized interests (Dahlström, Fazekas, and Lewis 2021; Lee 2025). Consistent with this view, Fazekas, Ferrali, and Waches (2023) find that firms making larger donations to the president's party receive more favorable treatment in federal procurement.

Instrumental to achieving the president's goals and to systematically navigating these multiple layers of political considerations is a bureaucratic apparatus that responds to the president's preferences and delivers on her directives. To this end, presidents attempt to exert significant control over the bureaucracy: they appoint loyal bureaucrats to key agency positions (Lewis 2008), they centralize authority within the Executive Office of the President (Moe 1985), and selectively invest in administrative capacity (Bednar and Lewis 2024).

However, building a bureaucracy capable of implementing presidential priorities is far from straightforward. Upon entering office, presidents inherit organizational structures, procedures, and personnel shaped by previous administrations. While presidents can attempt to direct agency action through executive orders, doing so requires persuasion and compliance from career bureaucrats (Rudalevige 2012). In practice, the preferences of civil servants often diverge from those of the president (Aberbach and Rockman 1976; Spenkuch, Teso, and Xu 2023), as well as from those of political appointees (Feinstein and Wood 2022), creating frictions in the implementation of the president's agenda. Notably, officials in the first Trump administration publicly complained throughout the first term that career agency staff were slow-walking or outright refusing to implement politically directed priorities. Efforts to increase political control by expanding the president's power of removal may also entail trade-offs, potentially reducing administrative competence and undermining bureaucratic performance (Lewis 2007; Krause and O'Connell 2019). Moreover, even in the unrealistic scenario in which all government employees are fully aligned with presidential goals, the complexity of administrative structures–the multiple layers of hierarchy, coordination challenges, and the vast number of daily tasks carried out by federal agencies–renders responsiveness inherently partial and uneven (see, e.g., Gordon 2011).

Against this backdrop, presidents may seek to bypass existing bureaucratic structures in order to advance their goals. One such strategy is the unilateral creation of new agencies designed to be more responsive to presidential directives. In their analysis of hundreds of federal agencies, Howell and Lewis (2002) show that a substantial share were created through executive action rather than legislation–including the Peace Corps and the National Security Agency. This *ad hoc* approach to agency design allows presidents to tailor administrative structures to their policy objectives. By establishing facts on the ground before Congress or the courts can intervene, such agencies expand the president's capacity to shape bureaucratic outcomes, providing an additional tool for navigating the multiple political considerations that presidents face (Howell and Lewis 2002).

Another strategy is to expand the private sector's role in government operations. This approach may help presidents circumvent ideological disagreement and resistance within federal agencies (Potter 2024). Individuals who self-select into government employment are more likely to be policy-motivated and driven by public service considerations than private-sector workers (Perry 1997). By contrast, private-sector contractors may be more responsive to executive directives and thus pose a lower risk of resistance (Michaels 2010). In addition to increasing control, reliance on private sector workers can provide greater flexibility, faster implementation, and lower political visibility (Dooling and Potter 2022).

DOGE and Enhanced Presidential Control

DOGE represents a clear case of such presidentially-controlled agencies. It was created by executive order on January 20, 2025, with a built-in termination date of July 4, 2026, and without any congressional authorization. Structurally, it was placed inside the Executive Office of the President, the institutional location that maximizes presidential control and minimizes congressional oversight. Moreover, rather than staffing DOGE with career civil servants, Trump populated it with political loyalists: Elon Musk and a team of young engineers he recruited from the private sector, who served as Special Government Employees

(The White House 2025).

Although DOGE was ostensibly created to improve government efficiency, anecdotal evidence suggests that Trump designed it to achieve specific policy and electoral objectives. Terminating government contracts was a key part of the strategy. Anonymous interviews revealed that DOGE employees extensively worked on terminating contracts awarded to Harvard University for earthquake relief research and contracts awarded to the state of Maine, as Trump had escalated fights with both (Flavelle et al. 2025). Moreover, when Musk and Trump parted ways in May 2025, Trump vowed to revoke billions of dollars in federal contracts and tax subsidies for Musk's business empire (Pager 2025).

While DOGE exhibits all the characteristics of a highly controlled bureaucracy, it should not be regarded as an unprecedented development in American politics. Presidents have long created or repurposed agencies to advance their policy goals. For example, during the Second New Deal, Franklin D. Roosevelt centralized significant budgetary authority within the executive branch, with much of the resulting spending channeled through newly created agencies and programs (Seidman 1981; Selin and Lewis 2018). During this expansionary period, the Works Progress Administration was established to enable the president to exert greater influence over the allocation of employment opportunities to job seekers (Wright 1974). In a similar vein, through Executive Order 12291, Ronald Reagan transformed the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs into a central instrument of presidential oversight over federal rulemaking, advancing his deregulatory agenda (Shapiro 2011; Haeder and Yackee 2018). Likewise, George W. Bush established the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives through unilateral action to facilitate religious organizations' access to government contracts and grants.

By establishing a centralized and politicized agency, presidents are better positioned to navigate the multidimensional political objectives they face. We test this argument by examining patterns of federal contract cancellations under DOGE. Specifically, we expect contract termination decisions under the second Trump administration to strongly reflect firms' polit-

ical connections to the president. Such connections are not directly observable from contract records and require substantial information-collection effort and coordination across DOGE and the relevant awarding agencies, making their influence on termination decisions a particularly demanding test of centralized political control. We further expect cancellations during this period to reflect multiple competing political considerations–including electoral geography (e.g., whether districts elected co-partisan legislators), and the ideological orientation of the agencies associated with the contracts in question.

Data

Our analysis combines four sources of data. First, we construct a sample of active contracts (not yet terminated) as of January 20, 2025, the inauguration day of the second Trump administration. Second, we compile snapshots of contracts terminated by DOGE along with termination records from the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS), the official government database. Third, we use campaign donations data to measure the donation behavior of firms that received contracts. Fourth, we track the partisanship of states and legislators where firms receiving contracts are located, as well as the ideological leanings of awarding agencies.

Active Procurement Contracts

To examine the political patterns underlying contract terminations during the second Trump administration, we first construct the universe of contracts that were active as of January 20, 2025. We do so by obtaining all federal contracts signed from fiscal years 2004 to 2025 from the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS). We identify a total of 704,750 active contracts, defined as those that either lack an official termination record until January 20, 2025, or have a performance end date that extends beyond January 20, 2025. Following standard practice in the procurement literature, we exclude *i)* Indefinite Delivery Vehicles (IDVs), which are agreements without ex-ante specified quantities and deadlines, *ii)* contracts

awarded to government entities, and *iii)* contracts performed outside the United States.[1] After applying these sampling restrictions, we obtain a sample of 545,361 active contracts.

FPDS allows us to observe a rich array of characteristics of active contracts. Our sample of contracts covers 71 federal agencies and 55,140 awarded firms. The total value of contracts is equal to $2.7 trillion. The agencies with the largest number of contracts are the Department of Defense (56% of the sample), the General Services Administration (9% of the sample), and the Department of Veterans Affairs (8% of the sample). In addition to financial information for each contract, the data include a transaction description and a product or service code, such as "medical and surgical instruments" or "airframe structural components." Agencies award contracts spanning a wide range of activities, with each agency associated with an average of 196 distinct product or service codes.

Terminated Contracts

To identify terminated contracts, we begin by scraping DOGE's self-disclosed activity. DOGE maintains a *Wall of Receipts* on its website, a public registry of self-reported contract terminations (see Figure A.1).We began scraping the data on February 26, 2025–approximately one month after the first terminated contract was posted online. We took snapshots of the data almost every day from February 26, 2025, through September 30, 2025, resulting in a total of 116 snapshots. Section A1 describes how we link DOGE-reported terminations to our sample of active contracts.

There are several reasons to question whether these records accurately capture the full universe of DOGE-terminated contracts. First, DOGE's self-reported records may be non-representative if terminations were selectively disclosed, potentially obscuring political targeting. This concern is reinforced by DOGE's own acknowledgment that only a subset of terminated contracts would be posted on its website. Second, multiple sources document

[1]Table A.1 in the Appendix shows the number of remaining contracts after each round of sample restriction.

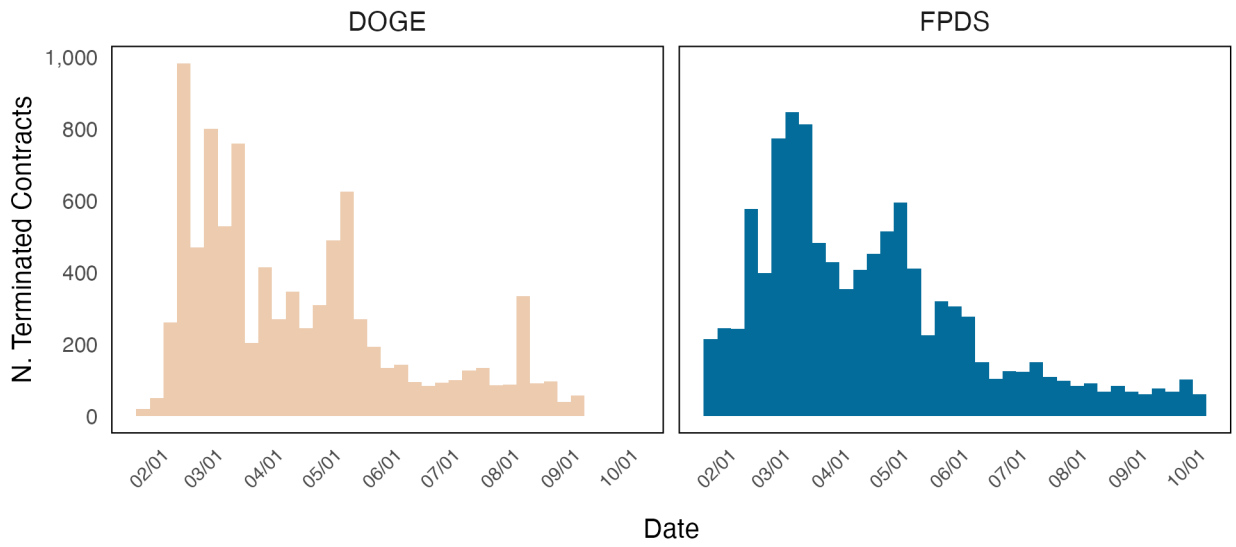
reporting errors, including double- or triple-counting contracts, posting and subsequently removing cancellations, and listing contracts that had already been terminated by prior administrations (see, e.g., Fahrenthold et al. 2025). Third, missing contract-level information often prevents precise identification of the terminated contract. For example, in the 116 snapshots we collected, 33% of entries contain missing information.

To address these concerns, we turn to official contract modifications reported on FPDS. We track all modifications to the 545,361 active contracts through September 30, 2025, and identify those classified as terminations for convenience. This category captures agencies' discretionary decisions to terminate contracts and is the most prevalent termination type among contracts reported as terminated on the DOGE website (99.4% of all contracts considered terminated both on DOGE and FPDS records).[2]

Since its inception and as of September 30, 2025, DOGE reports having terminated 8,924 contracts, representing 1.63% of all active awards. Using FPDS, we identify 18% more terminations, totaling 10,490 contracts (1.92% of all active contracts). 6,893 terminations appear in both sources, while 2,031 DOGE-reported terminations have no corresponding record in FPDS. Relative to FPDS-identified terminations, DOGE-terminated contracts are slightly more likely to have been awarded to firms owned by women, veterans, and racial minorities (+1-3 p.p.), and tend to have a larger total contract value (see Table A.4).

