

Prioritized Interests: Why Congressional Committees Address Some Problems and Ignore Others

by

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to those lobbyists and advocates who believe in the work they are doing. I hope my work can help you make a better world.

Acknowledgements

Like all large projects, dissertations benefit from a community of professional and personal support. My name is on this project, but here I acknowledge the many others whose time, energy, and support was necessary for it to come to fruition.

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Abstract

This dissertation examines why Congress addresses some problems while ignoring others. Key to this process are congressional committees, which organize much of Congress's day-to-day activity but whose role has been downplayed in recent scholarship on congressional lawmaking. I examine how committees come to address particular problems with legislation, across three substantive papers. First, I find that while committee leaders may be more constrained in their agenda-setting powers than in the past, they can still direct their committee's attention to issue areas that they prioritize personally. In the second and third parts of the dissertation, I examine how interest group lobbying influences chairs' agenda-setting decisions with respect to individual bills. In the second paper, I develop the concept of interest diversity as the relative degree of observable variety of social identities, political causes, or industries represented by set of organizations. Using new data on interest groups' positions on over 5000 bills introduced during the 109th to 113th Congresses, I develop and validate a measure for interest diversity among groups lobbying on a bill. I show that the net interest diversity on a bill, the difference in supporters' and opponents' interest diversities, varies in ways that are both consistent with general predictions about interest group activity as well as with well-understood patterns of legislative and interest group behavior. In the third paper, I examine how bills' net interest diversity impacts the legislative agendas of congressional committees. I argue that committee chairs' incentives to promote viable legislation induce them to favor bills garnering the support of a diverse array of causes and industries, who are in turn able to mobilize the sustained support and attention of many legislators. I find that bills with higher net interest diversity are more likely to be considered in committee. I then show how these associations vary across bill sponsors and party alignments between Congress and the White House. Taken together, these results suggest that interest group influence, and what makes interest groups influential, is moderated by legislative institutions and may be more benign than is commonly assumed.

Chapter 1

Introduction

In a society and economy as large and complex as that of the United States, many problems arise which might be addressed through a change in law. Congress is charged with making and changing laws, and the legislators who constitute Congress represent every corner of the country, along with the constituents who call their districts and states home. Given the motivation legislators have to maintain the support of their constituencies, one might expect the country's highest legislative body to attempt to address many of the problems its members will be held accountable for solving or not solving. However, of all the issues and policy problems that Congress might address, it attends to only a fraction. Indeed, while legislators introduce thousands of bills¹ in each Congress, the vast majority of these never make any legislative progress. This raises the question: why does Congress attend to some policy problems and ignore others?

Two of the most popular answers to "why doesn't Congress do X" are "parties" and "money." Party leaders, common critiques maintain, dominate the legislative process and use that dominance to pursue political victories rather than the common good. Concerned with maintaining the party's collective reputation and avoiding internal divisions, party leaders circumvent the normal legislative process, prevent legislators from gaining a nuanced understanding of the bills they vote on, and routinely bypass those legislators who are most likely to be experts on a particular policy area – i.e., the members and leaders of each chamber's substantive committees. The result is that many legislators are denied an opportunity to meaningfully participate in the legislative process, and so their priorities – and those

¹To say nothing of the practically innumerable social, economic, and policy problems that could be addressed through federal legislation but cannot find a legislative champion in Congress.

of their constituents – never make it onto the congressional agenda. On the other hand, blaming bad politics or policy outcomes on wealthy interest groups is a classic pastime among observers and participants of Congress. This is reflected in scholarly examinations interest group behavior; the preponderance of studies of interest group influence attempt to understand how groups’ resources – e.g., their campaign contributions and lobby expenditures – influence individual legislators’ behavior as well as policy changes. The normative implication of such studies, insofar as they identify a connection between resources and influence, is that groups (or coalitions) able to marshal more resources have more influence. As the members and benefactors of such groups would disproportionately hail from higher resource (i.e., wealthier) individuals, the natural implication is that organized interests exacerbate the overrepresentation of the wealthy in the legislative process. Critiques focused on either parties or interest group resources are an indictment, sometimes quite a searing one, of the functioning of American democracy.

This dissertation suggests that both types of accounts are incomplete. To do so, it focuses on the role of congressional committees in the legislative process. Committee activities – oversight hearings, markups on draft legislation, and votes to report bills to the floor – provide legislators with opportunities not only to learn about legislative issues most directly relevant to their constituents, but to ensure that the issues most important to their districts receive other legislators’ attention. Moreover, committee-approved bills are still more likely to pass their parent chamber than other bills, suggesting that committees serve a vital function in vetting legislative proposals. A potential answer to the question of why Congress attends to some policy problems and ignores others, then, lies in understanding which problems gain the attention of congressional committees.

To examine the influences on congressional committee agendas, this dissertation proceeds with three substantive articles. First, I argue that committee leaders have more power to set congressional priorities than current accounts often ascribe to them. I show that committee chairs can steer their committee’s issue agendas toward their personal priority issues. To do so, I examine the issue priorities of committees in years where the chair of the committee changed due to exogenous shock: the previous chair had died or resigned in scandal. I find that, during such exogenous transitions, levels of committee attention across

issues are positively associated with levels of committee chair bill sponsorship and previous committee activity across issues. Importantly, the priorities of majority party leaders and majority party members are not consistently associated with committees' issue agendas. This suggests that even though they are constrained in determining the content of their bills, chairs exercise substantial discretion in which issues their committees address.

Second, I conceptualize and measure interest diversity in lobbying coalitions. I define interest diversity as the relative degree of observable variety of subconstituencies – groups of citizens sharing a social identity, political cause, or industry – represented by set of organizations. Interest diversity can be influential because it allows legislators to assess which segments of their voters might reward or punish them for their behavior on a bill. I create a measure of interest diversity using an established taxonomy of interests. I then apply this measure to a dataset of 13,000 organizations lobbying on over 5000 bills introduced during the 109th to 113th Congresses. In particular, I focus on the extent to which the interest groups supporting a bill are more diverse than the interest groups opposing the bill – a difference I refer to as Net Interest Diversity. I validate this measure of Net Interest Diversity by exploring how it corresponds to well-understood patterns in how legislators and interest groups build support for legislation.

In the third paper, I examine how interest diversity among organizations lobbying on a bill impacts the legislative agendas of congressional committees. I argue that committee chairs' incentives to promote viable legislation induce them to favor bills garnering the support of a diverse array of causes and industries. I find that bills with higher Net Interest Diversity are more likely to be considered in committee, while interest groups' PAC contributions are not consistently associated with committee consideration. I then show how these associations vary across majority- and minority-party sponsors and across different partisan alignments between the House, Senate, and White House. Taken together, these results show that lobbying matters for which bills get on to Congress's agenda, and that institutions moderate the influence of lobbying on committee agendas. In addition, they provide a potential alternative to lobby expenditures and campaign contributions as a source of influence.

Together, these papers make several contributions to knowledge. In showing that committee leaders exercise powers of problem selection, they rehabilitate committee chairs' role in the legislative process,

which prior accounts of legislative organization have either ignored or treated as constrained to the point of triviality. In addition, by showing that chairs' personal priorities populate the committee agenda, these articles begin to expand the literature on congressional information processing and problem solving by providing answers to not just *how* problems are selected, but *which* are selected and, most importantly, *whose* problems take precedence. These articles also connect interest group lobbying to the fate of bills in Congress. They complement existing studies that show that lobbying is associated with which bills move through the first and most perilous winnowing point of the legislative process – gaining consideration in committee. However, in addition to showing that lobbying is associated with legislative advancement, this article provides a unique explanation for why interest groups are influential. By serving as proxies for important district subconstituencies, interest groups help lawmakers connect their legislative activities to the policy problems that are important to their voters back home. The dissertation develops the concept of interest diversity to capture what makes this proxying influence legislative outcomes, validates a measure that tracks which bills should be supported by a wide range of legislators and which are more likely to be opposed, and provides and tests the implications of a logic by which interest diversity should impact the decision to grant a bill consideration. In doing so, these articles examine the influence of organized interests across a wide range of issue areas, suggesting that their findings are more likely to generalize. It also captures interest group activity over legislation introduced over a range of years, 2005 to 2014, that contain many different alignments of the chambers of Congress and the White House between the parties.

These articles also point toward potentially fruitful avenues for future research. First, they suggest that scholars of Congress should study not just what bills are allowed onto the legislative agenda, but what problems are selected for those bills to address and, hence, what bills are available for the legislative agenda to contain. Second, it develops a new attribute of interest group influence – interest diversity – that might continue to impact the fate of legislation beyond its first committee, or that might help interest groups change the provisions of particular bills or help them obtain or prevent policy change regardless of legislative vehicle. In addition, by showing that aspects of lobbying other than interest groups' resources impact their legislative influence, these articles encourage future scholarship's attempts to keep

looking beyond resources for explanations of interest group influence. Indeed, how, and indeed whether, lobbying should be reformed depends strongly on what attributes of lobbying make it influential as well as what that influence changes in legislation.

