This paper investigates if research findings cause political leaders to enact policy change. To do so, we use new types of experiments to measure elected heads of governments’ (i) demand for research and (ii) policy responses to supply of research. Collaborating with the National Confederation of Brazilian Municipalities gave us access to a sample of 2,145 municipalities and the agents—mayors—who control their policies. In one experiment, we find that mayors are willing to pay to learn the results of impact evaluations. They update their beliefs over the expected impact of a policy if informed of research findings, and pay more for types of studies that subsequently affect their beliefs more. They value larger-sample studies more, while not distinguishing on average between studies in rich or poor countries. In a second experiment, we find that providing mayors with research findings indicating positive, cost-effective impact of a simple policy (reminder-letters for tax enforcement) increases the probability that mayors implement the policy in their own municipality by 10 percentage points. In sum, this paper’s results provide direct evidence that providing political leaders with access to academic research leads research to translate into policy change. Information frictions may thus play a role in explaining failures to adopt effective policies.