[2]Residual termination categories are termination for cause, termination for default, and legal contract cancellation. These termination categories are rare as they require agencies to demonstrate contractor misconduct or legal defects in the procurement process, which can expose agencies to administrative burdens and litigation risk. By contrast, courts have generally upheld the federal government's authority to terminate procurement contracts when it determines that doing so is in the government's interest, without necessarily finding the government liable for breach of contract. See, for example, Congressional Research Service report, "*The Government's Broad Power to Terminate Procurement Contracts*", https://www.congress.gov/crs_external_products/LSB/PDF/LSB11275/LSB11275.1.pdf.

Figure 1: Number of Terminated Contracts Over Time.



Notes: Number of DOGE-terminated contracts by reported upload date on the DOGE website (left panel) and number of FPDS-terminated contracts by reported modification date in FPDS records. Bars aggregate the total number of terminated contracts within week-long bins.

Figure 1 shows the total number of terminated contracts by reported upload date on the DOGE website (left panel) and by reported modification date in FPDS records (right panel). The first nine terminated contracts were uploaded to the DOGE website on January 22, 2025. Terminations increased rapidly in February and March, which recorded the largest numbers, with 2,310 and 2,165 terminated contracts, respectively. On FPDS, most terminations are also recorded in the period February-May, though the number of terminations is less skewed toward the earlier months than in DOGE-terminated contracts. This discrepancy may reflect delays in reporting of DOGE-targeted contracts in FPDS, or it may be that 23% of contracts identified by DOGE for cancellation were not ultimately terminated and not reflected in FPDS records.

Firms' Political Giving

As a primary indicator for identifying political allies and opponents of the Trump administration, we focus on firms' campaign donations. This approach is motivated by extensive research on whether corporate money secures political favors, either in the form of roll-call

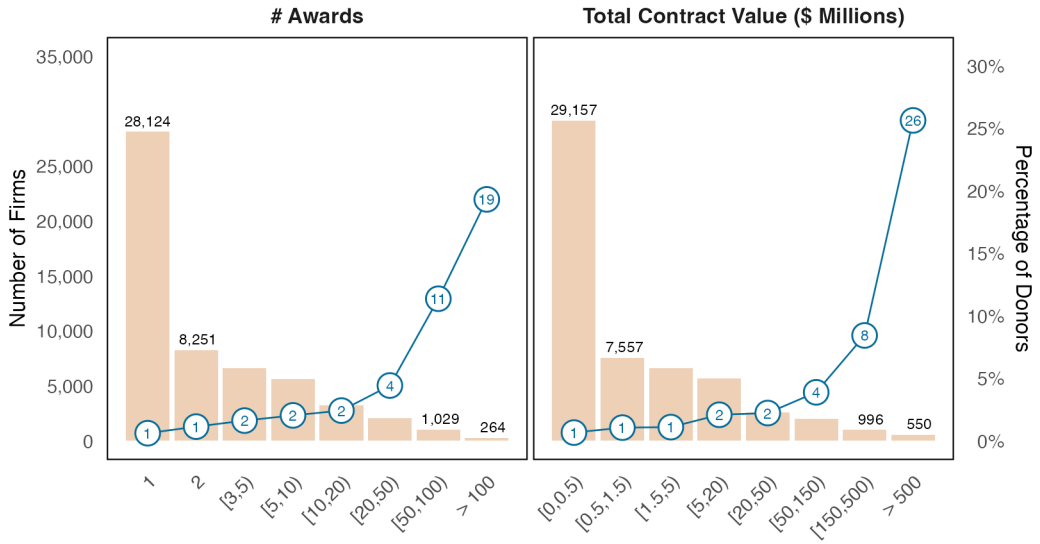
votes that benefit the interests of firms (see e.g., Ansolabehere, Figueiredo, and Snyder 2003; Fowler, Garro, and Spenkuch 2020) or in the form of less competitive practices in government contracting (see e.g. Fazekas, Ferrali, and Waches 2023).

To track firms' donations, we focus on the political giving of firms' political action committees (PACs). To identify firm PACs, we rely on data from the Center for Responsive Politics/OpenSecrets (OpenSecrets.org), a nonpartisan organization working on electoral transparency. We integrate OpenSecrets data–which covers election cycles from 2012 to 2022–with lists of corporate committees from the FEC, covering election cycles from 2012 to 2024. We match the committee names in OpenSecrets/FEC with parent firms in our sample of active contracts, using a combination of fuzzy name matching, transformer models for record linkage, large language models, and extensive manual checks and corrections. We then extract all donations originating from firm PACs to Democratic and Republican candidates and committees in the 2023-2024 election cycle. Appendix B provides a detailed description of our matching procedures and how we code the partisanship of contributions from the FEC data.

Out of the 55,140 unique parent firms associated with our sample of active contracts, we match 1,246 to a firm PAC. Among these, 824 parent firms made contributions during the 2023-24 election cycle. Overall, 1.5% of firms in our contract data are donors. Albeit small, this share of donor firms is consistent with the extant literature on corporate political spending. For instance, Cooper, Gulen, and Ovtchinnikov (2010) report that only 9.5% of public firms made donations between 1979 and 2004, and Fouirnaies and Hall (2018) find that 95% of publicly traded firms in the U.S. have never contributed to a political campaign.

Though few in numbers, donor firms receive a disproportionately large share of federal contracts, accounting for 16% (89,204) of the total number of contracts and 52% ($1.4 trillion) of the total contract value. Figure 2 illustrates this relationship. The horizontal axis shows the binned number of contracts awarded to each firm (left panel), as well as the total value of contracts awarded (in millions of dollars, right panel). The left vertical axis

Figure 2: Firms' Donations and Involvement in Public Procurement.



Notes: Number of firms and percentage of donor firms by number of contracts awarded to each firm (left panel) and value of contracts awarded to firms in million dollars (right panel).

indicates the number of firms in each bin, while the right vertical axis shows the percentage of firms in each bin that made political donations. Among the 28,124 firms awarded only one contract, just 1% are donors. In contrast, 19% of the 264 firms awarded more than 100 contracts made donations. A similar pattern emerges when using contract value: only 1% of firms receiving less than $500,000 in contracts are donors, whereas 26% of the 550 firms receiving more than $500 million in contracts made political contributions.

Electoral Geography and Presidential Policy Priorities

We measure two additional political dimensions of contracts: the partisanship of the state and congressional district where the firm is located, and the ideological mission of the agencies awarding the contract. This geographic information can be easily obtained from federal procurement data. Each contract record in FPDS includes the location of the awarded firm–its state and congressional district–as well as the awarding agency, which indicates the broad policy area the contract serves.

State and District Partisanship. We obtain presidential election data from MIT Election Data and Science Lab (2017). Based on the state-level vote share in the 2024

Table 1: Contract Distribution by Political Factors.

Panel A: Firm Location.

	Congressional District	
States	**DEM**	**REP**
DEM	49.6	8.4
REP	15.3	26.7

Panel B: Agency Ideology

Agencies	**Awarded Contracts**
Liberal	9.7%
Moderate	17.9%
Conservative	72.4%

Notes: Panel A reports contract shares by state and congressional district partisanship. States are classified as red (blue) if Donald Trump's two-party vote share in the 2024 presidential election exceeded (fell below) 50%. Congressional districts are classified as red (blue) based on the party of the winning candidate in the 2024 U.S. House election. Panel B reports contract shares by awarding agency ideology. Agencies are classified as liberal, moderate, or conservative based on estimates from Richardson, Clinton, and Lewis (2018).

presidential election, we classify states as red if Trump's two-party vote share exceeds 50%, and blue otherwise. We also identify the partisanship of House candidates who won their congressional districts and are currently serving in the 119th Congress (2025-2026).

Agency Ideology. We use estimates of agency ideological leaning from Richardson, Clinton, and Lewis (2018) to proxy for the administration's policy priorities. This data relies on expert surveys to produce time-fixed estimates of the perceived ideological leaning of federal agencies on a liberal-conservative scale. We match 47 out of 71 agencies to the ideology data. The remaining 24 unmatched agencies account for less than 1% of the total number of active contracts. To ease the interpretation of these ideological scores, we create three equal-size clusters of liberal (e.g., EPA, Department of Health and Human Services), moderate (e.g., General Services Administration, Department of Commerce), and conservative agencies (e.g., Department of Defense, Department of Agriculture).[3]

Table 1 shows the distribution of contracts by these two political dimensions. Panel A shows the share of awarded contracts by state and congressional district partisanship, whereas Panel B reports the distribution of contracts by the awarding agency's ideological leaning. A majority of contracts (58%) are awarded to firms located in blue states, with the two states near Washington D.C. (Virginia and Maryland) and larger states like California

[3]For ideological score and cluster of each agency, see Table D.6.

and Massachusetts alone accounting for 35% of total active contracts. At the congressional district level, nearly two-thirds of contracts (64%) go to firms in Democratic districts. Panel B shows that conservative agencies account for the largest share of contracts (72%), driven primarily by the Department of Defense, which alone accounts for 56% of total active contracts.

Research Design

Our primary goal is to assess whether contract terminations during the first months of the second Trump administration were associated with the political giving of awarded firms. The unit of observation is the individual active contract, and our strategy relies on comparing contracts awarded to firms that donate different amounts to the Republican and Democratic parties, conditioning on as rich a set of observable characteristics as possible at the contract, firm, and agency levels, to isolate the marginal predictive power of firms' political giving.

A central challenge is that firms' donation behavior may be highly correlated with the nature of the goods and services firms supply to the federal government. This makes it difficult to disentangle whether contract terminations were associated with the ideological character of the underlying contracts–such as DEI-related work–or by firms' campaign contribution patterns. We address this challenge in two ways. First, we restrict comparisons to contracts with identical product or service codes to hold the ideological character of the good or service category fixed. Second, we construct a text-based measure of each contract's latent termination potential, described in detail below, which captures the contract's partisan slant.

Specifically, we estimate regressions of the form:

$$y_i = \alpha_{at} + \delta_p + \gamma_d + \beta_1 \text{Donations}_f^{REP} + \beta_2 \text{Donations}_f^{DEM} + \upsilon' \mathbf{x}_i + \epsilon_i \tag{1}$$

where y_i is a dichotomous indicator equal to 100 for terminated contracts and 0 otherwise,

α_{at} are agency $\times$ year of contract initiation fixed effects, which allow for restricting comparisons within sets of contracts awarded by the same agency in the same year, and mitigating the concern that DOGE was targeting contracts signed under previous Democratic administrations. These fixed effects also capture differences in the baseline probabilities of federal agencies being targeted by DOGE, as determined by factors such as the ideology of the agency's mission or its level of insulation from political control (e.g., independent agencies versus bureaus within executive departments). δ_p are product/service code fixed effects, which allow us to compare very similar contracts assigned an identical code. γ_d are fixed effects for the congressional district where the firm is located, and aim at controlling for district-specific characteristics that might be correlated with DOGE's contract terminations (e.g., DOGE might be less likely to terminate contracts performed in red districts or states), while excluding alternative explanations centered on the party controlling the district and the favors a firm can obtain from their representative.

β are our key parameters of interest, capturing the change in the probability of contract termination resulting from a one-unit increase in the total amounts donated to the Republican or Democratic parties. Note that for non-donor firms, these amounts are set to 0. To ease interpretation, we standardize the donation amounts so that a one-unit increase equals one standard deviation, which is approximately \$310,000 for donations to Republicans and \$209,000 for donations to Democrats (see Table E.7 for the full distribution of the donation amounts).