Chapter 2

Legislator Priorities and Problem Selection in Congressional Committees

Bills in Congress that rise to national public salience deal with major issues and attempt to solve seemingly intractable problems that impact the lives of many. Or they reflect campaign promises that swept a party into power. Or they respond to some emergent crisis. However, many bills that are salient to members of Congress cannot be described in any of these ways. Some are about making sure the employers in one's district are getting the workforce they need. For example, Rep. Michael McCaul (R-TX), whose district includes parts of tech-centered Austin, sponsored and shepherded through committee the Green Energy Education Act of 2007: which authorized the Department of Energy to move funds to the National Science Foundation so that the latter could use them to support clean energy engineering training programs. This reflects the specific employment needs of the tech industry in his district. On the other hand, less salient bills sometimes include matters of personal interest to lawmakers. Transportation committee chairman Rep. Bill Shuster (R-PA), spurred by a Federal Aviation Administration review of an expiring regulation, filed and granted committee consideration to the Prohibiting In-Flight Voice Communications on Mobile Wireless Devices Act of 2013, which would have put into statute the expiring regulatory prohibition on making voice calls during commercial flights. Arguing in favor of the bill, Shuster claimed that it would allow air passengers to avoid being forced to listen to conversations that were "too loud, too close, or too personal."¹ Given that these sorts of bills often avoid a large public outcry, and rarely respond to emergencies or partisan debates, why do these less-salient issues get onto the agenda in the first place?

Of all the issues it might address, Congress attends to only a fraction. This might be normatively

¹Shuster, Bill. "Cellphones on Planes? Tap, don't talk." The Hill, February 10th, 2014. <http://thehill.com/opinion/op-ed/197962-cellphones-on-planes-tap-dont-talk>, accessed March 19th, 2017.

acceptable if the selection of issues was based on public demand for policy action, or on some other indicator of national need. The movement of issues from the systemic agenda, the issues considered worthy of discussion by political elites, to the institutional agenda, those receiving formal attention in policymaking institutions, is neither random nor automatically responsive to public or national needs. (c.f. Cobb and Elder 1972) Indeed, the ability to direct such movement, "the ability to decide what to decide on", is a significant form of political power, and a prerequisite for policy change. (Bauer, Pool and Dexter 1964; Bachrach and Baratz 1962)

However, surprisingly little is known about why Congress addresses the specific issues that it does. It is not due to lack of information: congressional and executive agencies, interest groups, think tanks, academics, and ordinary citizens constantly "educate" and "raise awareness" among members of Congress. (Hall 1996) Rather, this information glut causes Congress to delay responding to problems and to overcompensate when it does change policy. (Baumgartner and Jones 1993; Jones and Baumgartner 2005) While this describes the process by which Congress becomes aware of and solves problems, it does not tell us which problems Congress chooses to solve. In explaining which problems get addressed, theories of legislative organization ascribe agenda-setting power - the power to block or advance proposals - to specific pivotal legislators (Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2005; Krehbiel 1998) or to groups of actors with intense shared preferences. (Mayhew 1974; Aldrich and Rohde 2001) However, such models do not explain why these proposals are there to be blocked or permitted in the first place. Nor do they explain why solutions to a particular problem are blocked or permitted, but not to some other problem. In short, these models tend to consider which policy proposals may beat the status quo in a given problem; they do not tell us why that problem is being addressed in the first place. Thus, we know much about the process by which Congress solves problems, as well as which "solutions" are likely to carry the day; we know markedly less about why Congress tries to solve some problems and not others.

One consequence of the relative inattention to problem selection vis-a-vis agenda control is that committee leaders' powers have been largely dismissed. Indeed, despite their nominal control over their committee's agenda, committee chairs are unmentioned in much of the literature on agenda-setting in Congress. What literature does exist on committee leadership emphasizes how they are constrained, either

by informational shortcomings, (Krutz 2005) internal committee politics, (Manley 1969; Evans 2001) or the extent to which institutional reforms of the 1970s and 1990s brought committee chairs under the control of the majority party leadership. (Aldrich and Rohde 2001; Owens 1997; Stiglitz and Weingast 2010; Sinclair 1998; Deering and Wahlbeck 2006; Cann 2008; Bendix 2016) Thus, existing research suggests that committee activities are dominated by the needs of the majority party. By contrast, this study argues that, despite being constrained in the bills they can force onto or off of the agenda, chairs influence congressional problem selection as well. Chairs, like all legislators, seek opportunities to pursue their electoral, political, and policy objectives. For a given legislator, some issue topics may be more useful in this respect than others. (Shepsle 1978; Hall 1996; Schiller 1995; Sulkin 2005; Woon 2009; Mayhew 1974) In this article, I argue that, unlike many other legislators, committee chairs have institutional prerogatives – namely, the ability to schedule committee hearings – that allow them to generate valuable political opportunities for themselves. To the extent this is true, they should be expected to use that power to provide themselves with opportunities to position-take and credit-claim on issues that benefit them personally. In shaping the issue content of committee activities, chairs shape the agenda of Congress in a way consistent with having positive agenda power.

This article proceeds as follows. First, I argue that committees drive problem selection in the House, and that committee chairs' institutional prerogatives allow them to create opportunities for themselves by taking advantage of this discretion in problem selection. Based on this argument, I propose that the attention paid to different issue areas in committee agendas should be a function of committee chairs' personal priorities, independently of the priorities of the majority party's leadership or rank-and-file. I test this argument by examining the issue topics of House committee hearings in committee-years during the post-reform Congress in which the chair changed for exogenous reasons; these include the death or resignation in non-political scandal of the previous chair. Using this exogenous shock as a source of causal identification, I find that committee agenda decisions are driven by committee chairs' individual priorities and a committee's ongoing responsibilities. However, I fail to find a consistent association between committee agendas and the contemporaneous issue priorities of majority party leaders, majority party members, or all members of the House. Together, these findings suggest that the relationship between

majority party leaders and committee leaders may be more complicated than previous accounts suggest, and that problem selection is an important antecedent of agenda control in shaping legislative outcomes in Congress.

2.1 THE POLITICAL BENEFITS OF COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Legislators, including committee chairs, face an ongoing resource allocation problem. A given legislator has scarce personal and staff time with which to pursue her goals (Salisbury and Shepsle 1981; Hall 1996) and must make choices (e.g. committee assignment requests, bill sponsorships, etc.) that necessarily make them more active in some issue areas than others. Such choices may help or hinder legislators' efforts to pursue electoral, policy, and political goals. (Hall 1996; Fenno 1973; Mayhew 1974; Shepsle 1978) In particular, choices of issue effort allocation have significant implications for legislators' electoral prospects, as constituencies expect their representatives to work on the issues they care about most. (Hall 1996; Sulkin 2005; Woon 2009) Thus, individual legislators should be expected to take advantage of opportunities in committee to pursue their goals by strategically allocating their effort across issue areas.

Hearings are committees' primary formal activity and serve as one mechanism of issue effort allocation. In committee hearings, members hear witness testimony and discuss a topic related to the committee's issue jurisdiction. Many hearings are on oversight or investigatory matters, in which the committee hears witness statements about a topic. However, according to Policy Agendas Project data, about forty percent of committee hearings in the postwar era have been referral hearings, in which the topic of the hearing is a specific piece of legislation. The committee may or may not report legislation, based in whole or in part on bills considered in a referral hearing, to the Rules Committee for consideration on the floor. (Oleszek 2011; Deering and Smith 1997) Both of these types of hearings provide opportunities for legislators to work in the policy areas they prioritize.

Legislators' ability to use committee activities to pursue personal objectives is facilitated by two features of committee hearings. The first feature arises from the fact that most committee hearings are public. While committees vary somewhat in their procedures, most allow time for committee members to ask questions of witnesses or to make statements about whatever matter is under consideration. (Oleszek

2011; Deering and Smith 1997; Sinclair 1986) Because committee hearings often receive news coverage - and members self-promote their behavior in committees in their personal websites, press releases, etc. - such statements and questions amount to, if nothing else, acts of public position-taking. Position-taking helps legislators seek reelection by raising their public profile and attracting the positive attention (and support) of interest groups and other highly-attentive constituencies. (Mayhew 1974) Thus, even if no legislation results from a committee hearing, committee chairs and other legislators may derive some political benefits from participating in them.

The second feature of committee activities pertains to policy-making. While it is frequently argued that full committees have become less powerful relative to party leaders and individual members since the 1970s, (Sinclair 1998; Deering and Smith 1997; Cox and McCubbins 2005, 1993; Bendix 2016) it remains the case that legislators use their committee activities to engage in costly development of policy expertise. This has implications for legislative outcomes; a bill that is reported from a committee is much more likely to pass the House floor. In fact, according to Congressional Bills Project data presented in Table 2.1, while the raw number of bills passing the House since 1995 (the post-Gingrich Revolution era where parties are presumed to dominate committees) have been equally comprised of bills that did or did not get reported from a committee, nearly 75 percent of committee-reported bills passed the House while only four percent of non-reported bills did so. Notably, the advantage of a committee report maintains for subsamples considering only majority party bills, "leadership" issues (defined as the first ten numbered House bills, per House practice), and bills filed personally by majority party leaders. This advantage in floor success complicates the narrative that committees no longer matter for policymaking. Thus, if a bill can be reported from the committee, then the committee's reported bill is much more likely to pass the full chamber, which suggests that committees have some degree of influence on the results of deliberations on the floor. (Fleisher and Bond 1983) Because committee activities are consequential, the ability to direct them is valuable.

