

United States Senate Confirmations for Four-star Military Officers:



Effectiveness & Efficiency



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Background



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1. How does the Selection process for military four-star officers function?
2. Why are military four-star officers always confirmed?
3. What factors affect the speed of the confirmation process?
4. How does the confirmation process effect civil-military relations?



Military Four-Star Nomination Process

➤ Slating



Military Four-Star Nomination Process

➤ Slating

➤ CJCS Selection



Military Four-Star Nomination Process

- Slating
- CJCS Selection
- SecDef Selection



Military Four-Star Nomination Process

- Slating
- CJCS Selection
- SecDef Selection
- President's Nomination



U.S. Senate Confirmation Process

➤ Referral



U.S. Senate Confirmation Process

➤ Referral

➤ Submission Review



U.S. Senate Confirmation Process

➤ Referral

➤ Submission Review

➤ Hearings



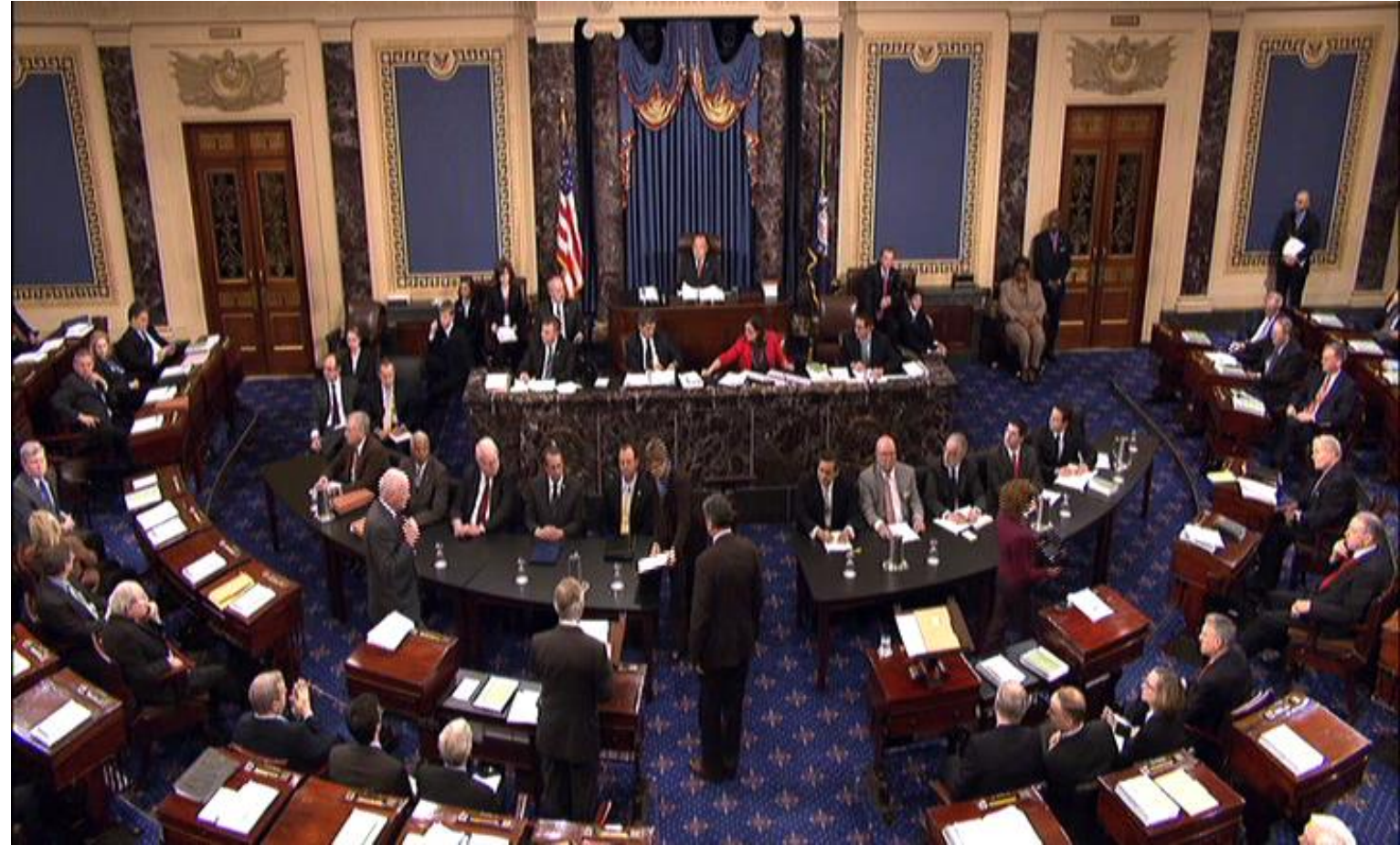
U.S. Senate Confirmation Process

- Referral
- Submission Review
- Hearings
- Committee Reporting



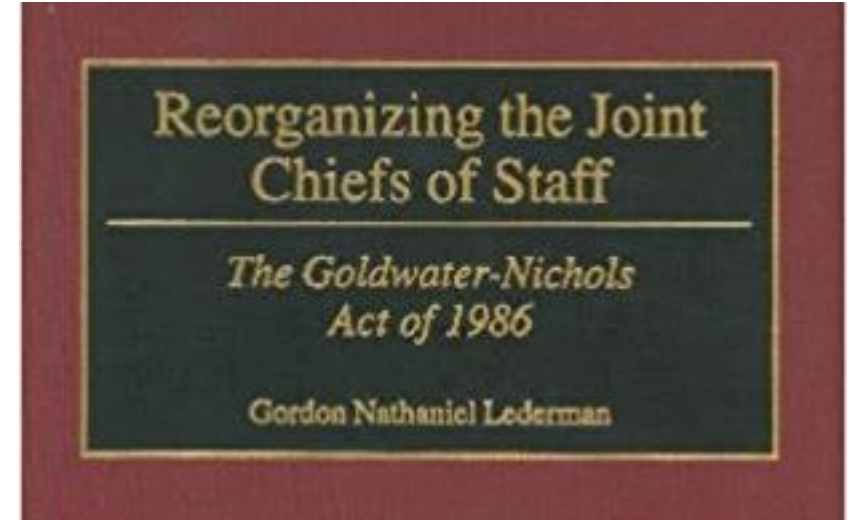
U.S. Senate Confirmation Process

- Referral
- Submission Review
- Hearings
- Committee Reporting
- Full Senate Confirmation



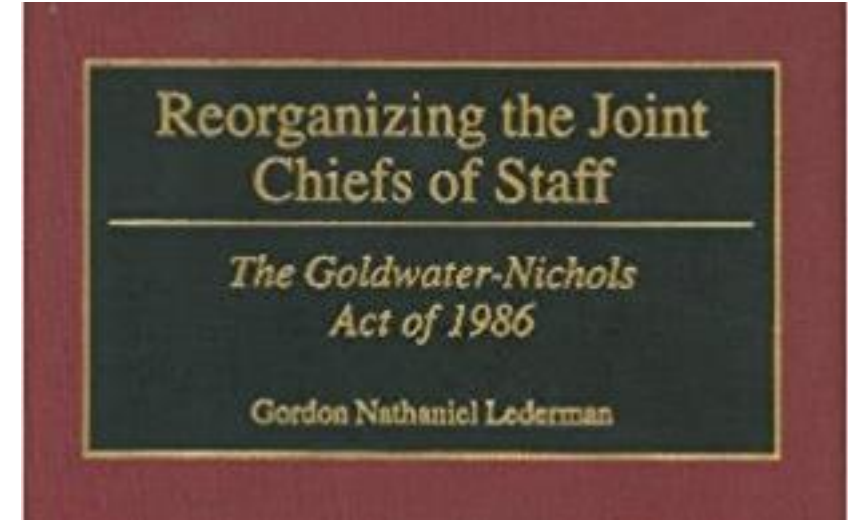
Research Methodology

- Data Analysis
 - Time Period: 1986 – 2016
 - Positions: Civilian & Military
 - Stages: Nomination, Hearing, Reporting, Confirmation