We also include a set of covariates ($\mathbf{x}_i$), capturing whether the firm is owned by a foreign entity, women, veterans, or ethnic minorities; whether the firm is a non-profit organization; whether it is classified as a small or large business by the awarding agency; whether it participates in a program designated for disadvantaged firms; and whether it is located in a historically underutilized business zone. Other contract-level covariates include the monetary value of the contract and two efficiency-related measures: the contract's incurred cost overruns and delays. Table E.8 reports summary statistics of each control variable.

Even within the same product or service code, some contracts might be more likely to be terminated than others based on the "partisan slant" of the contract rather than the political giving of firms. For example, the contract "Office of Equal Rights Organizational Health Assessment Support Services", awarded by the Department of Homeland Security under product code "Support - Professional: Other", might be more likely to be terminated than the contract "Technical Support for Response and Recovery Missions", awarded by the same agency under the same product code. We refer to this dimension of contract heterogeneity as a latent potential for termination. To quantify this trait as objectively as possible, we adapt the machine-learning approach proposed by Iaria, Schwarz, and Waldinger (2024). We extract text features from the contract description and use them to train a classifier that predicts the likelihood of contract termination based in FPDS records. To avoid bias stemming from campaign contributions, the model is trained exclusively on contracts awarded to non-donor firms. The steps are described in detail in Section C of the Appendix. Using the classifier, we estimate the probability of termination for each contract in our sample and include this estimate as a contract-level control in $\mathbf{x}_i$.

While our research design relies heavily on this extensive set of controls, we should note that our results are robust to specifications with no covariates. We cluster the standard errors at the firm level, corresponding to the level at which we observe our donation variables.

Results

Our main results are reported in Table 2, where we present the estimates for β, starting with a parsimonious specification that does not include any fixed effects or covariates (Columns 1 and 4), and progressively introduce additional fixed effects and controls, culminating in our most stringent specification in Equation 1. The outcome of interest is the probability of contract termination, measured using both DOGE and FPDS records. For ease of interpretation, each binary indicator is multiplied by 100; hence, the estimates represent

percentage-point changes in the probability of termination.[4]

Despite the imperfect overlap of our two measures of terminations, the results portray a very similar picture. Even when comparing contracts of identical product code and awarded by the same federal agency in the same year to firms located in the same congressional districts, firms donating greater amounts to the Republican Party are less likely to face terminations, whereas those donating greater amounts to the Democratic Party are more likely to experience terminations.[5]

Columns 1-3 report the estimated effect of firms' donations on the probability of terminations as recorded through the DOGE website. In the most stringent specification (Column 3), a one standard deviation (SD) increase in donations to the Republican Party reduces the probability of termination by .88 percentage points, which is approximately a 54% change relative to the baseline probability of termination of 1.6%. We find similar, though opposite-sign, effects for donations to the Democratic Party, where a one SD increase in donations raises the probability of termination by 0.82 percentage points. Reassuringly, the estimates are similarly precise and point in the same direction without covariates, though smaller in magnitude (Column 2). The estimates from a simple multivariate regression with no controls or fixed effects are noisier, and only the estimate for the amounts donated to Republicans is statistically significant (Column 1).

The results based on contracts terminated for convenience (Columns 4-6) point to similar conclusions. Firms' donations to the Republican and Democratic parties have opposing

[4]The results with full sets of covariate coefficients are reported in Table F.9 in the Appendix.

[5]To verify that the fixed effects and covariates do not absorb all identifying variation in the independent variable, we examine the residualized donation measure obtained by partialling out all fixed effects and covariates. The residualized variable retains substantial variation: its standard deviation is 0.7, representing 64% of the unconditional standard deviation. This confirms that our estimates are not driven by a lack of within-cell variation.

Table 2: Firms' Political Giving and Contract Termination.

	DV: Contract Terminated (× 100)					
	DOGE			FPDS		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
$ Donated to Republicans	-0.54**	-0.42**	-0.86***	-0.14	-0.24*	-0.87**
	(0.27)	(0.17)	(0.29)	(0.41)	(0.14)	(0.35)
$ Donated to Democrats	0.18	0.49***	0.82***	-0.09	0.36**	0.82***
	(0.31)	(0.18)	(0.26)	(0.37)	(0.15)	(0.30)
Firm Covariates			✓			✓
Contract Covariates			✓			✓
R^2	0.00	0.19	0.23	0.00	0.13	0.21
Observations	545,361	543,761	543,726	545,361	543,761	543,726
Mean DV (% Terminated Contracts)	1.64	1.63	1.63	1.92	1.92	1.92
Agency-Year Start of Contract FE		✓	✓		✓	✓
Product Code FE		✓	✓		✓	✓
Congressional District FE		✓	✓		✓	✓

Notes: OLS estimates. Standard errors, clustered at the recipient parent firm level, are reported in parentheses. The dependent variable is a binary indicator equal to 100 if the contract was terminated by DOGE, and 0 otherwise. Signif. codes: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.10.

effects on contract cancellation activities under the second Trump administration. Terminations for convenience are less likely if the awarded firms donated more to the Republican Party in the 2024 election; the opposite effect occurs for larger donations to the Democratic Party.

These findings suggest that contract cancellations during the first nine months of DOGE operation were associated with firms' campaign donation patterns to the Republican Party. The fact that we observe very similar correlations between amounts donated and the probability of termination across DOGE and FPDS records also indicates that, although DOGE disclosed only a subset of the contracts ultimately targeted, it did not do so in a way that conceals the broader patterns reflected in agencies' terminations for convenience.

Robustness Tests. In the Appendix, we present additional analyses designed to assess the robustness of our results. We demonstrate that the results become even stronger when

the analysis is limited to donor firms (see Table F.10). To ensure the results are not driven by extreme values on the independent variables, we exclude mega-donor firms (Table F.11). We further show the results are robust to alternative specifications of fixed effects (Table F.12), and excluding contracts awarded by USAID or to firms based in the Washington D.C. area (Table F.13). Given the specificity of defense contracts, we find that the results are robust to the exclusion of contracts awarded by the Department of Defense or by any of the top 10 agencies by number of contracts (Figure F.4). Finally, the effects of firms' contributions are larger when we subset the data to large contracts and to large firms with more than 100 awarded contracts (Table F.14).

We further address several alternative explanations in Appendix G. Our results are unlikely to be driven by factors such as DOGE targeting contracts awarded to Democratic donor firms that newly entered federal contracting during the Biden administration, or DOGE mechanically canceling contracts that were disproportionately awarded to Democratic donor firms in previous periods, or firms making campaign contributions in anticipation of the future political landscape of their location.

Political Targeting Across Administrations. While the results in Table 2 are consistent with our argument that Trump used DOGE for political targeting and electoral goals, it is possible that such patterns occur with every presidential transition. To establish that our results reflect a phenomenon distinctive of the Trump-DOGE era, we compare contract terminations under the second Trump administration with those under the Biden and first Trump administrations.

To conduct this comparison, we replicate the same data collection and analysis for the first nine months of the first Trump and Biden administrations. We assemble a sample of active contracts at the start of their terms and match the awarded firms with PAC donations from the 2016 and 2020 election cycles. As outcome variables, we examine whether each contract was terminated for convenience as of September 30, 2017, and 2021, for the first Trump and Biden administrations, respectively. We also employ the same set of covariates and fixed

Table 3: Firms' Political Giving and Contract Termination Across Other Administrations.

	Contract Terminated (× 100)		
Presidency:	Trump I	Biden	Trump II
	(1)	(2)	(3)
$ Donated to Republicans	0.12	0.08	-0.87**
	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.35)
$ Donated to Democrats	-0.11	-0.07	0.82***
	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.30)
Firm Covariates	✓	✓	✓
Contract Covariates	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.03	0.04	0.21
Observations	708,988	666,194	543,726
Mean DV (% Terminated Contracts)	0.28	0.32	1.92
Agency-Year Start of Contract FE	✓	✓	✓
Product Code FE	✓	✓	✓
Congressional District FE	✓	✓	✓

Notes: OLS estimates. Standard errors, clustered at the recipient parent firm level, are reported in parentheses. The dependent variable is a binary indicator equal to 100 if the contract was terminated by DOGE, and 0 otherwise. Signif. codes: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.10.

effects described in the previous section. Online Appendix Section H describes the data in greater detail.

The first important piece of descriptive evidence concerns the overall rate of contract terminations. Under the second Trump administration, 1.9% of active contracts were terminated for convenience, six to seven times higher than the corresponding rates under the first Trump administration (0.28%, or 1,983 terminations out of 708,988 active contracts) and the Biden administration (0.32%, or 2,159 terminations out of 666,194 active contracts).

Table 3 compares the estimates of firms' donations to the Republican and Democratic parties across the three administrations. We find no significant association between firms' political donations and contract terminations during the first Trump and Biden administrations. These results may reflect prior administrations' lower propensity to reward political loyalty, or the absence of a coordinating mechanism like DOGE. The second Trump admin-

istration, by contrast, exhibited both more pronounced patterns of political differentiation in cancellation decisions and the institutional infrastructure that may have enabled them. The results suggest that DOGE provided the vehicle through which firms' political giving became associated with contract cancellations, aligning with the president's objectives.

DOGE Terminations Reflect Multiple Political Considerations

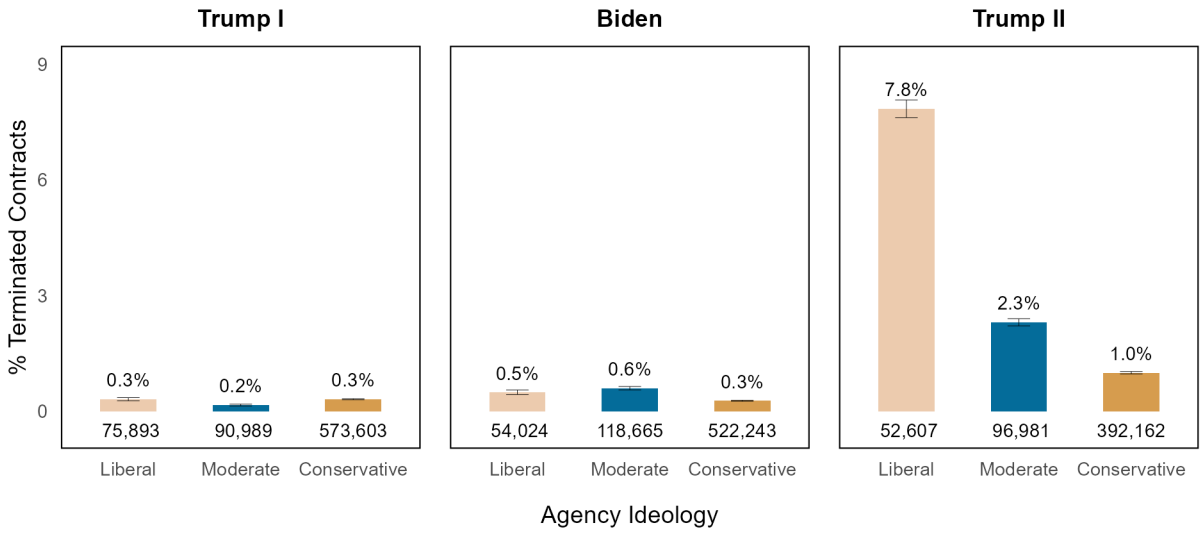
Terminating government contracts is a powerful tool for imposing costs on political opponents. Often, however, such decisions involve trade-offs with other goals. Terminating contracts can undermine other policy priorities or alienate important electoral constituencies. To examine whether termination patterns reflect these competing political considerations, we examine termination patterns along two additional dimensions: the ideological leaning of the federal agencies awarding the contract and the partisanship of the states and congressional districts where firms are located. In keeping with our previous findings on the distinct patterns in the Trump-DOGE era, we compare results across all three administrations and use terminations for convenience from FPDS as the outcome variable.[6]

For each dimension, we proceed in two steps. We first document whether termination rates vary systematically by agency ideology or electoral geography. We then test whether they moderate the relationship between firms' campaign donations and the probability of termination, allowing us to assess whether the patterns we observe vary along these additional, possibly competing, dimensions.