Table 2.1: Counts (and row percentage) of House bills by committee report status and chamber passage status, 1995-2012.

(a) All House Bills		
	Not Passed by the House	Passed by the House
Not Reported from Committee	83,503 (95.77)	3,669 (4.23)
Reported from Committee	1,419 (26.48)	3,939 (73.52)
(b) All Majority Party Sponsored House Bills		
	Not Passed by the House	Passed by the House
Not Reported from Committee	46,755 (94.49)	2,725 (5.51)
Reported from Committee	1,176 (26.79)	3,213 (73.21)
(c) All House "Leadership" Bills		
	Not Passed by the House	Passed by the House
Not Reported from Committee	121 (79.08)	32 (20.92)
Reported from Committee	3 (7.14)	39 (92.86)
(d) All House Bills Introduced by Majority Party Leaders		
	Not Passed by the House	Passed by the House
Not Reported from Committee	113 (83.09)	23 (16.91)
Reported from Committee	1 (3.85)	25 (96.15)

2.2 LEGISLATOR ISSUE EMPHASIS AND COMMITTEE TOPIC ALLOCATION

The opportunity-creation powers afforded to committees are nominally wielded by the committee chair. Committee chairs have scheduling and witness selection powers (see House Rule XI.2.g.(3)(A) as well as Talbert, Jones and Baumgartner 1995; Oleszek 2011; Deering and Smith 1997) These allow the chair, respectively, to determine the issue content of hearings and, by way of strategically selecting witnesses, to highlight certain aspects of a problem and emphasize advantageous issue frames. (Jones and Baumgartner 2005; DeGregorio 1997; Evans 2001; Kollman 1997) Chairs also control which bills are scheduled for hearing as well as which amendments to those bills are considered in committee; these allow a chair to grant the committee's floor success advantage to bills selectively. (Krutz 2005) Because of these powers, the committee chair can create position-taking and policymaking opportunities for issue areas of their choosing, and is largely unconstrained in doing so if the topic of a hearing is within the committee's issue jurisdiction.² Given control of their committee hearing's issue topics and incentives to pursue district

²It should be noted, however, that for investigatory and oversight hearings, House Rules are generally far more lenient about confining committee hearings to the topics within a committee's issue jurisdiction. Indeed, this leniency allows committees to make claims on issue areas outside of their current jurisdiction. (Talbert, Jones and Baumgartner 1995) Thus, in the realm of non-referral hearings, the chair is less constrained in directing their committee's attention to the issues they care

and personal priority issues whenever possible, committee chairs should be expected to direct committee hearings toward their own priority issues. To the extent they do so, they create optimal position-taking and policymaking opportunities for themselves. As a result of such efforts, the committee's agenda is more likely to reflect the issue priorities of its chair.

While this may seem intuitive, it goes against much recent literature on the power and independence of committee chairs in the post-reform Congress. Reforms Congress undertook in the 1970s and again in the 1990s shifted floor agenda power from committee chairs to the majority party, and in the House have allowed the majority party leadership to constrain committee chairs through specific tools; these include more aggressive use of "leadership bills", partisan election of committee chairs, and the advent of the Rules Committee with an effective ex post veto on committee-reported legislation. (Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2005; Sinclair 1998; Owens 1997; Stiglitz and Weingast 2010; Deering and Smith 1997; Aldrich and Rohde 2001) Indeed, what little scholarship exists on the role of committees and committee chairs in the post-reform Congress generally portrays them as acting according to the policy preferences of their co-partisans. (Evans 2001; Krutz 2005) To the extent that congressional reforms had their intended effect, committee chairs do not have much independent power in the post-reform Congress. Performing this party-serving function may preclude a committee chair from pursuing her personal issue priorities, particularly if an issue area's policy status quo(s) are broadly favored by the majority party and active oversight is discouraged. However, it should be noted that all of these empirical patterns are consistent with the proposition that committee chairs select bills from authors with similar preferences, (Krutz 2005) which members of their party will be more likely to have. This would suggest that committee chairs are acting in a relatively unconstrained fashion, and are simply more likely to favor their copartisans' bills. Moreover, studies of majority party power and the theories underpinning them typically relate to preferences within an issue area, rather than priorities across issue areas. Thus, even in the post-reform Congress, chairs may operate in relatively unconstrained fashion when setting their committees' issue priorities.

Proposition 1: among issues within a committee chair's committee's jurisdiction, the more important

about.

an issue is to the committee chair, the more likely she is to direct the committee's attention to that issue.

Though this article is primarily concerned with ascertaining the causal effect of committee chair issue priorities on committee agendas, there are alternative explanations of committees' issue priorities that imply empirical propositions.

Committee agendas may reflect the priorities of the majority party. There are two mechanisms by which it may do so. First, a committee chair might privilege the needs of majority party legislators over those of minority party legislators. If this is the case, committee agendas would be expected to reflect the relative priority majority party legislators³ place among the issue areas in a committee's remit.

Proposition 2: as an issue area within a committee's issue jurisdiction becomes more important to majority party legislators, the committee chair is more likely to direct the committee's attention to that issue.

The second potential mechanism of majority party influence over committee issue activity is the majority party leadership. In the Gingrich era, committees were handed majority party "leadership bills" that were expected to be reported regardless of committee members' preferences. (Deering and Smith 1997) This intensified a long-standing practice of House leaders designating some issues as "leadership issues": namely, those that the party wished to highlight, presumably for the sake of partisan advantage. (Oleszek 2011) Given that majority party leaders have strong influence over party caucus elections for committee chairmanships, it is quite possible that committee chairs are incentivized to pay heed to party leader demands and be more active in areas where party leaders have designated "leadership bills": since these bills always include those with the first ten bill numbers, "H.R. 1" through "H.R. 10", these serve as a reasonable proxy for the issue priorities of leadership bills.

Proposition 3: as an issue area with a committee's issue jurisdiction becomes more frequent among the "First Ten" bills of Congress, the committee chair is more likely to direct the committee's attention to that issue.

Additionally, there remains the possibility that committee agendas are instead reflective of the

³Of course, majority party legislators may be themselves responding to perceived electoral needs, a co-partisan President, or the needs party campaign contributors or some other actor. While this is probably the case (and indeed may hold for committee chairs as well), for the sake of parsimony I treat the motivations behind legislators' priorities as exogenous and leave discussion of the factors underlying legislators' priorities for the conclusion.

systemic agenda (c.f. Cobb and Elder 1972) as it pertains to issues within the committee's issue jurisdiction. To the extent that is the case, committee chairs create little to no bias in problem selection through their committee scheduling, and committee agendas would reflect the levels of demand among House members for legislation across issue areas.

Proposition 4: as an issue area with a committee's issue jurisdiction becomes more frequent among bills filed in the House during that Congress, the committee chair is more likely to direct the committee's attention to that issue.

Finally, the collective problem-solving framework of Adler and Wilkerson (2012) argues that committee activities are set by reauthorization periods that create opportunities for readdressing public problems in the future; the legislators of the past want to ensure that an issue remains "on the table" even after it is settled by passing legislation. To the extent their bill-level analysis applies at the issue level as well, it can be expected that issue areas where a committee has been legislatively active in the recent past (i.e. where it has previously reported bills) are more likely to continue to be the focus of that committee's future activities.

Proposition 5: as an issue area with a committee's issue jurisdiction becomes more frequent among bills reported by that committee in prior Congresses, the committee chair is more likely to direct the committee's attention to that issue.

2.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

To investigate the role of committee chairs' priorities in shaping committee agendas, I examine across-issue differences in committee activity as a function of the sponsorship activity of various sets of legislative actors, including committee chairs, majority party members, majority party leaders, and the House as a whole. The main threat to establishing this as a causal claim is the endogeneity of changes in chairs' priorities to legislative and party politics that also impact committee behavior. Thus, to identify a causal effect of changes in committee chair priorities on changes in committee agendas, it is necessary to leverage a sample of expressed committee chair priorities that are exogenous to the legislative, electoral, and party politics that regularly affect committee behavior.

This study leverages two such "plausibly exogenous" causes of committee chair priority change. These causes are the death or scandal-induced resignation of a sitting committee chair and their replacement with a new chair. Between 1974, when the modern era of powerful congressional parties began, and 2012, there were 164 chairs of the House's standing committees. Of these, 14 instances of chair turnover resulted from the death, scandal-induced resignation, or executive appointment of the sitting chair of an authorizing committee.⁴ Of these, there are 10 cases where both the previous chair and the new chair held that office for at least a full Congress, permitting them time to shape their committee's priorities if indeed they are able to do so. These ten cases include instances of committee turnover in seven House committees⁵ with jurisdiction including a wide variety of substantive topics. The cases of turnover occurred in eight different Congresses between the 93rd (1973-74) and 108th (2003-2004) Congresses, and form the basis of the data used to test propositions about committee chairs' and other actors' committee agenda-setting power in the post-reform Congress.