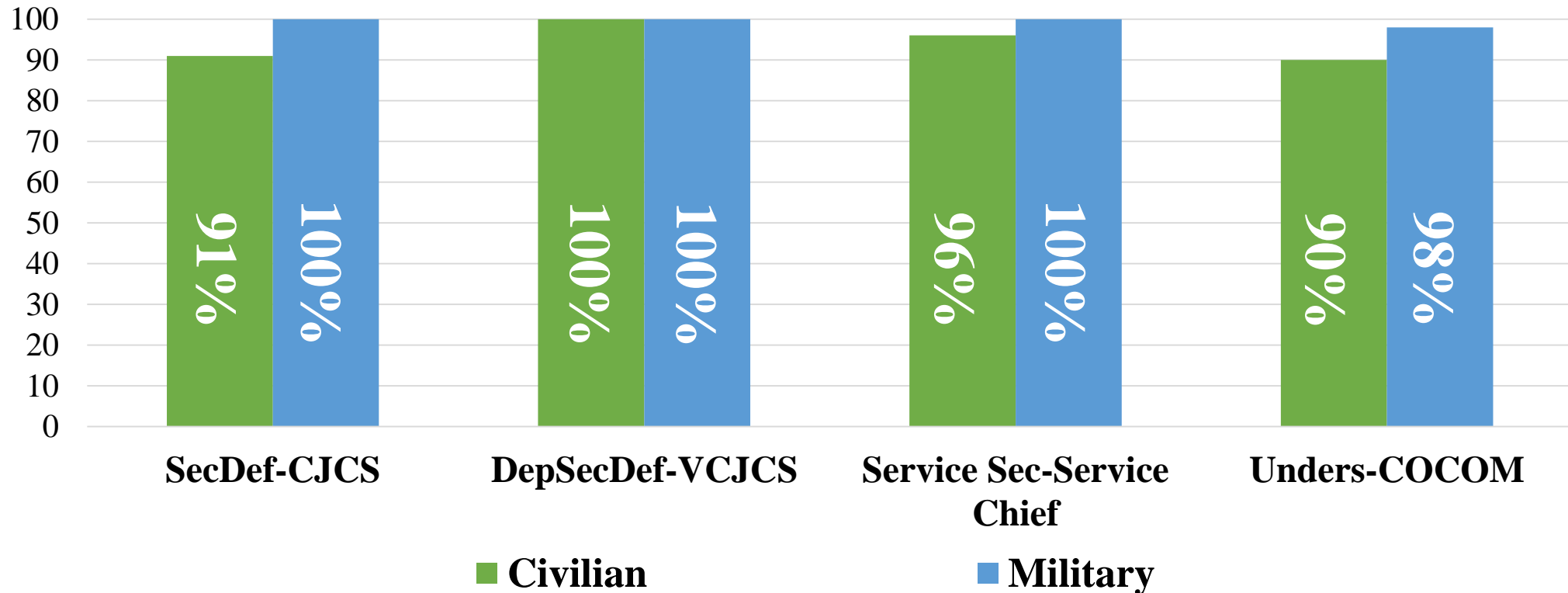


Research Methodology

- Data Analysis
 - Time Period: 1986 – 2016
 - Positions: Civilian & Military
 - Stages: Nomination, Hearing, Reporting, Confirmation
- Stakeholder Interviews
 - Elected Officials
 - Appointed Civilians
 - Four-star Military officers
 - Associated Staff in Senate & Pentagon

