

CSM, CNBC Feature Dominican Research on Presidency

In their 2006 book *Addressing the State of the Union*, Hoffman and Howard examine the evolution of the annual State of the Union Address and outline the ways presidents use the address to gain attention, to communicate with target audiences, and to make specific policy proposals.

Over the years, presidents have used the State of the Union address as a means of winning public support for their policies. Modern presidents include specific calls for congressional action, with a median of 31 requests per address, ranging from President Carter's 1979 low of nine to President Clinton's high of 87 requests in 2000.

Hoffman and Howard, who is beginning her ninth year of teaching in [Dominican's Department of Political Science and International Studies](#), developed a tool to gauge a president's success by calculating how many of the legislative requests presidents make of Congress get adopted in the next session. As the CSM story notes, their research highlights the difficulties of a second term. Hoffman and Howard show that an average 43 percent of requests are passed in some form, with 51 percent passed in a first term and only 38.6 percent in the second term.

In their article "Obama in Words and Deeds," published in the December 2012 edition of *Social Sciences Quarterly*, Hoffman and Howard note that President Obama's median yearly success rate for getting legislation through Congress is 47.6% for the three complete years of his first term (2009-2011). His success rate with Congress declined slightly in 2011 to 42 percent that year, after the House of Representatives became controlled by the Republicans.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read the Christian Science Monitor story.

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January 23, 2013