



The Politics of Policy Change: Welfare, Medicare, and Social Security Reform in the United States

(American Government and Public Policy)

Daniel Beland, Alex Waddan

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For generations, debating the expansion or contraction of the American welfare state has produced some of the nation's most heated legislative battles. Attempting social policy reform is both risky and complicated, especially when it involves dealing with powerful vested interests, sharp ideological disagreements, and a nervous public.

The Politics of Policy Change compares and contrasts recent developments in three major federal policy areas in the United States: welfare, Medicare, and Social Security. Daniel Béland and Alex Waddan argue that we should pay close attention to the role of ideas when explaining the motivations for, and obstacles to, policy change.

This insightful book concentrates on three cases of social policy reform (or attempted reform) that took place during the presidencies of Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. Béland and Waddan further employ their framework to help explain the meaning of the 2010 health insurance reform and other developments that have taken place during the Obama presidency. The result is a book that will improve our understanding of the politics of policy change in contemporary federal politics.



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