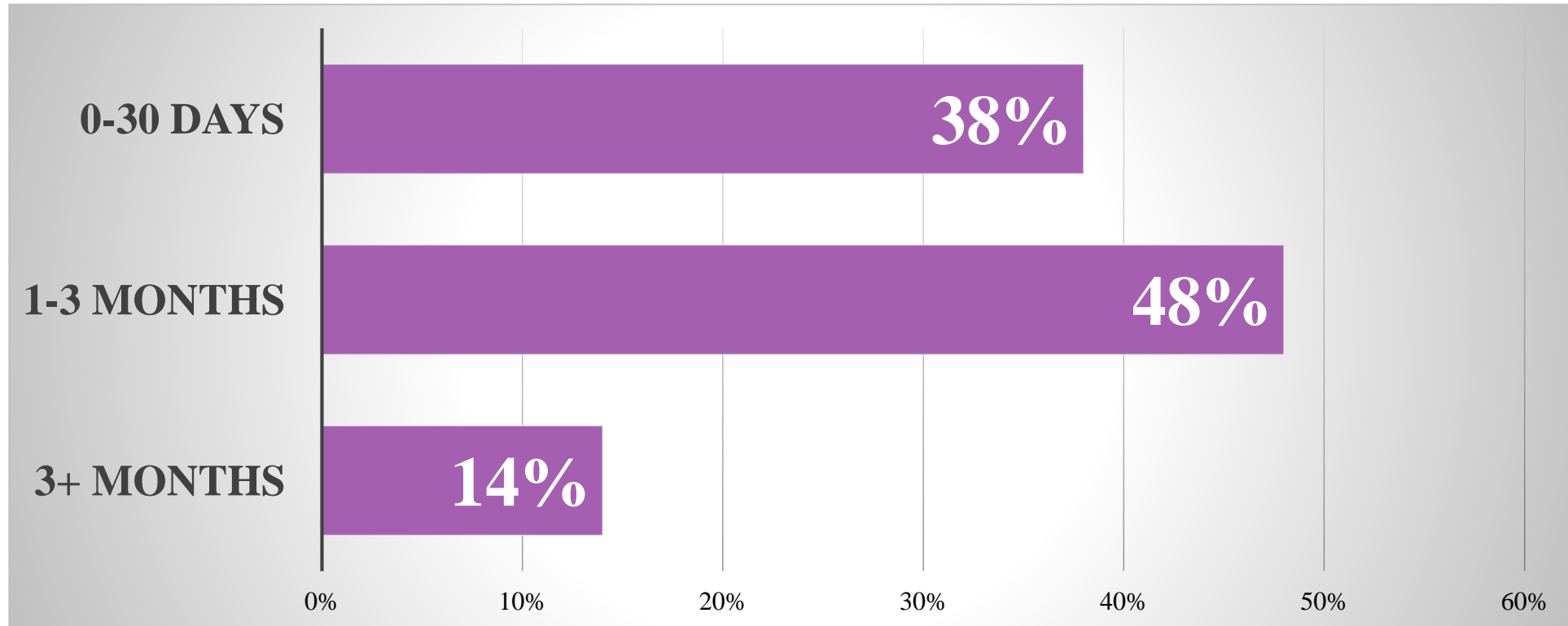


Confirmation Success Rate:



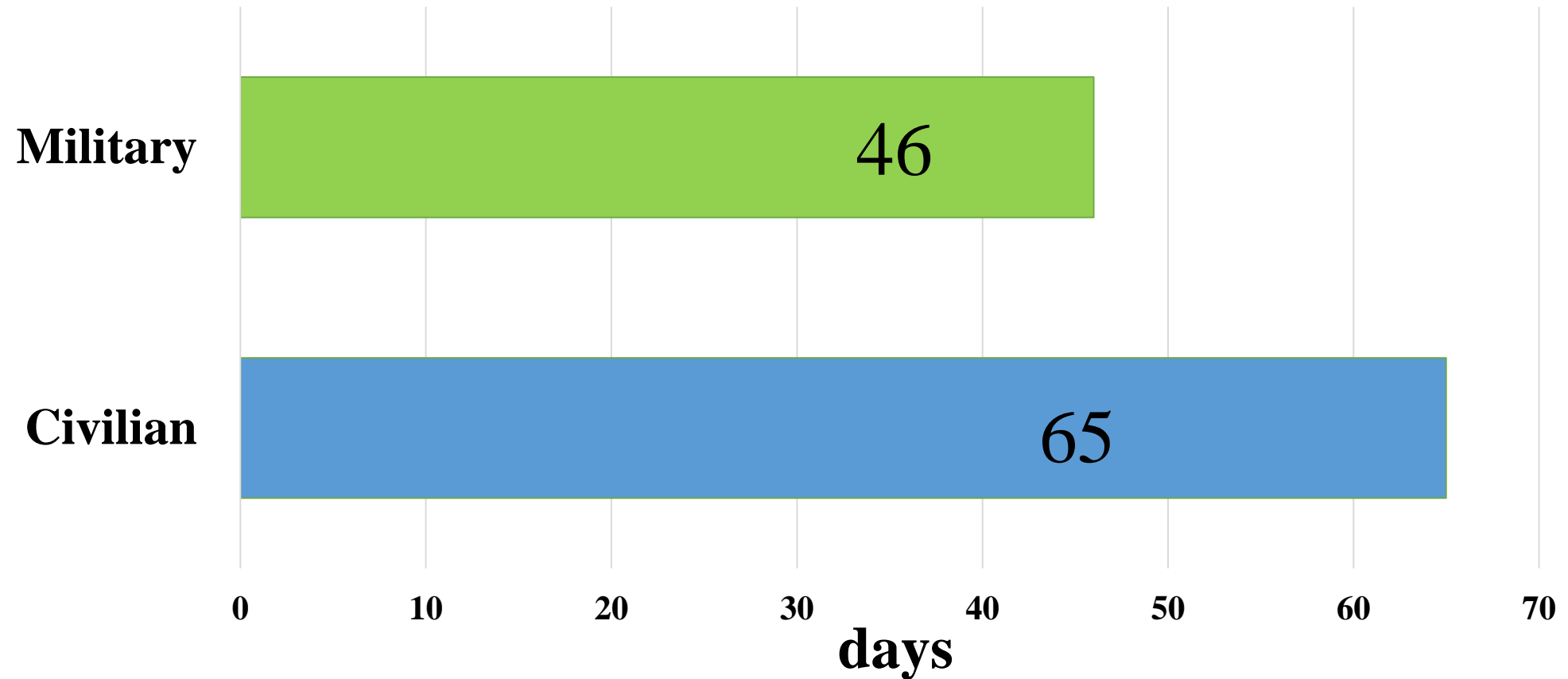
- Nominees are successful between Military & Civilian
- Success rate decreases at lower levels
- Civilians: Intent to Nominate concept