Agency Ideology. Figure 3 reports the percentage of terminated contracts conditional on the ideology of the awarding agencies across all three administrations. Each panel reports the total number of active contracts awarded by liberal, moderate, and conservative agencies, along with the share of terminated contracts within each group. As noted previously, given the large share of contracts awarded by the (conservative) Department of Defense, more

[6]For the second Trump administration, results are even stronger when using DOGE's own termination records (see Section F1).

Figure 3: Percentage of Terminated Contracts by Agency Ideology.



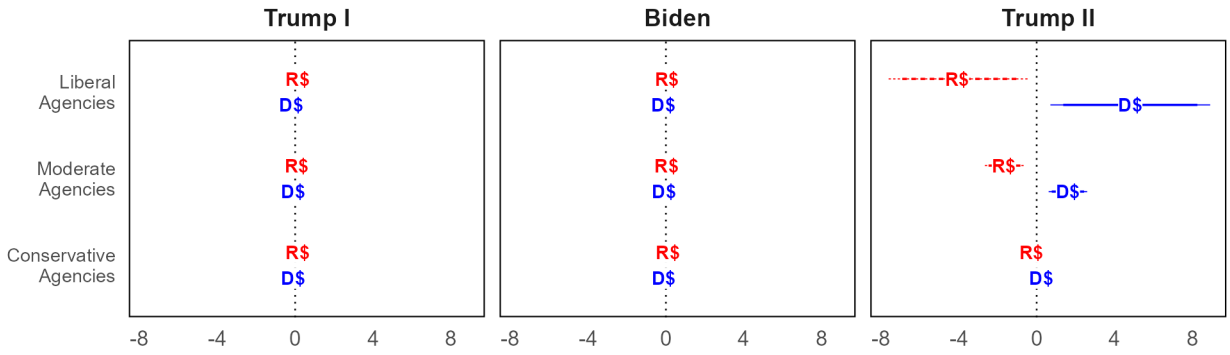
Notes: Percentage of terminated contracts by agency ideology. Agencies with available ideology scores are assigned to three equal-sized bins: liberal, moderate, and conservative. See Table D.6 for the full list of agencies and ideology scores.

than 70% of contracts across all three administrations originate from conservative agencies. During the first Trump and Biden administrations, termination rates are broadly uniform across agency ideological groups. Under the first Trump administration, the percentage of terminated contracts is identical for liberal and conservative agencies, while under Biden, liberal agencies are, if anything, slightly more likely to see terminations. This pattern shifts sharply under the second Trump administration, where the ideological gap widens considerably. The probability of cancellation is approximately 8% for contracts awarded by liberal agencies, compared to 2.3% for moderate agencies and just 1% for conservative agencies.

We then test whether agency ideology moderates the association between firms' donations and terminations. We estimate Equation (1) separately across three sub-samples of contracts awarded by liberal, moderate, and conservative agencies. For each administration, we report two coefficients, one for donations to the Republican Party and one for donations to the Democratic Party, within each agency ideology bin. The results are presented in Figure 4.

We find substantial differences in how agency ideology relates to termination patterns. Under the first Trump and Biden administrations, the estimated effects of firms' donations

Figure 4: Firms' Donations and Contract Terminations: Heterogeneity by Agency Ideology.

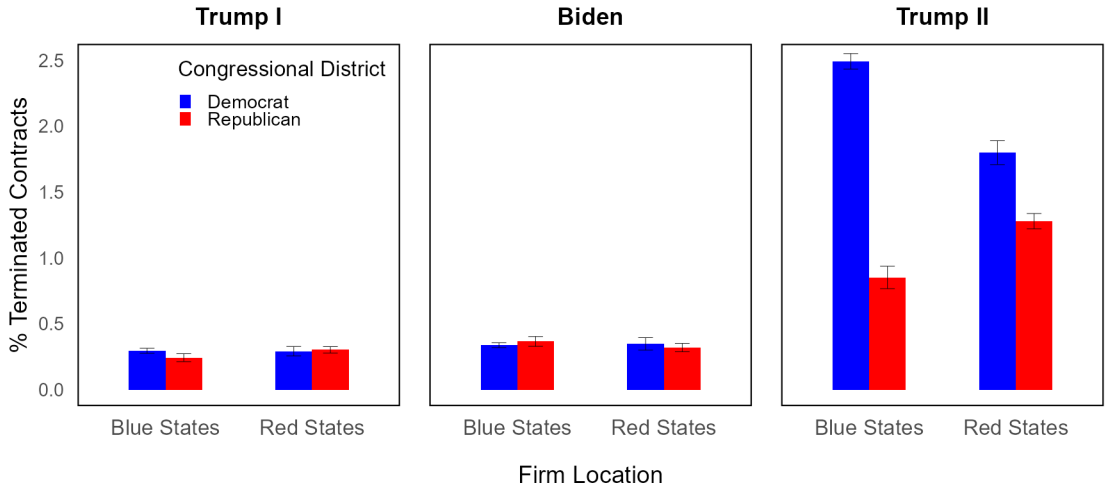


Notes: OLS estimates and 95% confidence intervals. SE clustered by recipient parent firm. Same covariates and specification presented in Equation 1.

are small and indistinguishable from zero across all agency ideology bins at conventional confidence levels. By contrast, under the second Trump administration, agency ideology is a strong moderator of the association between firms' donations and the probability of contract termination. We find that the average effects reported in Table 2 are concentrated among contracts awarded by liberal agencies. A one SD increase in the amounts donated to Republicans decreases the probability of termination by approximately 4 p.p., 50% compared to the baseline average termination rate among contracts awarded by liberal agencies. A one SD increase in amounts donated to Democrats has an even larger, though opposite, effect on the probability of termination (4.6 p.p.), with an effect size equal to 58% of the average termination rate in the sub-sample. For moderate agencies, the estimated effects are smaller in magnitude but precisely estimated, whereas we find no effects of firms' donations for the subset of contracts awarded by conservative agencies.

Electoral Geography. We now turn to the geographic dimension of targeting and test whether areas more favorable to the president's party were less likely to experience terminations, and whether in such areas the association between firms' campaign donations and the probability of termination is muted. We split our sample of contracts into four non-overlapping sub-samples based on whether the firm is located in a blue state-blue district,

Figure 5: Percentage of Terminated Contracts by District and State Partisanship.



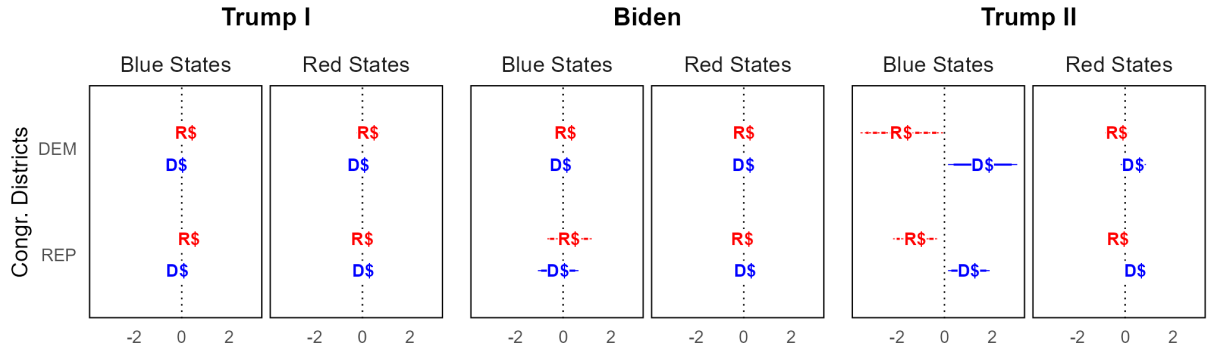
Notes: Percentage of terminated contracts by district and state partisanship. District partisanship is measured by the party of the candidate who won the district, while state partisanship is based on the presidential candidate who received the majority of votes in the state.

blue state-red district, red state-red district, or red state-blue district.

Figure 5 shows the percentage of terminated contracts among all active contracts in each sub-sample across the three administrations. During the first Trump and Biden administrations, the termination rate is just above 0.30%, and is similar across states and district partisanship. The second Trump administration presents a starkly different pattern. Regardless of state partisanship, contracts awarded to firms in Democratic districts are more likely to be terminated than those in Republican districts. The partisan gap is largest in blue states, where firms in Democratic districts face a termination probability nearly three times that of firms in Republican districts. In red states, firms in Democratic districts are 40% more likely to face termination than those in Republican districts.

In addition to the different baseline probabilities of terminations, we further examine whether the association between firms' donations and contract termination varies by state and district partisanship. For each sub-sample, we estimate Equation (1) and present the results in Figure 6. Each pair of panels displays the estimated effects of donations to the Republican Party (red) and the Democratic Party (blue) across the four combinations of

Figure 6: Firms' Donations and Contract Terminations: Heterogeneity by States' and Districts' Partisanship.



Notes: OLS estimates and 95% confidence intervals. SE clustered by recipient parent firm. Same covariates and specification presented in Equation 1.

district and state partisanship, separately for each administration.

The results confirm that the moderating effect of electoral geography is much more pronounced during the second Trump administration compared to the two prior administrations. During the first Trump and Biden administrations, we find no effects of firms' donations in either combination of state and district partisanship.

By contrast, it is during the second Trump administration that stronger patterns emerge. The effects of firms' donations are driven primarily by contracts associated with the least Republican-leaning locations, namely Democratic districts in blue states. The estimated coefficients are approximately twice as large compared to those reported in Table 2 (i.e., -1.90 for donations to Republicans and 1.7 for donations to Democrats).[7]

Taken together, these heterogeneity analyses suggest that contract cancellations under the second Trump administration were concentrated in agencies and locations that were politically unfavorable or ideologically misaligned with it. At the same time, contracts were less likely to be terminated if awarded to firms that donated greater amounts to the Republican Party. The fact that these patterns emerge only mildly under the Biden administration

[7]As an additional analysis, we divide states into the president's core, swing, and non-core states and find similar results (see Figure F.5).

points to DOGE as an important institutional mechanism through which the administration pursued multiple political goals simultaneously and at scale.

Discussion

The Department of Government Efficiency represents a major institutional expansion in the way presidents exert control over administrative agencies. In this paper, we have used this case in contemporary American politics to shed new light on how presidents can use politicized bureaucracies to pursue policy and electoral goals while defying Congressional oversight and internal bureaucratic resistance.

Our findings paint a consistent picture: contract terminations under DOGE reflected the president's policy and electoral priorities simultaneously. Termination rates were lower in agencies ideologically aligned with the president's conservative agenda, among Republican donor firms, and in politically favorable geographic areas. These patterns are consistent with an administration weighing electoral and policy considerations alongside the political payoff of cancellation. Whether DOGE succeeded in its stated mission of cutting waste and fraud is a separate question, and one beyond the scope of this paper. Yet what the evidence does show is that these patterns have no clear precedent in prior administrations, underscoring the distinctiveness of the Trump II-DOGE era.

