Interest Groups and Lobbyists
Interest Groups

• Political Interest groups are collective groups that allow like-minded individuals to have their voices heard
  • Interest groups seek positive benefits to promote the group’s interests
    • Ex. Environmental Interests work to gain favor in the government and protect the planet
Purpose of Interest Groups

• Interest groups seek to pass legislation and influence the political process to protect their interests, or further their political aims
  • Ex. Pro-Abortion Interests groups work to protect the right to abortions working against the Anti-Abortion Interest Groups
Lobbyists

- Lobbyists are individuals who represent interest groups
  - Many Lobbyists are former legislatures
  - Lobbyists are normally very well paid to influence legislation
- Lobbyists work directly for groups or as needed
Role of Lobbyists

• Lobbyists have become integral parts of the political process due to their knowledge and expertise
  • Sources of information, ideas and innovations.
    • Ex. How a particular group would react to a particular law
  • Can help politicians strategize how to pass or block legislation
  • They can help create a campaign strategy and get interest groups to support the candidate
Lobbyists in Washington D.C.

• Direct Lobbying – Where interest groups meet directly with an officeholder to get them to support or change policy
• Drafting Legislation – Lobbyists will draft bills for congressmen to introduce to the House or Senate
• Research – Lobbyists repair reports about legislation to attempt to sway opinion and votes, as well is inform politicians about issues
• Hearings – Staff can testify before congress to support or attack pieces of legislation
Lobbying outside Washington D.C.

• Grassroots Lobbying – Coordinate Interest group members to aid lobbyists by contacting politicians, recruiting members, or protesting

• Electioneering – Raising funds within interest groups to aid candidates
  • Funding PACs to raise campaign funds