Overall Time to Confirmation



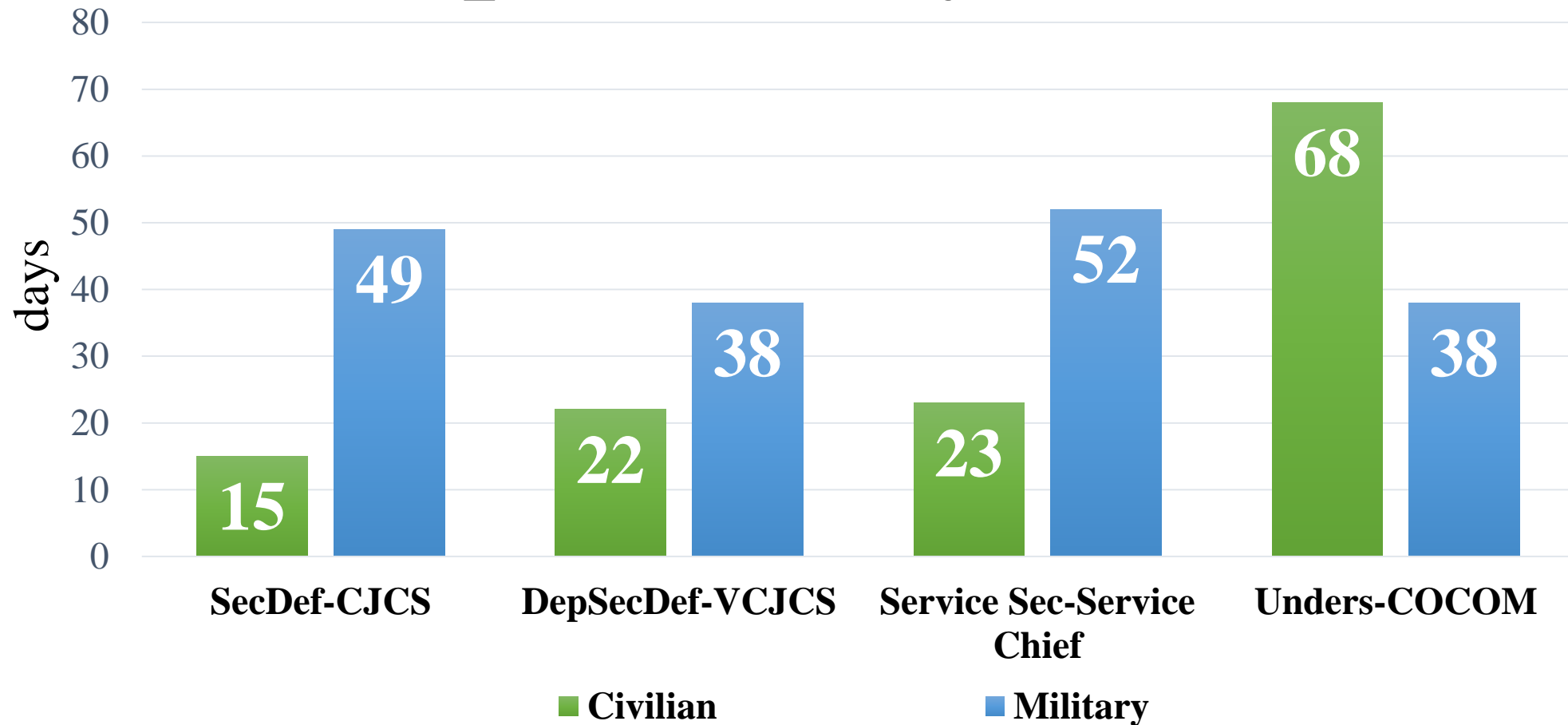
- Nominations are moving
- Most nominees confirmed between 1-3 months

