

## APGoPo Unit 4

# CHARACTERISTICS AND POWER OF INTEREST GROUPS

<b>WHAT FACTORS MAKE INTEREST GROUPS STRONG?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Size<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ More members = more money, more votes</li><li>○ More members also mean greater cross-pressure among members and possibly less focus</li><li>○ As size increases, free rider problem increases<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Free riders are people who benefit from the interest group without making any contribution</li><li>▪ Example: an elderly person will benefit from the group's lobbying efforts whether or not he joins AARP</li><li>▪ I.G. try to prevent this by giving incentives for people to join the group</li></ul></li></ul></li><li>2) Spread<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Extent to which membership is concentrated or dispersed - is important</li></ul></li><li>3) Organizational structure: centralized or decentralized<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ An organization with separation of powers tends to be less cohesive than a centralized, disciplined group</li></ul></li><li>4) Leadership<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Leaders may either bring the various elements of a group together or sharpen their disunity</li></ul></li><li>5) Resources<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Money</li><li>○ Expertise</li><li>○ Reputation</li><li>○ Connections</li><li>○ Volunteers</li></ul></li></ol>
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<b>WHAT ARE EFFECTIVE TACTICS (TECHNIQUES) OF INTEREST GROUPS?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Mass mailing (computerized and targeted)</li><li>2) Litigation – groups often take an issue to court if they are unsuccessful in gaining the support of Congress (used by NAACP, ACLU, NOW, etc.)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <i>Amicus curiae</i> briefs – someone who is not a party to a case who offers information that bears on the case but that has not been solicited by any of the parties to assist a court</li></ul></li><li>3) Use of mass media<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Independent expenditures</li><li>○ Issue advocacy</li></ul></li><li>4) Boycotting</li><li>5) Electioneering – working for the success of a particular candidate, party, ticket, etc., in an election<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Funneling volunteers to campaigns</li><li>○ Encouraging members to vote</li><li>○ Campaign contributions</li><li>○ Endorsement of candidates</li><li>○ "Targeting" of unfriendly candidates</li><li>○ Issuing "report cards" to rate candidates</li></ul></li><li>6) Initiative, referendum and recall at state and local levels</li><li>7) Lobbying – attempting to influence policymakers, often by supplying data to government officials and their staffs to convince these policymakers that their case is more deserving than another's</li></ol>
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