In addition to confining the analysis to plausibly exogenous chair transitions, limiting the dataset in this way has at least two consequences for interpreting the results of the models specified below. First, restricting the sample size renders the empirical tests of all propositions more conservative. Taking a full sample of all instances of committee chair change would increase the sample size from 10 committee chair changes to over 150. A larger sample would make hypothesis tests much more likely to detect small effects that might, in turn, be of little substantive interest. In and of itself, this is an acceptable limitation of the empirical tests. Second, the small number of committee chair changes meeting the exogeneity criteria may induce unknown biases into the estimates, reducing generalizability, if the committees or issues included were unrepresentative in some way. In addition to the criteria themselves being unconnected to legislative and party politics, there are two reasons to be confident of generalizability: the committee chair changes in the dataset occur across many different House committees with very different policy remits, and occur at many different time points within post-1970 period of strong House parties. Because of

⁴ The specific cases and their justification as plausibly exogenous are described in the Appendix. Changes in the Rules, Budget, and Appropriations committees were excluded from the analysis because those committees do not generally conduct hearings considering authorizing legislation.

⁵ These are the House committees on: Agriculture; Armed Services; Education and the Workforce; Financial Services; Natural Resources; Transportation; and Ways & Means.

this variety across both committees and time, there is reason for some confidence that the sample, while small, is representative of committee chair changes in general. Moreover, the full sample of committee chair transitions would include cases where chair turnover was endogenous to committee agendas; for example, changes in party control (which account for a large fraction of the 150 cases of chair turnover) would almost certainly cause changes in committee agendas as well as the priorities of the committee chair, majority party membership, and majority party leadership, all of which would represent members of the new majority party - entirely different sets of legislators. This would almost certainly bias upward the coefficients on chair priorities, majority party members' priorities, and leadership priorities. Therefore, while a small sample of committee chair changes, the increase in causal credibility gained by selecting for exogenous committee chair changes compensates for the modest potential harm to generalizability and increased probability of Type II error.

Empirical Models

The linear portions of the models reported below take the following form:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{CommitteeActivity}_{c,i,t+1} = & \beta_1 + \beta_2 \text{CommitteeReports}_{c,i,t} + \beta_3 \text{CommitteeReports}_{c,i,t-1} + \\ & \beta_4 \text{ChairSponsoredBills}_{c,i,t+1} + \beta_5 \text{ChairSponsoredBills}_{c,i,t} + \beta_6 \text{MajorityPartyBills}_{i,t+1} + \\ & \beta_7 \text{FirstTenBills}_{i,t+1} + \beta_8 \text{HouseBills}_{i,t+1} + \beta_9 \text{Congress}_t + \beta_{10} \text{Committee}_c + \zeta_{i,j} \end{aligned}$$

where, c designates a committee, i is an issue subtopic, and t is a Congress (period). In all cases, t is the last Congress prior to the change in committee chairs, $t + 1$ is the first Congress after the change in committee chair, and $t - 1$ is the second-to-last Congress before the change in committee chairs. $\text{CommitteeActivity}_{c,i,t+1}$ is the level of c 's agenda space granted to i in $t + 1$. $\text{CommitteeReports}_{c,i,t}$ and $\text{CommitteeReports}_{c,i,t-1}$ is the frequency of committee-reported bills in the Congress before the change in committee chairs, and the Congress before that, respectively. These correspond to Proposition 5, and their coefficients are expected to be positive. $\text{ChairSponsoredBills}_{c,i,t+1}$ and $\text{ChairSponsoredBills}_{c,i,t}$ are the frequency of the chair's bills referred to their committee, c , in each issue area i in the indicated Congress. Note that by construction, the chair of a committee at time t and the chair of the same committee at time $t + 1$ are different

people. $ChairSponsoredBills_{c,i,t+1}$ corresponds to Proposition 1, and is expected to be positive. $MajorityPartyBills_{i,t+1}$ is the incidence of i among bills sponsored by members of the majority party in Congress $t + 1$. It corresponds to Proposition 2 and is expected to be positive. $FirstTenBills_{i,t+1}$ is the incidence of issues i among leadership bills (H.R.s 1 to 10) introduced in Congress $t + 1$. It corresponds to Proposition 3 and is expected to be positive. $HouseBills_{i,t+1}$ is the incidence of bills in i across all House members in Congress $t + 1$. It corresponds to Proposition 4 and is expected to be positive, particularly if Proposition 1 does not hold. $Congress_t$ is the Congress number of Congress t and serves as a time trend. $Committee_c$ is a committee fixed effect. $\zeta_{i,j}$ is the error term, comprised of an issue-code random intercept (the variance of which is reported as ψ , below) and an observation-level residual error term (reported as ε).

Data on Legislators' and Committee's Issue Priorities

The data comprise 947 observations at the committee-congress-subtopic level. Committee-congresses are selected based on the sampling procedure described above. To identify the potential issue topics prioritized by committees or legislators, I used the Policy Agendas Project subtopic codes as assigned to congressional committee hearings in the Policy Agendas Project⁶ dataset and to individual bills in the Congressional Bills Project dataset.⁷ To determine which subtopics belong to a committee's jurisdiction, I followed the procedure outlined by King (1997) in his study of committee jurisdictions. King and others (e.g. Talbert, Jones and Baumgartner 1995) argue that, though committees' formal jurisdictions are listed with some specificity, a committee chair will often try to ensure that bills on topics marginally relevant to her committee's jurisdiction should be referred to her committee. Over time, such marginal referrals work to expand the committee's issue jurisdiction and, thus, its power relative to other committees. Thus, rather than using a committee's formally-designated jurisdiction, King measures its "de facto" jurisdiction, the set of issue areas included in bills referred to the committee. Following a similar procedure, I

⁶The data used here were originally collected by Frank R. Baumgartner and Bryan D. Jones, with the support of National Science Foundation grant numbers SBR 9320922 and 0111611, and were distributed through the Department of Government at the University of Texas at Austin. Neither NSF nor the original collectors of the data bear any responsibility for the analysis reported here.

⁷E. Scott Adler and John Wilkerson, Congressional Bills Project: (2005-2014), NSF 00880066 and 00880061. The views expressed are those of the authors and not the National Science Foundation.

demarcated each committee-congress's de facto jurisdiction by examining the subtopics of bills referred to that committee. Specifically, a subtopic was considered within the issue jurisdiction of a committee at the time of the committee's exogenous turnover if at least one bill with that subtopic code was referred to that committee at any congress up to two before or after that in which the committee chair turned over. Thus, each case of committee chair transition comprises many observations in the dataset, one for each subtopic code determined to be in the committee's jurisdiction according to this procedure.

Dependent Variables: Measuring Committee Activity

Here, I measure two ways in which a committee chair may manipulate the issue agendas of their committees. *Issue Prioritization* refers to the level of attention granted to an issue relative to other issues. If activities in some issue areas are more helpful in pursuing a committee chair's personal goals than others, then the activities of the committee will be more beneficial for the chair to the extent they are directed towards those issue areas and not others. On the other hand, *Issue Emphasis* refers to the absolute level of committee attention in an issue area. More committee activity in an issue area increases its prevalence in the policy agenda and allows the committee to shape which attributes of an issue area are the subject of proposals on the policy agenda. Prioritization and emphasis serve distinct purposes for the committee chair, but a chair is expected to do both activities in ways that direct committee attention toward their personal priority issue areas.

Committee attention to an issue area during a particular Congress is measured in four ways: two variants - proportions and counts - of two indicators of committee attention - all hearings, and referral hearings. Issue Prioritization models compare the prevalence of subtopic in a committee's activities relative to other subtopics, and is measured as the proportion of that committee's activities in that Congress that were in that subtopic. Issue Emphasis models, concerned with the absolute frequency with which a committee addresses different issues, use the raw counts of activities. Thus, each observation in the Emphasis models is the count of committee hearings in that subtopic in that Congress. In all cases, the Congress of the dependent variable is the first Congress of the new committee chair after a transition from a prior committee chair.

The first indicator of committee issue attention used in analyses reported here is the number of hearings in a subtopic. This measure includes legislative (i.e. referral) and non-legislative hearings. To the extent that they provide fora for position taking by members, and members derive different electoral benefits from position-taking on different issues, the prevalence of a particular issue area among a committee's hearings reflects the chair's intent to provide opportunities for position-taking on those issues. Among sample cases, in the first year of a new committee chair, subtopics received between 0 and 29 hearings and a given issue area received a mean of 0.856 hearings (sd 2.768). Subtopics as a proportion of a committee's hearings ranged from 0 to 0.439, with mean 0.011 (sd 0.034). Again, most issues present among the bills referred to a committee do not receive any sort of formal attention from that committee.

The second indicator of committee issue attention confines the analysis specifically to referral hearings. Referral hearings consider specific legislation, and comprise a little over a third of committee hearings in the sample. Where non-referral hearings are often about other matters, referral hearings are primarily policymaking activities. Subtopics received a mean 0.313 (sd 1.439) referral hearings; as a proportion of a committee's referral hearings, mean 0.011 (sd 0.052). And so, once more, committees neglect most of the subtopics under their jurisdiction in setting bills for hearing.

