

VISITING SCHOLAR LECTURE

THE POLITICAL BELIEFS OF CHINESE OFFICIALS

What are the stated political beliefs of China's unelected officials? Do they align with or diverge from the beliefs of the citizens they serve? We study these questions in an original survey of over two thousand local government officials in China, focusing on their beliefs about the economy and the role of law. The median respondent expresses support for 'law-abiding interventionism'—in which the government is both deeply involved in markets and constrained by law. Yet the median view is not a consensus. Principal component analyses show that disagreements between officials are organized into loosely coherent ideologies surrounding support for markets and attachment to legal process. Ideology also shows a generational gap among officials: younger officials are more supportive of markets and attached to law. Compared to a survey of ordinary citizens, officials favor greater state intervention in the economy with one noteworthy exception: their opposition to real estate price controls.

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Greg Distelhorst is an assistant professor at the University of Toronto, appointed at the



Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources and the Rotman School of Management. He is also an investigator with the Governance Project at Stanford University's Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law. His research focuses on politics and public policy in contemporary China, as well as global trade and worker rights. It appears in peer-reviewed social science journals including the American Journal of Political

Science, Management Science, the Journal of Politics, Comparative Political Studies, Perspectives on Politics, and the Quarterly Journal of Political Science. Greg previously served on the faculties of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of Oxford. He has also lived in mainland China for five years, and has been the recipient of fellowships, including those offered by the U.S. Fulbright Program and the Yale-China Association.

A light lunch will be provided. Please **RSVP** to cals@allard.ubc.ca



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