Average Time to Confirmation



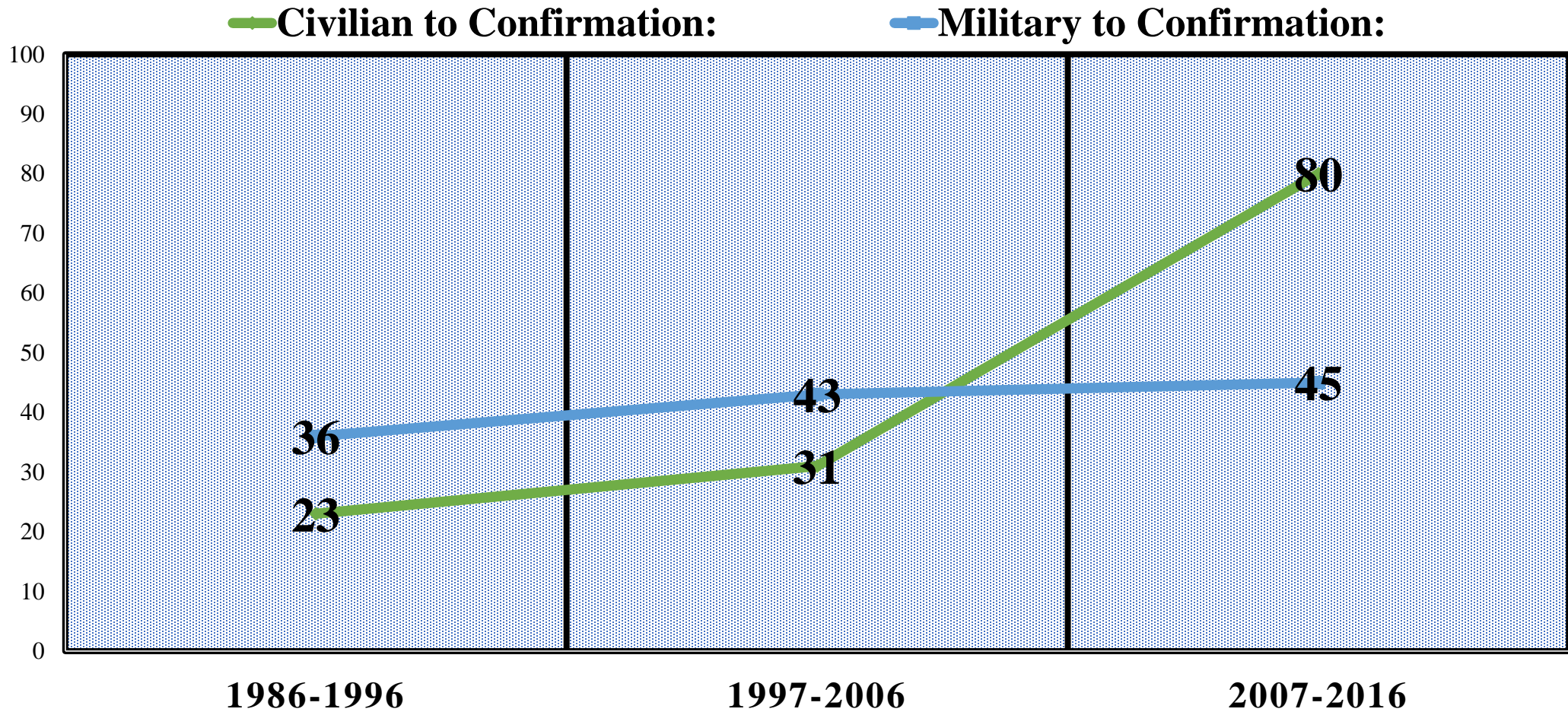
➤ Military nominations move quicker

Comparison by Position



- Consistency with Military
- Civilians: Increasing time to confirm at lower levels
- Expedited vs Routine

Change Over Time

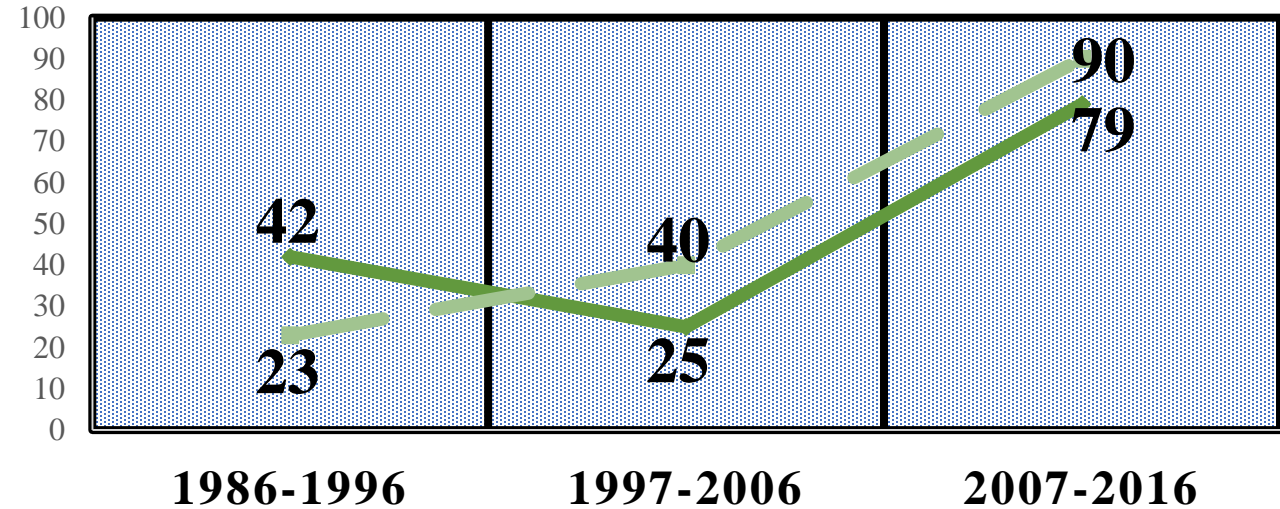


- Military remains relatively unchanged
- Significant increase in last decade for Civilians