Independent Variable and Controls: Measuring Legislative Actors' Issue Priorities

Bill introductions form the basis of most of the model's right-hand-side variables. Here, bill introductions are taken as an expression of a legislator's personal issue priorities. (see Sulkin 2005) In all models, an actor's issue priorities are measured as the actor's allocation of bill introductions across subtopics in the case committee-Congress's jurisdiction. In Issue Prioritization Models, I use the proportion of bill introductions across subtopics; in Issue Emphasis models, I use the raw count of bill introductions in each subtopic.

Each proposition specifies an actor whose priorities are expected to drive committee agendas. Proposition 1 holds that committee chair issue priorities dictate committee agendas; I measure the former as allocation (in proportional or absolute terms) of the chair's introduced bills by subtopic. The models also include a one-Congress lagged version of this variable to control for the possibility that being the

chairman of a particular committee induces a legislator to introduce bills in certain policy areas; by design, the bills included in these variables were sponsored by the previous chair of that committee. For Proposition 2, in which committee agendas reflect the needs of the majority party as a whole, I measure prevalence of subtopics among bills introduced by members of the majority party during the first Congress of the new committee chair. For Proposition 3, in which majority party leadership sets committee issue priorities, I use the prevalence of subtopics among the "First Ten" reserved leadership bills in the same Congress. For Proposition 4, that committee agendas are reflections of the chamber as a whole, I measure the chamber's priorities as the prevalence of the committee's subtopics among all bills introduced in the House. For Proposition 5, I measure committee's ongoing legislative duties with the prevalence of subtopics in the committee's reported legislation in the previous two Congresses; given biennial schedule of many program expirations, this measure is a reasonable proxy for the issue areas the committee must attend to on a regular basis. Also, Kypriotis (2013) and others have argued that more recent Congresses have featured centralized policymaking authority controlled by parties at the expense of committees, while incentivizing committees to conduct more oversight and investigative hearings. Thus, across all issue areas, I expect fewer referral hearings in more recent Congresses and include a time trend - the number of the Congress at the year before or after the chair transition - in the Issue Emphasis models to accommodate this. This coefficient is expected to be negative in the Issue Emphasis models.

Multilevel Models of Committee Issue Prioritization and Emphasis

The data feature two types of clustering. The first is that bills with nearly all the subtopic codes (203 subtopic codes out of 210 in the dataset) have been referred to multiple committee-years among those in the dataset. It is highly likely that some of the subtopic codes indicate bills in issue areas that are likely to get issue attention due to factors not specifically captured among the right-hand-side variables in the model. Because there are so many topic codes in the data, and because I wish to make inferences beyond the committee-years appearing in the sample, I follow the advice of Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal (2012, p 159) as well as Clark and Linzer (2015) and estimate models with subtopic code random effects. Because different committees have lower or higher levels of legislative activities not explicitly modeled, I include

committee fixed effects in all the models reported here.

For models of Issue Prioritization, for which the dependent variable is the proportion of all bills reported by the committee in a given period that had a particular topic code, I use linear mixed models. For models of Issue Emphasis, for which the dependent variable is the (overdispersed) count of bills reported in a period, I use mixed effects negative binomial models. Huber-White standard errors are used in all models, with the acknowledgement that they do not correct the misspecification bias inevitable in the models reported here (and indeed, virtually all models without experimental control) so much as render the statistical tests reported here yet more conservative. (King and Roberts 2015)

2.4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results for the estimated Issue Prioritization models are presented in Table 2.2, while the results for Issue Emphasis models are presented in Table 2.3.

I argued above that if committee chairmen are able to use committee agendas to advance their own issue interests, then the prevalence (either proportion or count) of issue areas in their individual bill introductions should be positively associated with that in their committee's hearings. In general, the results provide evidence that committee chairs have the ability to direct committee agendas toward their own personal priorities. Across the priorities models, the coefficient on new ($t+1$) committee chairs' sponsorships is positive and statistically significant, suggesting that, at the margins, the committee chair can direct committee attention toward her priorities and does so to facilitate optimal proposal-making and position-taking opportunities. In terms of committees' issue priorities, a one-standard deviation (0.047) difference in a committee chair's proportion of bills in a subtopic area is associated with an approximately one percent (0.011 proportion) increase in a committee's hearings (both in general and in referral hearings specifically) in that area, which is roughly equal to the mean proportion of committee hearings across subtopics. Thus, adding a chair sponsored bill in an issue area nearly doubles the expected proportion of hearings in a given issue area.

The estimated marginal effect of a single additional chair-sponsored bill is slightly more complex in its calculation. An increase in the proportion of bills introduced by the chair in one subtopic also represents

Table 2.2: Mixed Effects Models of Committee Issue Prioritization in Congress After Exogenous Chair Transition

	(1) Proportion All Hearings	(2) Proportion Referral Hearings
Proportion of Reports, t	0.192*** (0.0424)	0.213* (0.0905)
Proportion of Reports, t - 1	0.106 (0.0768)	0.124 (0.085)
Proportion of Chair-Sponsored Bills, t + 1	0.239** (0.0737)	0.181* (0.0886)
Proportion of Chair-Sponsored Bills, t	-0.00142 (0.102)	-0.019 (0.126)
Proportion of Majority-Party Members' Bills, t + 1	-0.343 (0.407)	-1.137 (0.947)
Proportion of Majority Party "First Ten" Bills, t + 1	-0.00982 (0.00654)	-0.00993 (0.0129)
Proportion of All House Bills, t+1	0.34 (0.453)	1.345 (1.042)
Congress (number), t	-0.000176 (0.000583)	-0.0000835 (0.00103)
Constant	0.0245 (0.0592)	0.0127 (0.105)
Var($\psi_{subtopic}$)	0.0000362 (0.0000356)	5.40e-16 (1.93e-14)
Var(ε)	0.0006437 (0.000201)	0.00134 (0.000408)

$N_{subtopic-committee-Congress} = 899$. All variables expressed as proportions of bills across subtopics in a committee-Congress. Robust standard errors in parentheses. All models include committee fixed effects. t is the last year of the previous committee chair. t+1 is the first Congress under the new committee chair. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

some increase in the proportions of majority member bills and House bills in that issue area. Specifically, one additional bill would represent a proportional increase of 0.05 for the average committee chair's sponsorships (mean 20.2 chair sponsorships per case), of 0.0003 for the average majority party members' sponsorships (mean 3597.4 majority party sponsorships per case), and of 0.0002 for the average House (mean 5494.7 House bills per case). Taking the estimated coefficients for Proportion of Chair-Sponsored bills (0.227), Proportion of Majority Party Members' bills (0.445), and Proportion of all House bills (-0.649), the more appropriate point estimates of the marginal effect of a chair adding an additional bill are as follows:

$$\Delta HearingsProportion_{+1ChairBill} = 0.239 * 0.05 - 0.343 * 0.0003 + 0.340 * 0.0002 = 0.0119$$

$$\Delta ReferralHearingsProportion_{+1ChairBill} = 0.181*0.05 - 1.137*0.0003 + 1.345*0.0002 = 0.0091$$

Thus, even a small increase in frequency among a chair's other bills can make a given issue area more prominent among a committee's hearings. Committee chairs, therefore, can make some adjustments to the priorities of their committee to direct its attention to their own personal priority issue areas. The generally positive association between chair priorities and committee outcomes is consistent with Proposition 1. The only other statistically significant predictors of committee prioritization among the variables included in these models is the one-Congress lagged committee reports variable. This suggests that committee activities are fairly stable from year to year, and (especially given that actors other than the committee chair do not appear to be able to consistently shift committee priorities) that committees function to facilitate ongoing collective problem-solving. This is consistent with Proposition 5. The priorities models fail to find an association between committees' issue priorities and those of other categories of actors, including majority-party leaders, members-at-large, and the House as a whole.

Models of committee emphasis yield similar results. The number of chair-sponsored bills in an issue area is positively and statistically-significantly associated with the number of hearings in general, and referral hearings specifically, the committee was expected to make in that issue area. As indicated by the corresponding estimates of incidence rate ratios, this association is also substantively significant: the count of each dependent variable is expected to nearly (or, in the case of hearings, more than) double for each bill a chair sponsored in a given issue area. Thus, issues a chair personally prioritizes are expected to increasingly be the focus of her committee's work.