We believe these findings can stimulate further discussion and inquiry into the second Trump administration as a turning point for the study of American political institutions. While our focus is government contracting, there are reasons to expect medium- and long-term consequences for bureaucratic capacity and public trust in government as well. Drawing on Rogowski (2020), who finds that the loss of expertise significantly reduces public confidence in the bureaucracy, layoffs and voluntary departures driven by DOGE are likely to undermine agencies' ability to produce impartial, evidence-based information, eroding the trust that voters and the public place in government institutions. The effects on bureaucratic capacity may prove equally lasting. The workforce reductions brought about by DOGE could

take years to reverse, with lasting consequences for public service delivery and the federal government's ability to address pressing policy challenges. As Gailmard and Gailmard (2025, 4) notes, bureaucratic capacity is like an old car: "once turned off, it may require a significant lag to warm back up."

Finally, it is plausible that many institutional changes carried out by the Trump administration will not be easily undone, and other presidents might deploy such organizations to quickly achieve targeted objectives. Therefore, our study can inform broader debates on the presidency and the administrative state. As Skowronek (1997) argues, not only do presidents make policies, but they also make politics, and their actions can redefine the scope of presidential power. With the growing acceptance, both within branches of government and among sections of the public, of the unitary executive theory, which advocates for granting presidents sweeping control over the entire executive branch, future presidents may enjoy considerably greater influence over the federal bureaucracy. This creates greater potential for "deconstructive" presidents to bring about radical change in how the executive branch functions (Skowronek, Dearborn, and King 2021). The socio-political forces that have turned the Republican Party against the administrative state are likely to shape future administrations as well, and we may be witnessing the beginning of a sustained expansion in presidential control over federal agencies (Howell and Moe 2025). While greater executive power can produce a more responsive government, our findings illustrate how systematically it can also be wielded for particularistic and electoral ends.

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Appendix

A Active and Terminated Contracts

Table A.1: Sample Definition for Active Contracts

.

N.	Step	# Contracts
1	Active Indefinite Delivery Vehicles (IDVs) + awards as of Jan 20th, 2025	704,750
2	Remove Indefinite Delivery Vehicles (IDVs)	580,719
3	Remove contracts awarded to government entities	572,040
4	Remove contracts performed outside the U.S.	545,361

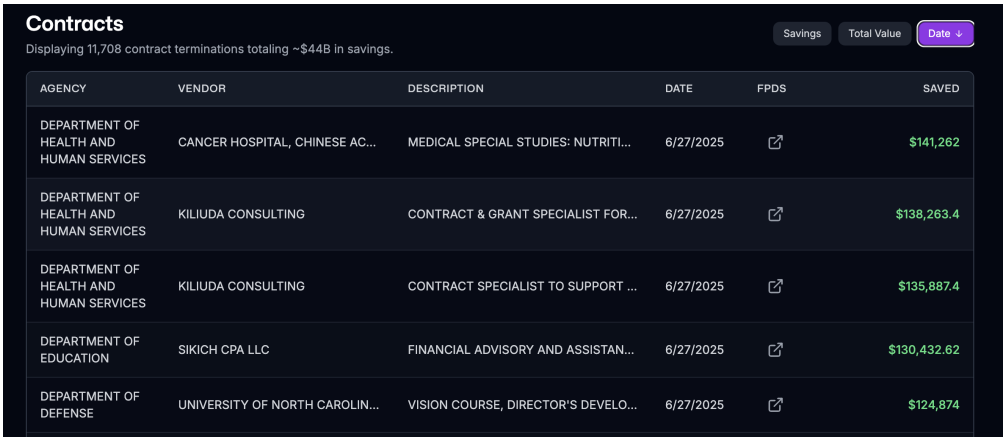
Notes: Number of active contracts remaining after each sample restriction.

Table A.2: Number of Active Contracts Signed in Fiscal Year 2004-2025.

Fiscal Year	# Active Contracts
2004	22
2005	48
2006	111
2007	1,028
2008	1,088
2009	374
2010	199
2011	331
2012	178
2013	226
2014	283
2015	799
2016	1,144
2017	1,419
2018	2,295
2019	5,854
2020	17,284
2021	27,278
2022	43,291
2023	69,446
2024	261,826
2025	110,837

Notes: Number of active contracts as of January 20, 2025, signed over time, during the period from FY2004 to FY2025.

Figure A.1: DOGE Wall of Receipts.



Notes: Screenshot of DOGE's *Wall of Receipts* with information on awarding agency, vendor, award description, date posted on the website, FPDS link, and estimated amount saved.

A1 Linking DOGE-terminated Contracts to FPDS Records

From the FPDS URL of each contract reported on the DOGE website, we extract a combination of unique contract identifiers, including parent award ID, award ID, transaction number, and awarding agency code. We use these fields to merge this data with our sample of active contracts.

Of the DOGE-terminated contracts, we matched 89% to the 704,750 active contracts. Finally, once we impose the sample restrictions on non-IDVs performed in the United States, we obtain 8,924 DOGE-terminated contracts out of 545,361 active awards.

Table A.3: DOGE Contract Removal: Difference in Contract and Firm Characteristics.

	Terminated Contracts				
	Removed		Never Removed		
Variable	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Difference
Awarded Firm Characteristic					
Foreign Owned	0.028	0.164	0.034	0.182	−0.007
Women Owned	0.234	0.423	0.203	0.402	0.031*
Veteran Owned	0.127	0.334	0.117	0.321	0.011
Minority Owned	0.234	0.424	0.287	0.452	−0.053*
Non-profit	0.064	0.245	0.083	0.276	−0.019*
Small Business	0.519	0.500	0.603	0.489	−0.084*
C8A Participant	0.154	0.361	0.169	0.375	−0.015
Historically Underutilized	0.055	0.228	0.058	0.233	−0.003
Contract Characteristic					
In-Scope Cost Overruns	0.087	0.282	0.082	0.275	0.005
Delays	0.082	0.274	0.090	0.287	−0.008
Base and All Options Value (Million $)	7.416	70.540	8.368	116.604	−0.952
Predicted Termination	0.696	0.254	0.661	0.253	0.034*

Notes: Difference in means for various firm and contract characteristics between terminated contracts that are removed at least once from the DOGE website across different snapshots and contracts that are never removed. Removed contracts do not include the April 8 snapshot, where nearly all contracts disappeared from the website.

A2 Differences Between DOGE and FPDS Records

Table A.4 reports the average characteristics of terminated contracts based on FPDS and DOGE records, as well as the difference in means and the p-value of a two-sided t-test. We report two sets of covariates, contract-level characteristics and firm-level characteristics.

Table A.4: Differences in Contracts' and Firms' Characteristics between DOGE and FPDS Terminated Contracts

	Terminated Contracts			
	FPDS (N = 10,490)	DOGE (N = 8,924)	Difference	p-value
Awarded Firm Characteristic				
Foreign Owned	0.026	0.031	-0.01	0.024
Women Owned	0.206	0.216	-0.01	0.084
Veteran Owned	0.110	0.121	-0.01	0.015
Minority Owned	0.230	0.265	-0.03	0.000
Non-profit	0.062	0.075	-0.01	0.001
Small Business	0.588	0.567	0.02	0.004
C8A Participant	0.134	0.163	-0.03	0.000
Historically Underutilized	0.043	0.057	-0.01	0.000
Contract Characteristic				
In-Scope Cost Overruns	0.092	0.084	0.01	0.053
Delays	0.103	0.087	0.02	0.000
Base and All Options Value (Million $)	5.014	7.962	-2.95	0.023
Predicted Termination	0.701	0.676	0.03	0.000

Notes: Sample means for contracts terminated for convenience according to FPDS (column 1) and contracts terminated according to DOGE's *Wall of Receipts* (column 2), along with their difference and associated p-value from a two-sided t-test.

B Linking Firms with Campaign Donation Data

To match awarded firms to campaign donation records, we perform a multi-step matching process. While federal contracting data include information on both the subsidiary and the parent firm awarded the contract, our focus is on parent firms, given the higher probability that larger firms make donations and by their ability to protect subsidiary firms. We combine parent firm names from the three samples of active contracts we analyzed, one for each presidential administration in 2017, 2021, and 2025 (before any of the sample restrictions described in Table A.1). The number of unique parent firms is 160,739.

OpenSecrets provides information on FEC-registered committees, including the committee name, a unique FEC identifier, and the committee's ultimate organization name (i.e., parent company) for election cycles from 2012 to 2022. To date, OpenSecrets has not released

data for the 2024 election cycle. To ensure we are not missing new firm PACs established in 2024 or firm PACs that were not included in OpenSecrets data, we accessed corporate committee lists from the FEC website and combined them with the OpenSecrets committee list.

We match firm parent names to the multiple firm/committee names in OpenSecrets/FEC lists. Regardless of whether firms had awarded a contract during one or more of the three administrations we study, we match whether they ever had a PAC during the election cycles from 2012 to 2024.

The matching process consists of three steps. First, we perform fuzzy matching to link the two records. We use the `fedmatch` package in R, using Jaro-Winkler distance with a threshold of 0.2. We also perform another round of matching using transformer-based models for record linkage, using the `linktransformer` library provided by Arora and Dell 2023. This step returns pairs of parent firm name-committee name with a similarity score. Second, we assess the quality of the matches using large language models. We pass each pair of matched strings to OpenAI's API, asking the model to decide whether the two strings indeed refer to the same entity. Third, we manually check all instances where GPT confirmed the matches. Our matching strategy thus prioritizes the exclusion of false positives, accepting a smaller but higher-confidence matched sample. We finally keep only matches confirmed by both the GPT model and our manual checks.

As a result, of the 160,739 unique parent firms, we match 1,803 firms to their PACs (1.12%). When applying the sampling restrictions described in Table A.1, of the 121,520 unique firms, we match 1.35% to a firm PAC making donations in the period 2012-2024. Table B.5 shows the donor rate by presidential administration.

Table B.5: Record Linkage Results: Parent Firms and Matched PAC.

Administration (Year)	# Parent Firms	# Matched to PAC	% Matched to PAC
Trump I (2017)	74,486	1,130	1.52
Biden (2021)	64,618	1,054	1.63
Trump II (2025)	55,140	1,246	2.26
All	121,520	1,643	1.35

To track donations, we first extract the FEC committee ID from the matched firm PACs, which we use to query the FEC data and retrieve all transactions originating from that committee ID/PAC to candidates and committees. Candidate partisanship is determined by linking candidate IDs to party affiliations recorded by the FEC. For committees, we assign partisanship through a three-step process. First, we use FEC-reported linkages between candidates (and their parties) and committees. Second, we classify the Republican and Democratic national committees accordingly. Third, using OpenSecrets, we identify Super PACs that–despite lacking formal party ties–primarily supported one presidential candidate in the 2024 race, and label their donations accordingly.

C Estimating Contracts' Predicted Probability of Termination

To estimate the predicted probability of contract termination given the text of the transaction description, we perform the following steps:

1) pre-process contract descriptions;

2) construct a contract-feature matrix X with unigrams and bigrams, where x_{cj} denotes the frequency of feature j in contract c;

3) apply tf-idf reweighting to adjust feature importance;

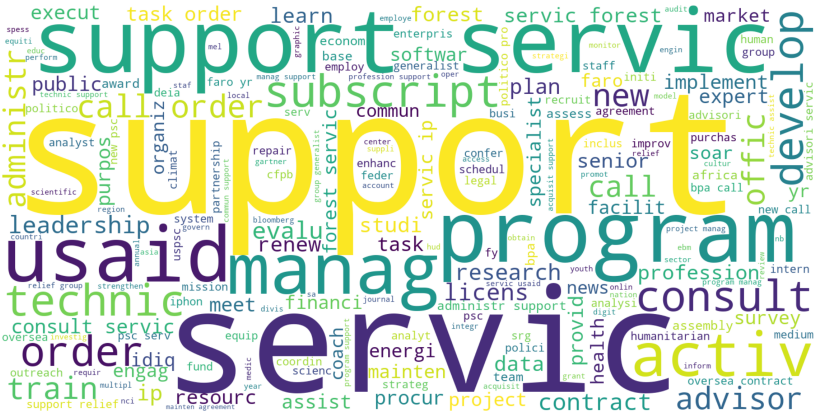
4) train and validate a random forest classifier on contracts awarded to non-donor firms, using the weighted text features to predict whether a contract was terminated for convenience; and

5) compute the predicted termination probability for each contract, which we include in our set of contract covariates $\mathbf{z}_i$.

