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  - Started to become more prominent nationally – now many presidents are/were governors
Influence/Ambition of Governors

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- Due to distrust of colonial governors prior to U.S. Constitution, most governors prior to 20th century were highly constrained/had weak authority.

- Executive was hampered by dominance of relatively strong state legislatures.

- Like with many other things, at turn of 19th century, states began amending state constitutions:
  - Popular election of state executives (as opposed to appointment by state legislatures)
  - Longer, multiple terms of service
  -Statutory changes – delegation of new authority to boards and commissions under purview of executive branch – gave governors more power over state policy

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- Strong: IL, HI, MD, MA, NJ, WA
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Some scholars have suggested informal powers can be actually more important than formal powers, however, individual traits like guile, charisma, intellect can be hard to measure/capture in any systematic way. Instead, we turn to:

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- Why did one governor succeed where another failed?

Governors quite different from legislators in that they have to reach a much wider audience across the state – whereas legislators are mostly only concerned with constituents in their district who vote for them.

So governors may appear – at times – more moderate than individual legislators. E.G. – Brown not going after farmers over water (most recently...“they’ve suffered enough.”)

Governors are often not dealing with unified majority/opposition – so have to wade/negotiate through factions.

E.G. – Asian, Latino, Black voters have increasingly become Democratic in their voting – but often disagree over affirmative action-type programs.

State legislatures also vary significantly in party organization – some are like Congress (very organized) others are not so much more factional.
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- Used as way of influencing public policy implementation by way of the bureaucracy – effect outcomes without involving other branches of government.

Governors across the U.S. frequently use executive orders – on a variety of topics – some have used such orders to enter into contracts with private-sector entities (building roads, e.g.).

Signing statements/memoranda – direct agencies how to implement certain laws.

None of these involve working with the legislature to produce the desired policy result.

Governors may go this route because working formally through legislature is time-consuming, can backfire, which harms executive’s ability to control policy outcomes.

However, some policy goals may entail legal requirements of going through the legislature.
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Recall Elections

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19 states allow recalls; MI and OR became first to adopt recall procedures for state officials in 1908.

Since then, 24 state legislative recall elections involving 32 state legislators – but only 2 to recall state executives (ND in 1921, CA in 2003)

Scott Walker of Wisconsin was recalled, but won that election with 53% of the vote

Recall elections use direct democracy as an external check on gubernatorial authority along two dimensions:

1. Recall efforts can be invoked by electorate when they perceive governor to be abusing power
2. May be initiated if voters of state feel as though governor is engaging in political "overreach" by pursuing extreme policies well outside perceived mandate of electorate (Davis)

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- Over time, gubernatorial campaigns have become more professionalized and expensive – especially in competitive contests

- Formerly one-party states (i.e., the South) now see more spending (VA, FL, NC, LA) than average
- With decline of party attachment – candidates can no longer depend on party regulars to deliver needed votes – so they must build up their own campaigns from ground up

- General approaches: New – Social media, free media; Older – opinion polls, consultants, direct-mail, fundraising, phone banks
- Governor races generally more expensive when political parties are weak, open seat, race is highly contested from nomination to general election; self-financed (Meg Whitman) candidates
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- Other 16 of 40 states, LG is chosen separately from governor
- The latter often adds a layer of difficulty to job of governor, as governor cannot depend on his/her lieutenant to share policy preferences and rely on to pursue policy goals

- LG power varies – in most states LG acts as president of the senate and casts tie-breaking vote (like U.S. Senate). But in some states, governor actually functions as true leader of senate.
- Seven (7) (AL, GA, MS, RI, TX, VT, WV) give LG power to assign members to committees.
- 12 states give LG power to refer bills to committees – thus LG can nearly supplant governor as legislative leader
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- LG power varies – in most states LG acts as president of the senate and casts tie-breaking vote (like U.S. Senate). But in some states, governor actually functions as true leader of senate.

- Seven (7) (AL, GA, MS, RI, TX, VT, WV) give LG power to assign members to committees.
- 12 (12) states give LG power to refer bills to committees – thus LG can nearly supplant governor as legislative leader
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- Forty (40) states popularly elect their lieutenant governor
- Thus, Gov and LG may not even be from same party
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