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Credible Commitments and Legislative Success: Explaining Executive-Initiated Bill Passage Rates under Presidential Coalitions

Many Latin American countries share similar levels of political fragmentation, constitutionally strong executives, and coalition government, yet their bill passage rates differ dramatically. What explains these divergent rates? Cross-national studies of the determinants of legislative success emphasize the role of institutional veto players, legislative predictability, or even contextual factors, but they cannot explain deviations among coalition governments. Here I argue that different types of coalitions represent levels of commitment to the executive, and that variation in coalition type is one important determinant of bill passage rates. The statistical findings support my hypothesis that different levels of legislative success can be explained by variation in the way coalitions under presidentialism are formed and held together.