Training is limited to contracts awarded to non-donor firms to avoid bias from campaign contributions. To handle class imbalance, we use all terminated contracts and a random sample of non-terminated contracts twice as large. We achieve satisfactory performance metrics, with accuracy on a held-out test set of 0.83 and F1 0.72.

Figure C.2 shows the most important words in predicting contract termination. "Service" and "support" are among the most important text features, which also comprise words such as "leadership", "expert", "train", and "consult". Out of 838,732 unique words used as predictors, "climat" ranks 82nd in terms of importance, and "environment" 116th.

Figure C.2: Most Important Text Features in Predicting Contract Termination.



Notes: The word cloud reports uni-grams and bi-grams that most strongly predict contract termination. The n-grams are identified with a random forest classifier that uses unigrams and bigrams of the description of the contract as inputs.

D Agency Ideology

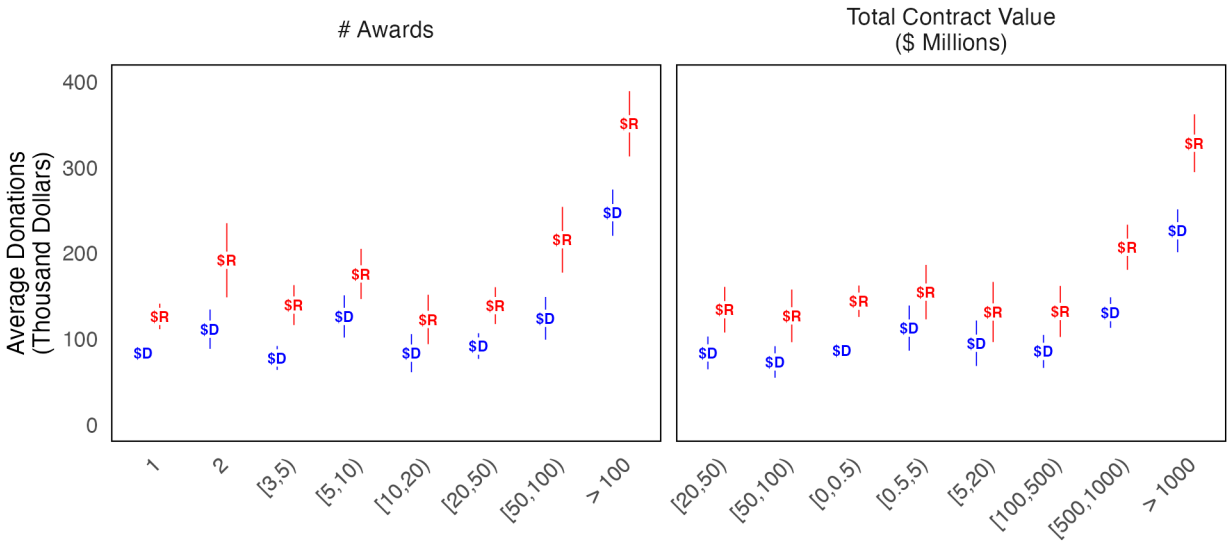
Table D.6: List of Agencies with Matched Ideology Estimate.

Agency	Ideology Estimate	Ideology Bin
Consumer Financial Protection Bureau	-1.94	Liberal
Peace Corps	-1.80	Liberal
Agency for International Development	-1.59	Liberal
Department of Health and Human Services	-1.57	Liberal
Environmental Protection Agency	-1.51	Liberal
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	-1.50	Liberal
Department of Education	-1.44	Liberal
Consumer Product Safety Commission	-1.19	Liberal
Department of Labor	-1.17	Liberal
Federal Labor Relations Authority	-1.15	Liberal
National Labor Relations Board	-1.14	Liberal
Merit Systems Protection Board	-1.03	Liberal
Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service	-1.01	Liberal
Corporation for National and Community Service	-1.00	Liberal
Department of Housing and Urban Development	-0.95	Liberal
Department of the Interior	-0.82	Liberal
Department of State	-0.72	Moderate
National Science Foundation	-0.69	Moderate
Federal Housing Finance Agency	-0.67	Moderate
Administrative Conference of the U.S.	-0.62	Moderate
Social Security Administration	-0.54	Moderate
Federal Trade Commission	-0.43	Moderate
Millennium Challenge Corporation	-0.34	Moderate
Department of Justice	-0.34	Moderate
Office of Personnel Management	-0.32	Moderate
Department of Energy	-0.24	Moderate
Department of Transportation	-0.14	Moderate
Department of Commerce	-0.13	Moderate
Federal Election Commission	-0.12	Moderate
National Archives and Records Administration	-0.11	Moderate
National Transportation Safety Board	-0.11	Moderate
General Services Administration	-0.04	Moderate
Federal Communications Commission	-0.03	Conservative
Small Business Administration	-0.03	Conservative
Federal Maritime Commission	-0.01	Conservative
National Aeronautics and Space Administration	0.05	Conservative
Export-Import Bank of the United States	0.10	Conservative
International Trade Commission	0.18	Conservative
Department of Agriculture	0.25	Conservative
Nuclear Regulatory Commission	0.34	Conservative
Commodity Futures Trading Commission	0.60	Conservative
Department of the Treasury	0.64	Conservative
Department of Veterans Affairs	0.67	Conservative
Securities and Exchange Commission	0.73	Conservative
Department of Homeland Security	0.93	Conservative
Overseas Private Investment Corporation	1.05	Conservative
Department of Defense	1.88	Conservative

Notes: List of federal agencies with available ideology score from Richardson, Clinton, and Lewis (2018). Agencies are assigned to three equal-sized ideology bins.

E Summary Statistics

Figure E.3: Average Donations by Firms' Involvement in Procurement.



Notes: Average firm contributions to the Democratic and Republican parties based on the number of contracts awarded (left panel) and the total value of awards (right panel).

Table E.7: Distribution of Firms' Donation Amounts.

	Firms' Donations (N = 55,140)				
Party	Min	Median	Mean	Max	SD
Republican	0	0	102,525	2,515,000	311,038
Democratic	0	0	70,031	2,024,250	208,946
Other/Non-Partisan	0	0	1,168	33,500	3,630

Notes: Descriptive statistics of firms' contributions to the Republican, Democratic, and Other parties.

Table E.8: Descriptive Statistics of Contract and Firm-level Covariates.

Variable	Min	Median	Mean	Max	SD
Awarded Firm Characteristic					
Foreign Owned	0	0.00	0.04	1.00	0.20
Women Owned	0	0.00	0.12	1.00	0.33
Veteran Owned	0	0.00	0.10	1.00	0.31
Minority Owned	0	0.00	0.15	1.00	0.36
Non-profit	0	0.00	0.03	1.00	0.17
Small Business	0	1.00	0.58	1.00	0.49
C8A Participant	0	0.00	0.07	1.00	0.25
Historically Underutilized	0	0.00	0.04	1.00	0.19
Contract Characteristic					
In-Scope Cost Overruns	0	0.00	0.07	1.00	0.26
Delays	0	0.00	0.08	1.00	0.28
Base and All Options Value (Million $)	0	0.05	4.99	70846.62	224.18
Predicted Termination	0	0.08	0.16	1.00	0.20

Notes: Descriptive statistics of awarded firms' and contracts' characteristics from the sample of 545,361 active contracts.

F Robustness Tests

Table F.9: Firms' Donations and Contract Termination: With and Without Covariates.

	DV: Contract Terminated (× 100)					
	DOGE			FPDS		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
$ Donated to Republicans	-0.54**	-0.42**	-0.86***	-0.14	-0.24*	-0.87**
	(0.27)	(0.17)	(0.29)	(0.41)	(0.14)	(0.35)
$ Donated to Democrats	0.18	0.49***	0.82***	-0.09	0.36**	0.82***
	(0.31)	(0.18)	(0.26)	(0.37)	(0.15)	(0.30)
Foreign Owned			0.05			-0.05
			(0.24)			(0.22)
Women Owned			0.33**			0.36***
			(0.14)			(0.13)
Veteran Owned			0.09			0.03
			(0.11)			(0.11)
Minority Owned			-0.38***			-0.36***
			(0.14)			(0.13)
Non-profit			-0.62			-0.71*
			(0.54)			(0.43)
Historically Underutilized			0.40**			-0.05
			(0.18)			(0.17)
Small Business			-0.16			-0.19*
			(0.12)			(0.11)
C8A Participant			0.08			-0.07
			(0.21)			(0.20)
In-Scope Cost Overruns			-0.11***			-0.26***
			(0.04)			(0.05)
Delays			-0.03			0.01
			(0.02)			(0.03)
Base and All Options Value (log)			-0.02			-0.09***
			(0.02)			(0.02)
Predicted Pr. of Termination			17.61***			26.20***
			(0.99)			(0.91)
R^2	0.00	0.19	0.23	0.00	0.13	0.21
Observations	545,361	543,761	543,726	545,361	543,761	543,726
Mean DV (% Terminated Contracts)	1.64	1.63	1.63	1.92	1.92	1.92
Agency-Year Start of Contract FE		✓	✓		✓	✓
Product Code FE		✓	✓		✓	✓
Congressional District FE		✓	✓		✓	✓

Notes: OLS estimates. SE clustered by recipient parent firm in parentheses. The outcome variable is a dummy equal to 100 for terminated contract and 0 otherwise. Signif. codes: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.10.

Table F.10: Firms' Donations and Contract Termination: Sample of Donor Firms.

	DV: Contract Terminated (× 100)			
	DOGE		FPDS	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
$ Donated to Republicans	-0.93***	-1.13***	-0.92***	-1.13***
	(0.28)	(0.32)	(0.25)	(0.30)
$ Donated to Democrats	1.03***	1.18***	0.93***	1.07***
	(0.32)	(0.33)	(0.24)	(0.27)
Firm Covariates		✓		✓
Contract Covariates		✓		✓
R^2	0.24	0.24	0.15	0.16
Observations	86,744	86,734	86,744	86,734
Mean DV (% Terminated Contracts)	0.77	0.77	1.08	1.08
Agency-Year Start of Contract FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Product Code FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Congressional District FE	✓	✓	✓	✓

Notes: OLS estimates. SE clustered by recipient parent firm in parentheses. The outcome variable is a dummy equal to 100 for terminated contract and 0 otherwise. Signif. codes: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.10.

Table F.11: Firms' Donations and Contract Termination: Winsorizing Firms' Donations.

	DV: Contract Terminated (× 100)					
	DOGE			FPDS		
Firms Donating Less Than ($ Million):	0.5	1.0	1.5	0.5	1.0	1.5
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
$ Donated to Republicans	-1.29**	-1.21***	-0.56***	-1.65**	-0.95**	-0.52***
	(0.52)	(0.37)	(0.18)	(0.68)	(0.44)	(0.20)
$ Donated to Democrats	1.32**	1.15***	0.63***	1.65*	0.92**	0.57***
	(0.60)	(0.33)	(0.19)	(0.86)	(0.38)	(0.20)
Firm Covariates	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Contract Covariates	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.22	0.22	0.22
Observations	498,507	519,933	539,569	498,507	519,933	539,569
Mean DV (% Terminated Contracts)	1.75	1.71	1.65	2.01	1.95	1.89
Agency-Year Start of Contract FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Product Code FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Congressional District FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Notes: OLS estimates. SE clustered by recipient parent firm in parentheses. The outcome variable is a dummy equal to 100 for terminated contract and 0 otherwise. Signif. codes: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.10.