Impact of Divided Government

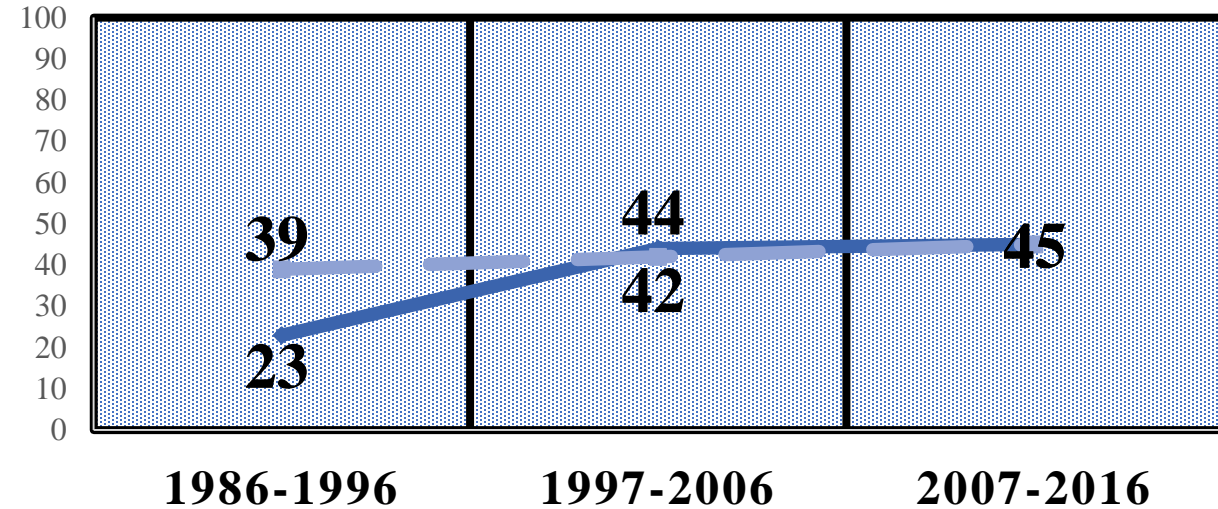
CIVILIAN

— UNITED President-Senate for Civilian Nominees
— DIVIDED President-Senate for Civilian Nominees



MILITARY

— UNITED President-Senate for Military Nominees
— DIVIDED President-Senate for Military Nominees



- Partisanship not significant factor
- United or Divided, graphs depict similar trends

Confirmation Process: Effectiveness

➤ Military has 99% success rate



Confirmation Process: Effectiveness

- Military has 99% success rate
- Low risk tolerance



Confirmation Process: Effectiveness

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- Internal process creates qualified officers



Confirmation Process: Effectiveness

- Military has 99% success rate
- Low risk tolerance
- Internal process creates qualified officers
- Common Goal

“SASC strived for highest degree of bipartisanship because it is a matter of necessity. You are dealing with the lives and future of the All Volunteer Force, and that rises above politics. You are a nation first, then party and politics second.”

– Sen John Warner

Confirmation Process: Efficiency

- Pentagon & SASC in agreement over efficiency



Confirmation Process: Efficiency

- Pentagon & SASC in agreement over efficiency
- Time to confirm is increasing



Conclusions: Civil-Military Implications

➤ Why does the confirmation process exist?

Confirmations are a “very healthy piece of civil-military relationship demonstrating the civilians are in control of the country, they have the right to challenge the military, they have the right to question them and determine whether they are fit to command. - Four Star Officer

Conclusions: Civil-Military Implications

- Why does the confirmation process exist?
- Relationships matter



Conclusions: Civil-Military Implications

- Why does the confirmation process exist?
- Relationships matter
- Process built on trust and mutual respect

“An institutional process that forges trust and builds credibility between the two branches of government. It is an affirmation of the process by Congress – a reinforcement of civilian control.”

– Pentagon Staff Interview

Questions?

