

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