To make appropriate marginal effects estimates, the independent variables in the models above are related to one another in a way relevant to the hypothesis tests reported here. An additional chair-sponsored bill is also an additional majority party-sponsored bill and a House-sponsored bill. However, given the incidence rate ratios reported in Table 2.3, accounting for this non-independence across independent variables is trivial - it is the product of the coefficients on Chair-Sponsored bills, Majority Party bills, and House bills. For the three different committee activities the multiplicative marginal effect of an additional bill in an issue area is estimated as:

Table 2.3: Mixed Effects Negative Binomial Models of Committee Issue Emphasis in Congress After Exogenous Chair Transition

	(1)		(2)	
	Count All Hearings Coefficients	IRR	Count Referral Hearings Coefficients	IRR
Number of Reports, t	0.371*** (0.101)	1.449*** (0.146)	0.263 (0.142)	1.301 (0.184)
Number of Reports, t - 1	-0.195 (0.129)	0.823 (0.107)	-0.0876 (0.159)	0.916 (0.146)
Number of Chair-Sponsored Bills, t + 1	0.829*** (0.206)	2.291*** (0.473)	0.675* (0.275)	1.964* (0.54)
Number of Chair-Sponsored Bills, t	0.449*** (0.119)	1.567*** (0.187)	0.299** (0.111)	1.348** (0.149)
Number of Majority-Party Members' Bills, t + 1	0.00392 (0.0112)	1.004 (0.011)	-0.00537 (0.0178)	0.995 (0.018)
Number of Majority Party "First Ten" Bills, t + 1	0.232 (0.353)	1.262 (0.445)	-0.154 (0.454)	0.857 (0.389)
Number of All House Bills, t+1	-0.00454 (0.00742)	0.995 (0.007)	0.00349 (0.012)	1.003 (0.012)
Congress (number), t + 1	-0.0104 (0.0324)	0.99 (0.032)	-0.159** (0.0591)	0.853** (0.05)
Constant	0.395 (3.29)		13.95* (6.003)	
$\ln(\alpha)$	1.270*** (0.146)		1.228*** (0.26)	
$\text{Var}(\psi_{\text{subtopic}})$	0.0248 (0.112)		0.11 (0.243)	

$N_{\text{subtopic-committee-Congress}} = 947$. All variables expressed as counts across subtopics. Robust standard errors in parentheses. All models include committee fixed effects. t is the last year of the previous committee chair. t+1 is the first Congress under the new committee chair. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

$$Q_{\text{chairsponsor,hearings}} = 2.291 * 1.004 * 0.995 = 2.287$$

$$Q_{\text{chairsponsor,referralhearings}} = 1.964 * 0.995 * 1.003 = 1.960$$

Thus, a single additional chair-sponsored bill is associated with a near- or more-than- doubling of the number of committee activities in that issue area.

However, other factors are also found to be associated with committee activity in an issue area. There is a statistically significant negative time trend (represented by the Congress in which a chair changed) in referral hearings, confirming that there have been fewer referral hearings in more recent Congresses, regardless of issue area. The results of the committee activity models also suggest that committee attention tends toward the same issues over time. Coefficients on prior-year bill reports are positive

and statistically significant for the models of hearings though, interestingly, not referral hearings. Two explanations for this suggest themselves: reauthorization bills often recur in cycles of only a few years, suggesting that bills passed in earlier Congresses are likely to come up again in subsequent Congresses; (see Adler and Wilkerson 2012) also, that members and leaders of committees to some extent self-select onto those committees with jurisdictions that allow them to pursue their personal priority issues. If this is true, then those committees exist, and their jurisdictions are fairly stable, because the members want to take positions on those particular sets of issues, and that desire maintains over time. The positive and statistically significant coefficient on the prior committee chair's number of introduced bills suggests that committee leaders appear to have an influence on their committee's issue emphasis that outlasts their tenure as chair; it may also indicate that committee chairs are responsible for certain recurring aspects of programs in their committee's jurisdiction. This might be explained by self-selection into candidacy for the chair of particular committees - a prospective chair of a particular committee wants to be chair of that committee because of their interest in the committee's core issues. It might also reflect the desire to defend jurisdictional gains won by previous chairs. (King 1997) On the other hand, once again the Issue Emphasis models fail to find an association between committees' issue priorities and those of majority party leaders, rank-and-file members, or the House as a whole.

2.5 CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that new committee chairs can shift, in both an absolute and relative sense, the issues considered by their committees to focus on those issues the new chair prefers. To do so, it relies on a sample of chair transitions spurred by the death or scandal-induced resignation of a previous chair and replacement by a new chair of the same party. Given the success of committee-approved bills on the floor, this suggests that committee chairs have influence over problem selection in Congress. Committees also have recurring responsibilities in some issue areas, and as such tend to consider the same issues from Congress to Congress. All analyses in this article fail to find evidence of an association between committee agendas and those of majority party members and leaders, nor with the priorities of House members as a whole.

One particular way in which external validity may be compromised by this research design is the time period of the set of cases examined here. While all of the cases (see the Appendix) come from the post-1970 era of strong House parties, most (7 out of 10) of the "first years of new chairs" occurred prior to 1995, when Speaker Newt Gingrich centralized legislative decision-making within party leadership, and instituted reforms to make committee chairmanships more contingent on prospective chairs' support for leadership goals. (Deering and Smith 1997; Cann 2008; Deering and Wahlbeck 2006) As a prediction of the effect of committee chair prioritization on contemporary or future committee activity, the coefficients on committee chair sponsorships presented here may be biased upward. However, there are two reasons that such issue are unlikely to lead to false inferences. The first is the finding that chairs' bills remain advantaged in the post-Gingrich House, as noted above. The second is that while Gingrich compelled committee chairs to grant agenda space to the so-called "Contract with America" legislation, there is less evidence that he actively used his new clout to censor entire issue areas. (Deering and Smith 1997) Once the party's immediate needs were met, committees would have been free to consider other topics. More likely, however, is that in the models reported here the coefficients on the "Top Ten" bills, representing leadership issues, are biased toward zero. Thus, the particularities of the time period considered here are unlikely to create dramatic biases in the coefficient on committee chairs' issue priorities.

Indeed, while the case that backbenchers might be less influential is fairly intuitive, an inability of majority party leaders to dictate committee issue agendas would be considerably less so. The most likely explanation of this article's non-statistically-significant results with respect to majority party leadership priorities is that the research design was intended to allow for the identification of a causal effect of committee chairs' priorities on committee agendas. It was not intended to test whether, or how much, party leaders' priorities influenced committee agendas. On the other hand, it is possible that the result suggests an actual absence (or inconsistent influence) of party leader priorities on issue agendas. One potential explanation of this is that, due to the multitude of potential issues (c.f. Jones and Baumgartner 2005), the majority party confines its attention, and by extension its control, to the floor. (see Crombez, Groseclose and Krehbiel 2006) However, this possibility is qualified somewhat by the finding of Volden and Wiseman (2014) that majority party legislators' advantage in legislative effectiveness

is most prominent at the committee stage of the legislative process. Alternatively, it could be the case that party leaders are for the most part focused on the policy preferences expressed in legislation rather than the issue priorities expressed therein; this suggests that problem selection is a power that committee leaders maintain in the post-reform era. The results reported here cannot clarify which of these explanations hold, and so leaves it to future work to specifically investigate whether party leaders' powers in agenda control result in powers of problem selection such as those wielded by committee chairs.

This study has implications for research in at least two areas beyond the relationship between individual and collective priorities in Congress. This study suggests an avenue of research on policy entrepreneurship and lobbying. Because so much influence over committee priorities and activities is wielded by identifiable individuals (in this case, committee leaders⁸), actors with the ability to influence a chair of a committee relevant to their interests stand to leverage agenda power as well. Under what conditions can lobbyists or other legislators co-opt committee chairs' agenda power?

Finally, this study has implications for how political scientists think about agenda setting in Congress. In much research on American politics, agenda-setting is conceptualized in spatial terms: given the relative position of the majority party median, the chamber pivots, the legislative status quo, and an agenda-setter, which proposals can beat the status quo depends in part on the location of the agenda-setter. However, Kingdon (1995) places this sort of decision calculus into the category of alternative specification: which policy outcomes are politically feasible is an important part of knowing when an "idea's time has come". Rather less attention has been paid to agenda-setting as Kingdon defines it: the movement of particular issues toward formal attention from government. The work of Baumgartner and Jones (1993, 2005) is an exception, but their focus on problem selection is systemic - what is the overall distribution of government attention - rather than directed at predicting the agenda status of individual issues. Thus, the rise and fall of individual issues onto the governmental agenda, and the ability of particular actors to induce such change, remains an area needing additional research.

⁸This is as opposed to, say, the chamber or majority party median, the identities of whom would vary by vote and would be estimated with some uncertainty.

Table 2.4: Cases of Plausibly Exogenous Committee Chair Transition, post-reform House

Congress	Committee	Old Chair	New Chair	Cause of Transition
94	Financial Services	Wright Patman	Henry Reuss	Death
95	Ways & Means	Wilbur Mills	Al Ullman	Resignation
99	Armed Services	Charles Melvin Price	Les Aspin	Imminent Death
99	Education and Workforce	Carl D. Perkins	Gus Hawkins	Death
101	Transportation	James J. Howard	Glenn M. Anderson	Death
102	Natural Resources	Mo Udall	George Miller	Resignation
103	Armed Services	Les Aspin	Ron Dellums	Resignation
107	Armed Services	Floyd Spence	Robert Strump	Death
107	Transportation	Bud Shuster	Don Young	Resignation
108	Agriculture	Larry Combest	Bob Goodlatte	Resignation

The "Congress" reported here is the first Congress in which the new committee chair served ($t+1$ in models from main text).