Table F.12: Firms' Donations and Contract Termination: Alternative Fixed Effects Specification.

	DV: Contract Terminated (× 100)					
	DOGE			FPDS		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
$ Donated to Republicans	-0.71**	-0.90***	-0.87***	-0.73**	-0.76**	-0.72**
	(0.28)	(0.28)	(0.25)	(0.35)	(0.36)	(0.31)
$ Donated to Democrats	0.66***	0.82***	0.82***	0.68**	0.67**	0.67**
	(0.26)	(0.26)	(0.25)	(0.31)	(0.32)	(0.29)
Firm Covariates	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Contract Covariates	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.30	0.34	0.34	0.26	0.29	0.29
Observations	539,549	537,056	536,874	539,549	537,056	536,874
Mean DV (% Terminated Contracts)	1.61	1.57	1.57	1.90	1.87	1.87
Agency-Year Start of Contract FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Agency-Product Code FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Congressional District FE	✓			✓		
Agency-Congressional District FE		✓	✓		✓	✓
Agency-Year End of Contract FE			✓			✓

Notes: OLS estimates. SE clustered by recipient parent firm in parentheses. The outcome variable is a dummy equal to 100 for terminated contract and 0 otherwise. Signif. codes: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.10.

Table F.13: Firms' Donations and Contract Termination: Removing District of Columbia and USAID.

	DV: Contract Terminated (× 100)			
	DOGE		FPDS	
Drop:	DC	USAID	DC	USAID
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
$ Donated to Republicans	-0.87***	-0.84***	-0.89**	-0.85**
	(0.29)	(0.28)	(0.35)	(0.34)
$ Donated to Democrats	0.83***	0.80***	0.85***	0.80***
	(0.26)	(0.26)	(0.30)	(0.30)
Firm Covariates	✓	✓	✓	✓
Contract Covariates	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.21	0.18	0.19	0.17
Observations	533,369	542,559	533,369	542,559
Mean DV (% Terminated Contracts)	1.49	1.49	1.79	1.78
Agency-Year Start of Contract FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Product Code FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Congressional District FE	✓	✓	✓	✓

Notes: OLS estimates. SE clustered by recipient parent firm in parentheses. The outcome variable is a dummy equal to 100 for terminated contract and 0 otherwise. Signif. codes: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.10.

Figure F.4: Firms' Donations and Contract Termination: Removing One Agency at a Time.

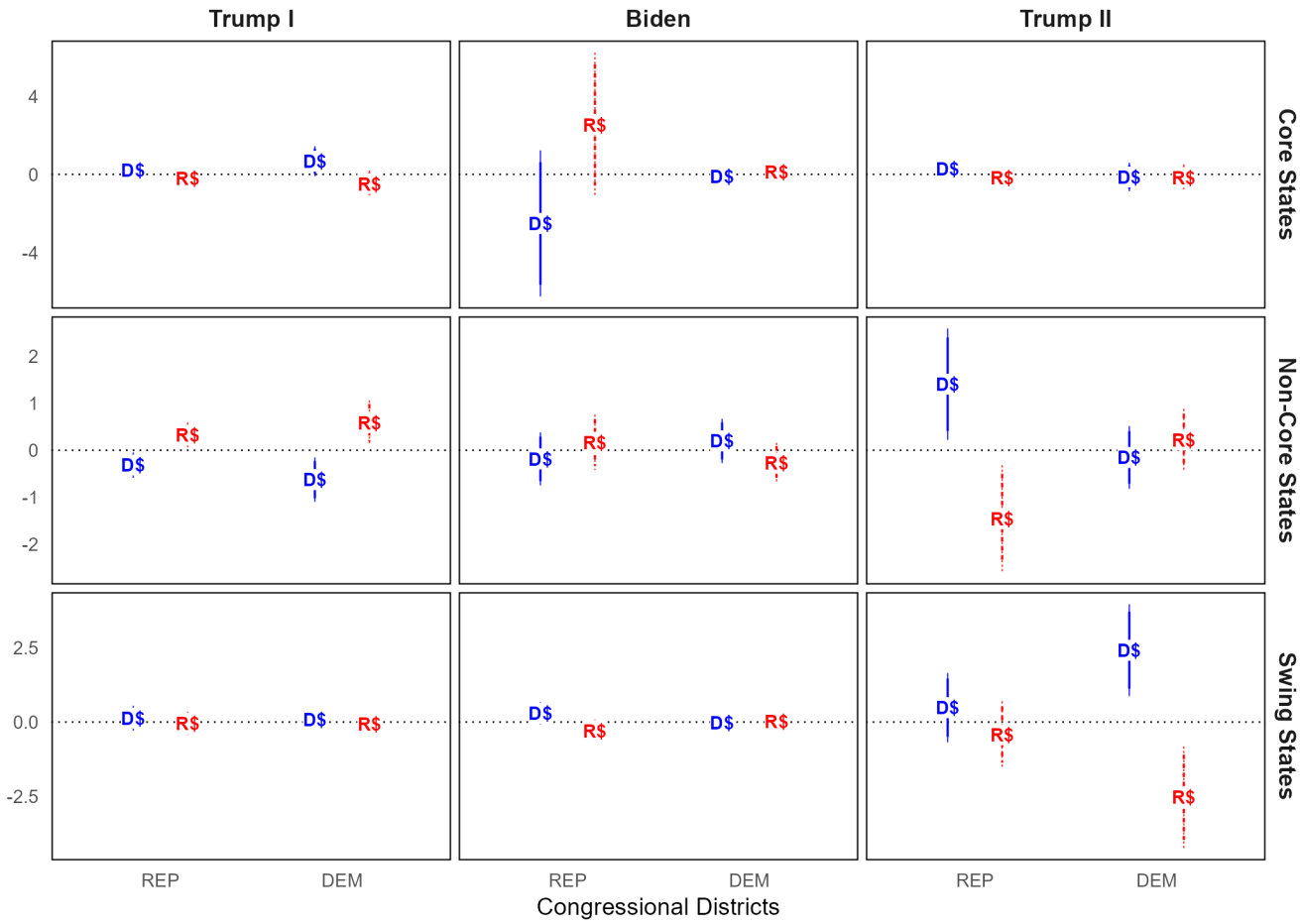
Notes: t-statistic of two coefficients for firms' donations to the Republican and Democratic parties, obtained from sub-samples of the dataset excluding the agency reported on the vertical axis. The outcome variable is a dummy equal to 100 for terminated contract and 0 otherwise.

Table F.14: Firms' Donations and Contract Termination: Large Contracts and Large Contractors.

Sample:	DV: Contract Terminated (× 100)					
	All Contracts		Large Contracts (Above $250,000)		Large Contractors (> 100 Awards)	
	DOGE	FPDS	DOGE	FPDS	DOGE	FPDS
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
$ Donated to Republicans	-0.86***	-0.87**	-1.36***	-0.87**	-0.75***	-0.79***
	(0.29)	(0.35)	(0.46)	(0.42)	(0.24)	(0.30)
$ Donated to Democrats	0.82***	0.82***	1.54***	0.95**	0.64***	0.72***
	(0.26)	(0.30)	(0.48)	(0.40)	(0.23)	(0.26)
Firm Covariates	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Contract Covariates	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
R^2	0.23	0.21	0.26	0.27	0.25	0.17
Observations	543,726	543,726	150,509	150,509	290,382	290,382
Mean DV (% Terminated Contracts)	1.63	1.92	3.53	3.41	0.84	1.30
Agency-Year Start of Contract FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Product Code FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Congressional District FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Notes: OLS estimates. SE clustered by recipient parent firm in parentheses. The outcome variable is a dummy equal to 100 for terminated contract and 0 otherwise. Signif. codes: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.10.

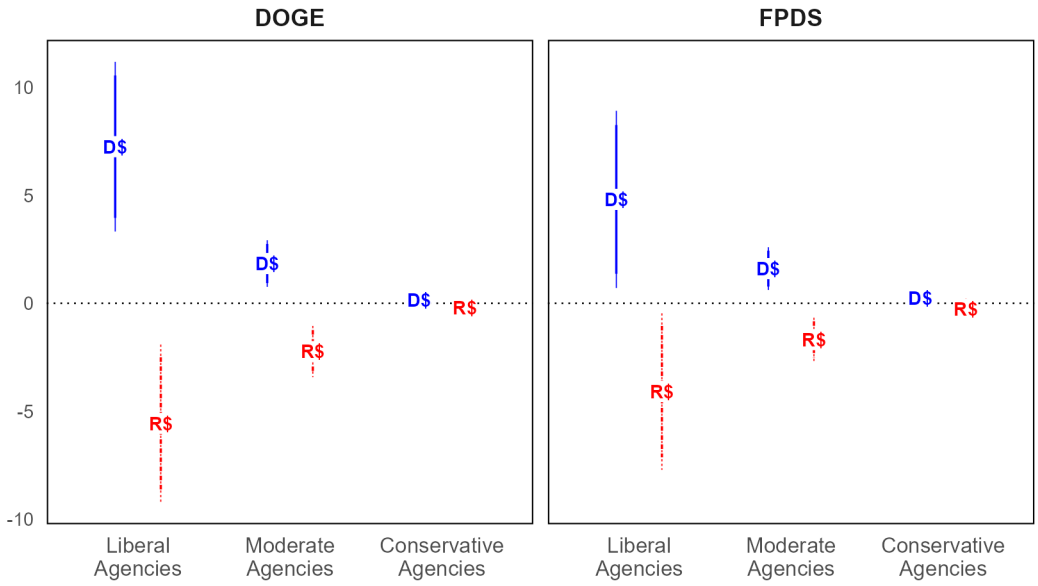
Figure F.5: Firms' Donations and Contract Termination: Heterogeneity by States' and Districts' Partisanship.



Notes: OLS estimates and 95% confidence intervals. SE clustered by recipient parent firm. Same covariates and specification presented in Equation 1.

F1 Heterogeneity Analysis: Comparing DOGE vs FPDS Terminations

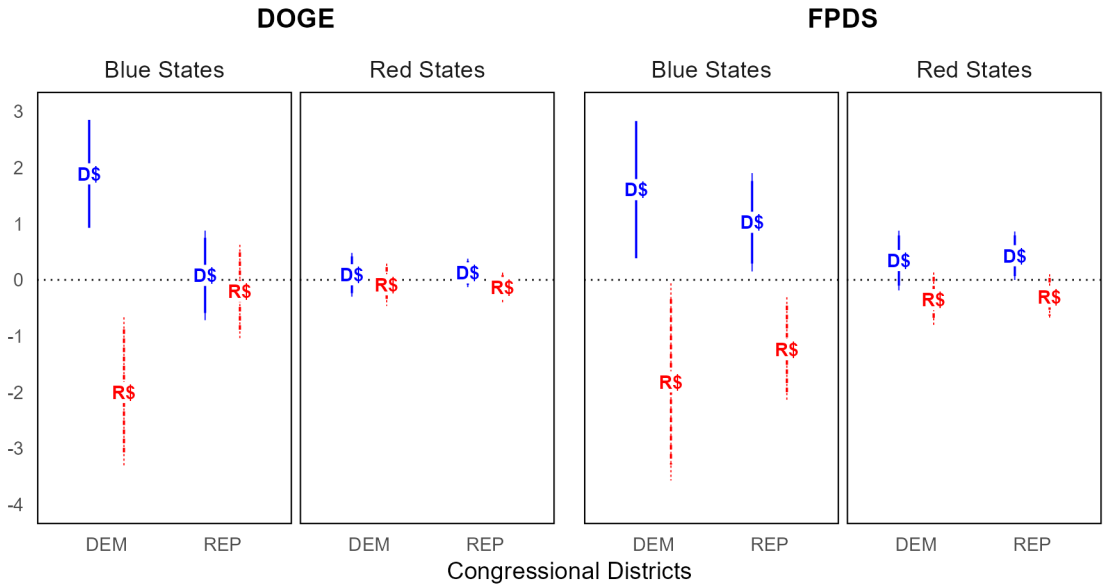
Figure F.6: Heterogeneity by Agency Ideology.



