

# How interest groups influence the lawmakers politics essay



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The authors of this paper used testimony at committee hearings to determine the effects that lobbyists for special interest groups have on lawmakers in America. This study attempts to put to rest the controversy started after several contradicting studies were published on the effect special interest groups have on lawmakers. They hypothesized that one reason for the disparity between these studies is because of the gap between research and theory. In an effort to work with direct evidence, as opposed to theory and experiments, the researchers pulled information from testimonies during policy hearings. The data from 1, 000 testimonies on a random sample of policy proposals describe who testifies, their arguments and their evidence. Findings from their data indicate that close to half of the witnesses who testified in front of congress were representative of interest groups. These findings also indicate that these special interest witnesses almost always get the intended outcome with their testimony. Evidence from this study indicates that lobbyists for special interest groups have a profound impact on the policy making process.

Elhauge, Einer. "Does Interest Group Theory Justify More Intrusive Judicial Review?" *The Yale Law Journal* 101. 1 (1991): 31-110. Print.

This article from the Yale Law Journal offers the mechanisms by which small special interest groups can speak over the voices of the majority. More specifically, it explains how the political system in America allows for the exploitation of large majorities because they are unable to police free riding in political efforts, in comparison to small intensely interested groups. This article helps to back up the modern interest group theory that most

Americans hold to be true: that special interest groups can influence our

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political system to produce results that aren't in the interest of the general public. Elhauge examines the justification of current proposals to change constitutional review and law interpretation to help stop special interest groups from dominating the political playing field.

Kollman, Ken. "Inviting Friends to Lobby: Interest Groups, Ideological Bias, and Congressional Committees." *American Journal of Political Science* 41. 2 (1997): 519-44. Print.

The author Ken Kollman, from the University at Michigan at Ann Arbor, relied on measures on congressional committee members ideology and interest group ideology and lobbying behavior to gather data on confrontational versus friendly lobbying, to determine if special interest groups can have an effect on the ideology of politicians. Kollman theorized that current conclusions about the effects on special interest groups on lawmakers are wrong because they don't take bias into account. Kollman concluded that similarities in special interest groups and lawmakers beliefs lead to an overestimate of the influence of those special interest groups. Kollman's outline of the overestimation of the effects of special interest groups on American lawmakers back up the common conception that most Americans hold.

Question 9- How do negative political advertisements affect voter turnout?

Fridkin Kim L., Patrick J. Kenney, Gina Serignese Woodall. "Bad for Men, Better for Women: The Impact of Stereotypes during Negative Campaigns." *Political Behavior* 31. 1 (2009): 53-77. Print.

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This article, published in *Political Behavior*, examines the impact of negative advertising on citizen's evaluations of candidates, and whether this impact varies depending on the gender of the candidate. The authors theorized that people are still very open to male and female stereotypes, and because of this the authors believed that negative campaigns affect male and female candidates differently. After a survey of 700 citizens, surveys demonstrated that negative campaigns hurt the public's image of male candidates more than female candidates. The findings are consistent and strong, demonstrating that it is easier to do damage to a males campaign with negative advertisements.

Martin, Paul. " Inside the Black Box of Negative Campaign Effects: Three Reasons Why

Negative Campaigns Mobilize." *Political Psychology* 25. 4 (2004): 545-62. Print.

The author, Paul Martin of the Department of Political science at the University of Oklahoma, uses surveys of the voting population to learn the effect of negative campaigns on the three mechanisms of voter motivation- republication duty, candidate threat, and perceived closeness of the election. This paper disputes early research that negative campaigns hurt voter turnout, and instead agrees with a more recent Goldstein and Freedman study that negative campaigns in fact increase voter turnout, because of the negative campaigns effects on the mechanisms of voter turnout. Martin argues that the perception of negative campaigns hurting voter turnout comes from experimental data (which Martin considers unrealistic) while

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evidence that shows increases in voter turnout due to negative campaigns comes from survey data conducted at the polls.

Matsusaka, John. "Explaining Voter Turnout Patterns: An Information Theory." *Public Choice* 84. 1/2 (1995): 91-117. Print.

John Matsuaka presents a novel explanation for the post 1960s decline in voter turnout, by arguing that voters benefitted more if they felt confident in their decision while voting, and that in today's society voters don't feel as strong a sense of duty to vote. His theory began with the idea that voter turnout was based off of the idea that people are more likely to vote if they feel a sense of duty. He goes on to outline different effects that can increase or decrease voter turnout and attempts to explain that traditional voter theory can be used to explain all correlations, including negative campaign spending. Traditional voter theory takes it as a given that citizens are predispositioned to vote, and uses this assumption to explain campaigning effects on voter turnout. Matsuaka attempts to use this theory to explain all things that effect voter turnout, from negative campaigns to voters moving houses.

Question 4- How do interest groups influence lawmakers?

Over the course of American history, many small and intensely interested groups of American voters have banded together to try and influence lawmakers at the state and federal level. Political analysts and the news media have observed these groups getting lawmakers to change legislation in favor of whatever cause that their interest group supports. After much research into special interest group theory two interesting correlations have <https://assignbuster.com/how-interest-groups-influence-the-lawmakers-politics-essay/>

been discovered: Special interest groups have beliefs similar to the lawmakers they are trying to influence, and when special interest groups do speak the lawmakers they appear before are almost guaranteed to vote with the interest group's desires. Take for example typical firearm legislation. The NRA always appears and speaks to the committee voting on the issue, so it appears that every time lawmakers vote with the NRA's decisions, the NRA influenced that outcome. However, consider what the researchers at the University at Michigan at Ann Arbor discovered in their study: that lawmakers vote with interest groups not because they try to change the lawmakers ideology, but rather, the lawmaker's ideology already closely mirrored that of the interest group's. Researchers' contribute this to the idea that lawmakers sit on committees that they feel strongly about, and their ideology just so happens to match that of interest groups.

Question 9- How do negative political advertisements affect voter turnout?

Negative politics have been a part of the election process for centuries. A negative campaign occurs when a participant in the election beginning trying to cut down his opponent to make himself look more appealing, and as a result win the election. The typical political analyst on news radio or on television will say that negative campaigns will turn off voters and decrease voter turnout because the voters will get fed up with the " mudslinging" and stay home on Election Day. Researchers have discovered through exit polls that when voters see negative campaigning they feel a duty to go vote and ensure that the lesser candidate does not win. Studies have also shown that female candidates do not suffer the same effects as male candidates when it comes to negative campaigning. Female candidates get to enjoy a type of "  
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anti sexism” that is, voters give female candidates a lot more leeway when the mud starts flying. Male candidates are held to a higher standard than female candidates by the voters, and when negative campaigning takes place, females come out on top when the campaigns are equally negative.