2.6 APPENDIX: CASES OF PLAUSIBLY EXOGENOUS COMMITTEE CHAIR TRANSITION

The empirical models in this study leverage plausibly exogenous transitions in chair priorities to make causal claims about the relationship between committee chair priorities and those of their committees. Among House authorizing committees in the post-reform House (i.e. 1970 to the present), there have been ten such transitions, across 7 committees, where both the prior chair and the new chair held the position for at least one full Congress. These are summarized in Table 2.4.

Chapter 3

Interest Diversity in Lobbying Coalitions: an Exploratory Analysis

On a cold morning in early March 2017, House Republicans had promised to reveal their long-awaited bill to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The ACA had been the most significant overhaul of the American healthcare system in decades, and Republicans running for offices at all levels across the country had been running on a promise to "repeal and replace" it for years. Making good on this promise was a top priority for the new Republican unified government, and so party leaders in Congress – particularly, House Speaker Paul Ryan – wanted to move a bill as quickly as possible. The replacement bill, the American Health Care Act (AHCA), was drafted by majority party leadership staff without input from affected interests, or even other members of the House Republican caucus. Instead, it would first be revealed to House Republican members of the committees that would be charged with moving it to the floor. This reveal took place in a room whose location was a closely guarded secret. As House Democrats, Senators of both parties, and journalists scrambled to find the secret room, Republican committee members were given a briefing and then allowed to read the bill, but not to leave the room with it.¹ This approach reflected the desire of Republican leaders to move the AHCA quickly through the House and over to the Senate, where any ACA replacement would face the hurdle of a potential Democratic filibuster; debate over the larger goals as well as the legislative minutiae would be, at this stage, pointless.

However, the approach backfired. The bill garnered vocal opposition from both sides of the aisle, as well as from major healthcare trade and professional organizations.² A few weeks after the bill was divulged to

¹Kliff, Sarah, "'We cannot find the bill': inside the frantic hunt for the GOP Obamacare replacement", *Vox.com*, March 2nd, 2017. <http://www.vox.com/2017/3/2/14792196/gop-obamacare-bill-search>, last accessed March 16, 2017.

²DeBonis, Mike, "Ryan: Health care plan must change to pass the House," *Washington Post*, March 15th, 2017, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/powerpost/>

House Republicans, it was withdrawn in the face of this overwhelming opposition.

Just a few months before, Republicans successfully overhauled medical research and drug approval with the 21st Century Cures (CURES) Act, a years-in-development pet project of House Energy and Commerce Committee chairman Fred Upton (R-MI). Upton proposed to change the Food & Drug Administration's (FDA) drug approval process, particularly with respect to the types of evidence that the FDA could take into consideration when making drug approval decisions. The provisions to do so were strongly opposed by consumer groups,³ and were treated warily by the FDA itself,⁴ but were favored by the pharmaceutical industry as a way to reduce research and development costs. Upton, who had pharmaceutical companies in his district and had previously sponsored legislation they favored (e.g. the Asthma Inhalers Relief Act of 2012), wanted to help this important constituency within his district. In the face of this mixed reception, the original version of the CURES Act languished in Upton's committee for years.

However, in the last Congress of the Obama Administration, Upton changed tactics. Upton bargained with committee Democrats to package his FDA reforms into a bill that included many proposals favored by members on both sides of the aisle: funding programs to address the opioid addiction crisis, improving how the government responds to mental and behavioral health problems, and making large investments in medical research, including the so-called "Cancer Moonshot" championed by Democratic Vice President Joseph Biden. The combined bill won broad support from both Democrats and Republicans, as well as from university medical centers and health advocacy groups. The CURES Act ultimately passed both chambers with large majorities, and President Obama signed it into law in the waning days of his administration.

The initial version of the AHCA and the CURES Act were both controversial and substantial changes to American healthcare, and both were prioritized by the congressional majority party leadership. Their different legislative fates present a puzzle. Given the powers of the House majority party leadership, particularly on highly salient issues such as ACA repeal, the leadership-championed AHCA should have progressed smoothly. The CURES Act, while supported by Republican party leadership, was much more

speaker-paul-ryan-doubles-down-on-gop-health-care-plan-amid-opposition/2017/03/15/872c4f3c-0974-11e7-93dc-00f9bdd74ed1_story.html, accessed March 16th, 2017.

³Kaplan, Sheila, "Winners and losers of the 21st Century Cures Act", *STAT*, December 5, 2016 <https://www.statnews.com/2016/12/05/21st-century-cures-act-winners-losers/>, last access March 16, 2017

⁴Sherman, Anderson, Dal Pan, Gray, Gross, Hunter, LaVange, Marinac-Dabic, Marks, Robb, Shuren, Temple, Woodcock, Yue and Califf (2016).

the product of Upton and his Democratic committee colleagues and dealt with a relatively obscure issue. Moreover, while the CURES Act was passed during a period of divided government, the AHCA was initiated and scrubbed under a period of unified Republican government. If anything, given extant conditions, the CURES Act should have proven less likely to pass than the AHCA. However, the two bills differed markedly in how they approached potential objections and conflict. The AHCA, at least initially, was the product of House leadership and closed to outside input. It was opposed by virtually every major healthcare interest group, even after revisions were made to make the bill more viable.⁵ The CURES Act bundled together many different proposals from members on both sides of the aisle as well as from a wide array of interests affected by its numerous provisions. How might this difference in openness to outside interests have contributed to the bills' differing legislative outcomes?

Openness to input from affected interests creates opportunities to garner support from those interests. Indeed, organized interest groups lobby on many bills in virtually every policy area in which Congress can make law. (Baumgartner, Berry, Hojnacki, Kimball and Leech 2009; LaPira, Thomas and Baumgartner 2014; Grossmann and Pyle 2013) The vast majority of the existing research on interest group influence focuses on the question of whether interest groups' lobbying resources, such as more or better lobbyists or higher levels of campaign contributions, make them more influential on legislation. Indeed, one difference between the AHCA and the CURES Act is that, for the former, campaign contributions made by interest groups opposed to the bill vastly outstripped those made by groups supporting the bill, while for the CURES Act the opposite was the case – campaign contributions from supporting interests were double those of opposing interests.⁶ This would suggest, perhaps, that campaign contributions and similar flexing of interest groups' political clout might explain the difference in outcomes between the AHCA and the CURES Act. However, scholarly research on the influence of interest group financial resources has produced mixed evidence of their role in interest groups' legislative influence. (Baumgartner et al. 2009; McKay 2012a; Mahoney and Baumgartner 2015; Hojnacki, Kimball, Baumgartner, Berry and

⁵Abelson, Reed and Katie Thomas."In Rare Unity, Hospitals, Doctors and Insurers Criticize Health Bill", *the New York Times*, page A20, May 5th, 2017. Accessible at: <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/04/health/health-care-bill-criticisms.html>, last accessed May 6th, 2017.

⁶See Maplight.org's analysis of the CURES Act in its final form: <http://maplight.org/us-congress/bill/114-hr-34/11823228/total-contributions>, accessed May 5th, 2017.

Leech 2012; Wawro 2001) Perhaps the difference in outcomes between the AHCA and the CURES Act represents one case in which money did buy policy. However, if prior research is a guide, it is at least as likely that something other than financial advantage is generating interest groups' legislative influence.

One reason that resource advantages inconsistently convert into influence is that interest groups often collaborate to pool resources. Interest groups frequently form coalitions, both formally (e.g. with dedicated staff) and informally (with regular meetings of individual groups' lobbyists). (Hula 1999; Hojnacki 1997; Heaney 2006) There are many ways in which coalition-building efforts increase individual groups' policy influence. Coalitions aggregate groups' resources, (Mahoney and Baumgartner 2015) help them recruit allies, (Baumgartner et al. 2009) and give them more advantageous positions in policy networks. (Heaney and Lorenz 2013) In addition, coalitions allow groups to partner with organizations that differ from them. For example, they may differ in their organizational forms and favored tactics, or in the issues they normally focus on, or in their ideology or partisan identity. In each of these ways and others, a coalition (or other set) of interest groups can be said to be diverse. (Crosson and Heaney 2016; Phinney 2017) This diversity provides a signal to policymakers about the quality of legislation, particularly because, compared to homogeneous coalitions, more diverse coalitions are costlier to maintain and more difficult to find common ground within. Tactical, issue, and ideological diversity have been found to result from interest groups' response to the features of individual issues. (Crosson and Heaney 2016; Phinney 2017) But they are not the only kinds of diversity that a set of organizations may exhibit.