Federal Agencies	N. Awarded Contracts	% Terminated Contracts	
		DOGE	FPDS
Liberal Agencies	52,607	8.74	7.84
Moderate Agencies	96,981	1.92	2.30
Conservative Agencies	392,162	0.59	1.00

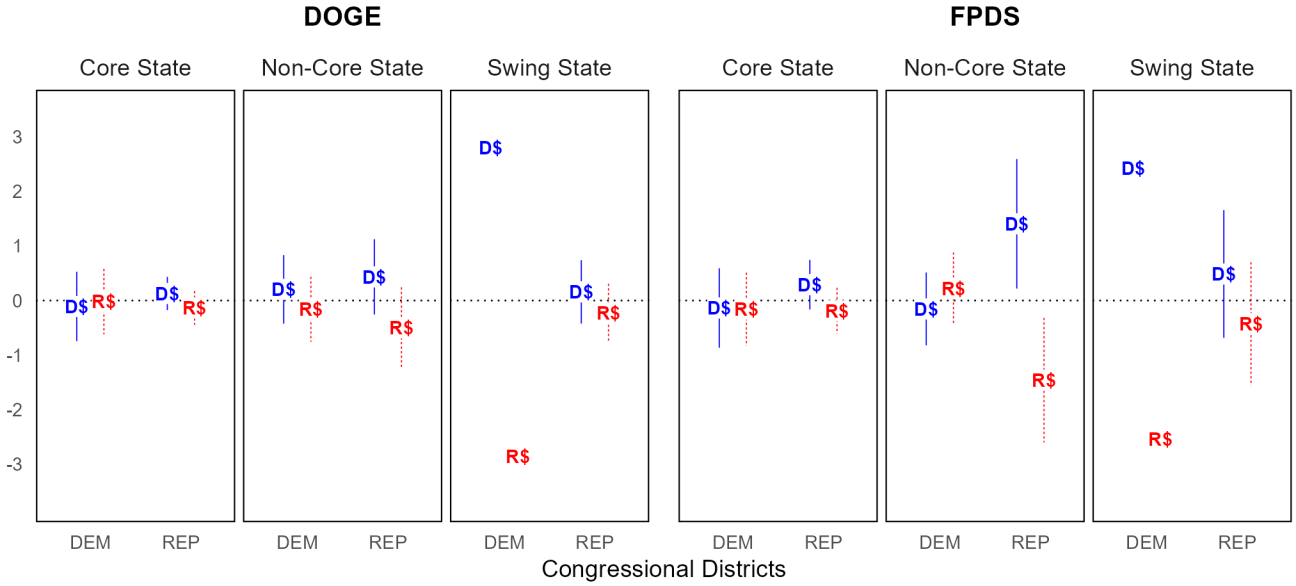
Notes: OLS estimates and 95% confidence intervals. SE clustered by recipient parent firm. Same covariates and specification presented in Equation 1.

Figure F.7: Heterogeneity by States' and Districts' Partisanship.



Notes: OLS estimates and 95% confidence intervals. SE clustered by recipient parent firm. Same covariates and specification presented in Equation 1.

Figure F.8: Heterogeneity by States' and Districts' Partisanship: Core, Non-core, Swing States.



Notes: OLS estimates and 95% confidence intervals. SE clustered by recipient parent firm. Same covariates and specification presented in Equation 1.

G Addressing Alternative Explanations

G1 DOGE Targeting Newly-Entered Firms.

It may be the case that DOGE was canceling contracts awarded to Democratic donors because many of these firms entered federal contracting for the first time during the previous Biden administration due to their political connections. Since these firms have no prior experience in federal contracting, they may be less efficient, which could justify DOGE's decision to target them.

To address this explanation, we create a binary indicator that equals 1 if a firm had never competed in federal contracting before October 1st, 2020–the beginning of fiscal year 2021–, otherwise 0. These new entrants account for about six percent of our contract sample, and only 137 Republican donors and 136 Democratic donors fall into this category.

We then interact this binary indicator with the measures of firms' donations to the Republican and Democratic parties in the regression model 1. Table G.15 presents the results. The findings suggest that Democratic donors are still more likely to have their contracts terminated, even if they were not new entrants during the Biden administration.

Table G.15: Heterogeneity By New Entry After FY 2021.

	DV: Contract Terminated (× 100)	
	DOGE	FPDS
	(1)	(2)
New Entrants After FY2021	0.15	0.57**
	(0.23)	(0.28)
$ Donated to Republicans × New Entrants After FY2021	1.56	0.86
	(4.22)	(4.49)
New Entrants After FY2021 × $ Donated to Democrats	-1.48	-0.97
	(3.46)	(3.69)
$ Donated to Republicans	-0.86***	-0.87**
	(0.29)	(0.35)
$ Donated to Democrats	0.82***	0.82***
	(0.26)	(0.30)
Firm Covariates	✓	✓
Contract Covariates	✓	✓
R^2	0.23	0.21
Observations	543,726	543,726
Mean DV (% Terminated Contracts)	1.63	1.92
Agency-Year Start of Contract FE	✓	✓
Product Code FE	✓	✓
Congressional District FE	✓	✓

Notes: OLS estimates. SE clustered by recipient parent firm in parentheses. The outcome variable is a dummy equal to 100 for terminated contract and 0 otherwise. Signif. codes: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.10.

G2 Disproportional Number of Contracts Awarded to Republican and Democratic Donor Firms.

If Republican donors held fewer active contracts at the outset of DOGE's activities, our findings might simply reflect a mechanical effort by DOGE to reduce the disproportionate number of contracts awarded to Democratic donors in order to restore balance. In this case, DOGE's targeting would not necessarily indicate an intentional attempt to penalize political opponents or favor allies. However, the data shows firms donating more to the Republican Party than to the Democratic Party were more likely to have active contracts as of January 20, 2025. Table G.16 shows the correlation for three outcomes: number of contracts, average

dollar value of contracts, and total dollar value of contracts.

Table G.16: Republican Donor Firms and Number and Value of Awarded Contracts.

	DV: log(1 + ...)		
	Number of Contracts (1)	Avg. Value of Contracts (2)	Total Value of Contracts (3)
$REP > $DEM	0.44***	0.72***	1.20***
	(0.13)	(0.26)	(0.34)
R^2	0.01	0.01	0.01
Observations	824	824	824

Notes: OLS estimates. Robust SE in parentheses. The outcome variable is the logarithm of the number of contracts, the average dollar value of contracts, and the total dollar value of contracts. The predictor is a dummy variable equal to 1 if firms donated more to the Republican Party than the Democratic Party. Signif. codes: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.10.

G3 Firms' Location and Campaign Contribution.

The null effects on firms' donations for contracts performed in Red states or congressional districts may be due to firms' strategic decision to make fewer donations. That is, if firms expected Trump to win the 2024 election and were located in Republican-favorable areas, they may have refrained from making substantial campaign donations, anticipating that their location alone would secure them political favor. If few corporate donations are made in Republican-favorable locations, the null effects for contracts associated with these locations might be driven by the lack of significant variation in within-district firms' donations.

To test this possibility, we compare the average and standard deviation of donor firms' donated amounts to the Republican and Democratic parties based on their locations. If firms' campaign contributions are endogenous in the way described above, we would expect the within-district mean and standard deviation of donations to the Republican party to be very small in Republican-leaning areas, which could explain the null results. To assess this, we report the average and standard deviation of firms' donations based on their location in Table G.17.

The table shows that the within-district mean and standard deviation of donations to the Republican party are indeed smaller in Republican-favorable areas. The average firm donations to the Republican party are largest for firms based in blue districts, both within red states ($215,830) and within blue states ($159,419). The same is true for donations to the Democratic party, which are also highest in blue districts. However, the standard deviations are also very large, suggesting that there remains ample variation in firms' donations to both the Republican and Democratic parties in districts and states more or less favorable to the Republican party.

Table G.17: Firms' Donations to Republican/Democratic Parties by Firms' Location.

		Donations to [...] Party REP		DEM	
Firm Location		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Blue States	Democratic	159,410	281,692	116,694	202,447
Blue States	Republican	104,553	164,342	69,483	120,485
Red States	Democratic	215,830	415,077	128,488	268,382
Red States	Republican	128,566	269,238	77,991	182,012

Notes: Average and standard deviation of firms' donations to the Republican and Democratic parties by firms' donations.

H Comparing Trump I, Biden, and Trump II

Table H.18: Descriptive Statistics of Analysis Datasets for Trump I, Biden, Trump II

Variable	Trump I	Biden	Trump II
Contracts			
N. Active Contracts	745,839	699,659	545,361
N. Terminations for Convenience	2,168	2,396	10,490
% Terminations for Convenience	0.29	0.34	1.92
Total Contracts' Value ($ billion)	2,375	2,335	2,719
Firms			
N. Recipient Firms	74,486	64,618	55,140
N. Donor Firms	741	656	824
% Donor Firms	0.99	1.02	1.49
Donations			
Total $ Donated to Republicans ($ million)	151	125	148
Total $ Donated to Democrats ($ million)	76	86	97
N. Donations to Republicans	78,362	57,773	65,285
N. Donations to Democrats	43,278	46,031	48,838

Notes: Summary statistics for all active contracts at the onset of each administration. Donor firms are defined as firms with at least one PAC contribution in the relevant election cycle. Donation amounts are measured in millions of dollars. The percentage of terminated contracts is computed as the share of active contracts terminated for convenience as of September 30 of the first year of each administration.

Table H.19: Descriptive Statistics of Contracts Across Administrations.

N. Terminations	**10,490 (1.92%)**	**2,168 (0.29%)**		**2,396 (0.34%)**	
		2025 − 2017		2025 − 2021	
Variable	Mean 2025	Diff.	p-value	Diff.	p-value
Awarded Firm Characteristic					
Foreign Owned	0.04	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
Women Owned	0.12	0.00	0.38	0.01	0.00
Veteran Owned	0.10	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00
Minority Owned	0.15	0.03	0.00	0.02	0.00
Non-profit	0.03	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
Small Business	0.58	0.07	0.00	0.05	0.00
C8A Participant	0.07	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00
Historically Underutilized	0.04	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
Contract Characteristic					
In-Scope Cost Overruns	0.07	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
Delays	0.08	0.02	0.00	0.01	0.00
Base and All Options Value (Million $)	4.99	1.80	0.00	1.65	0.00
Predicted Pr. of Termination	0.16	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00

Notes: Average characteristics of contracts across administrations. Administration referenced by the first year of the presidential term. Mean 2025 reports the average characteristic of contracts during the second Trump administration. Columns 2-3 report the difference in means and the associated p-value from a two-sided t-test between the second Trump administration and the first Trump administration (2025-2017). Columns 4-5 report the difference in means and the associated p-value from a two-sided t-test between the second Trump administration and the Biden administration (2025 − 2021).