This article examines another type of diversity as a possible source of interest group influence. This source depends on the connections between organized interest groups and subpopulations within a given legislator's district. Any legislators' district includes many different businesses, social groups, and people who care about particular issues. Appealing to these distinct subpopulations, which Bishin (2009) refers to as "subconstituencies", allows a legislator to more efficiently build support for their own continued reelection than would be the case if they tried to identify and appeal to their district's median voter. Appealing to subconstituencies requires legislators to be able to take positions and claim credit (c.f. Mayhew 1974) on legislative issues those subconstituencies care about. However, identifying the optimal set of issues to work on in order to appeal to a subconstituency is difficult. Interest groups help legislative

overcome this difficulty, but can only do so to the extent that the legislator takes the interest group as a proxy for the subconstituencies to which the legislator wishes to appeal. Aware of this, groups often portray themselves as the proxy of various subconstituencies in society. Legislators often treat them as such, preferentially granting access to groups representing interests important to their district. (Grossmann 2012*b*; Hansen 1991) This relationship between subconstituencies and interest groups is important for determining which interest groups have the ear of which legislators, but does not in and of itself translate into influence over legislation. In order to judge the merits of legislation, lawmakers need to understand which subconstituencies would reward them for supporting a bill, and which would punish them. To change this calculus, interest groups must lobby together.

This paper develops the concept, and a proposed measure, of interest diversity in a coalition (or other set) of lobbying organizations. First, I define the concept of interest diversity as the relative degree of observable variety of subconstituencies represented by a coalition (or other set) of organizations. After developing this concept, I propose a measure of interest diversity based on the unique industries, issue causes, and other interest categories that lobby for or against a bill. Using data on interest groups' positions on over 5000 bills introduced between 2005 and 2014, I explore the variation in this measure, finding that it conforms to general expectations about differences in lobbying activity across bills. Among several variations of this measure, the difference in diversity between supporters and opponents – what I term "Net Interest Diversity" – is the most likely to impact legislators' decisions. Thus, I focus measurement validation on it. To do so, I examine how Net Interest Diversity varies across types of bills that existing theory would lead us to believe should covary with broad or diverse lobbying (either in support or opposition). These analyses demonstrate the validity of the measure as well as its limitations. In the conclusion, I discuss both in context of testing interest group influence on legislative progress and outcomes.

3.1 CONCEPTUALIZING INTEREST DIVERSITY AMONG LOBBYING ORGANIZATIONS

Interest groups often form coalitions in order to collaborate on shared policy objectives. Doing so helps groups pool resources, synergize tactics, and signal to lawmakers that there exists consensus among a

set of interests. (Hula 1999; Hojnacki 1997; Baumgartner et al. 2009) While individual groups have attributes – the issues they care about, the lobbyists they employ, their campaign contributions, or their existing connections among policymakers – those group-level attributes have been repeatedly shown to provide, at best, conditional influence on policy outcomes in Congress. (Baumgartner et al. 2009; Mahoney and Baumgartner 2015) Instead, it is the attributes of interest group coalitions – their size, their aggregated resources, their shaping of lobbyist networks – that more consistently result in policy influence. (Mahoney and Baumgartner 2015; Gilens and Page 2014; Heaney and Lorenz 2013) Thus, examining the attributes of interest group coalitions can help us better understand the conditions that allow organized interests to shape public policy outcomes.

This study elaborates the concept of interest diversity in lobbying coalitions. For this purpose, interest diversity is defined as the relative degree of observable variety of subconstituencies represented by set of organizations. This definition has several components. First, diversity is relative. A set of interest groups is only diverse when compared to a different set of interest groups. While a given set of interests may appear to be diverse in some sense, the implication of such an observation is that they are diverse by some standard. Given that no default diversity level exists in this context, I contend that one can only meaningfully assess diversity in sets of interest groups if that set is compared to another set. Second, diversity is observable. While many organizations may work incidentally or narrowly on a given issue, a set of interest groups is only diverse (by this definition) insofar as other actors are aware of those organizations' activity. Third, diversity denotes variety. Diversity concerns the differences among and between individuals. Unlike lobbyist hours, campaign contributions, or other resources, diversity arises not through aggregation of some individual-level attribute. Instead, it emerges from distinctions between organizations that exist only when those organizations are considered together (e.g. as groups lobbying on the same bill). In this conceptualization, therefore, no individual organization is diverse.⁷

Fourth, the key distinctions that allow interest diversity to emerge are in subconstituencies. A subconstituency is a subset of a legislator's district's population. Subconstituencies are delineated by a

⁷I recognize that in other contexts, individuals can be "diverse" insofar as they add some sort of diversity to a group that would not have that diversity in the individual's absence. The above discussion is not intended to invalidate that conceptualization of diversity so much as to distinguish how I am using the term from other ways in which it is used.

shared, salient identity – such as membership in a particular ethnic or racial community, participation in an industry, or attachment to a social cause – that is relevant to their policy preferences, issue priorities, or political participation. Subconstituencies help legislators solve several difficulties in representing the interests of their constituents and securing reelection. These difficulties arise because a legislator’s relationship with her constituents is at once fraught with uncertainty about the latter’s preferences, complicated by representatives’ differing relationships with their personal supporters and their constituents at large, and impeded by varying attention and knowledge across both voters and issue areas. (Miller and Stokes 1963; Fenno 1978; Arnold 1990) To overcome these difficulties, legislators appeal to subconstituencies within their district. (Bishin 2009; Mayhew 1974) Such appeals involve publicly taking positions and working on issues known to be important those subconstituencies’ members. Working on issues important to a given subconstituency solves all three representation problems: the subconstituency’s preferences on such issues are usually clear; because such issues are relevant only to a subset of their district, legislators may avoid conflicts between their personal supporters and their district at large; and, finally, because subconstituencies by definition care about specific priorities, they will be more likely to be aware of and reward their representatives’ attention to their priority issues. If successful, subconstituency appeals can be combined to form a supporting coalition of voters who will sustain a member’s reelection.

The fifth aspect of the present conceptualization of interest diversity is that subconstituencies are represented in the legislative process by interest groups.⁸ Even if legislators intend to appeal to important district subconstituencies, they may still fail to assess the subconstituency-relevance of particular legislative choices. Interest groups perform this assessment on behalf of legislators and communicate to them that a particular issue or bill is relevant to the group’s members and that those members share a set of policy goals on that issue or bill. This works, in part, because legislators use organizations as proxies for subconstituencies. (Grossmann 2012*b*) For example, legislators often consider the National Rifle Association (NRA) to be a proxy for American gun owners or the AARP⁹

⁸This is not to say that subconstituencies cannot also be represented in other ways – e.g. through social movements and similar grassroots organizations.

⁹Which used to be an acronym for the American Association of Retired Persons but, officially, no longer is.

as a proxy for the interests of the elderly. Such proxy-taking is not exact. Individual members of a subconstituency do not necessarily agree with the stances of the organization taken as their proxy: many gun owners disagree with NRA stances, as do many elderly persons disagree with the AARP on some issues. Moreover, different organizations can represent what is essentially the same subconstituency at once. For example, both the NRA and Gun Owners of America (GOA) purport to represent the interests of gun owners. Most of the time, they agree on policy direction (e.g. more permissive gun control laws and both stronger protection of and broader application of Second Amendment rights) even if they disagree, sometimes quite vocally, on particular policy provisions. For present purposes, they occupy the same subconstituency even though they view the preferences of that subconstituency in slightly different ways.

Because there is a distinction between organizations and subconstituencies in this definition, interest diversity among a set (e.g. a coalition) of organizations is distinct from the size of that set. A set of organizations can be large in size, including many individual organizations, but not interest diverse, if organizations in the coalition all represent the same subconstituency. For example, while the American Medical Association (AMA) represents medical doctors generally, there are several other organizations that represent subcategories based on emphasis – e.g. the American College of Physicians – or based on ideological inclination – e.g. the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons. A coalition of those three organizations, though larger than a coalition of two organizations, is not particularly diverse in the interests its members represent. By comparison, if the AMA formed a coalition with America’s Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) and PhRMA (which represents the pharmaceutical industry), that coalition would be equal in size to the first coalition but more diverse in the interests its members represent. This is not to say that the two concepts – size and interest diversity – are unrelated; a coalition’s potential diversity grows as the number of organizations in the coalition increases. However, because of its connection to the critical process of how lawmakers understand and appeal to different parts of their constituencies, I maintain that the distinction between coalition size and coalition interest diversity deserves separate consideration.

On the other hand, interest diversity can be a lens through which to assess political conflicts among organized interests. Schattschneider (1975) famously argued that the most important element of any

political strategy is how it impacts the scope and dimensions of the conflict on which an issue is decided. Moving a conflict from private (concerned with only a few actors) to public (in which many actors get involved) is done, according to Schattschneider, to ensure that "the power ratio among the private interests most immediately involved [in the conflict] shall not prevail." (p 37) Thus, political conflicts in Schattschneider's view are defined by the relative power of actors on each side of the conflict, with actors on each side attempting to reframe issues to recruit allies. The question, then, is how to assess the "power ratio" of interests on different sides of a conflict. In much research on lobbying, the primary form of interest group power that has been assessed is some variation on lobbying resources, which might include campaign contributions as well as lobby expenditures. (Hojnacki et al. 2012; Baumgartner et al. 2009) However, prior studies have mixed findings on the relationship between interest group resources and policy change. (though see also Mahoney and Baumgartner 2015) The concept of interest diversity in a lobbying coalition provides an alternative to financial resources (or resources derived through financial advantages, such as hiring more or better lobbyists) as a source of interest group power. If groups on one side of a bill are more diverse than those on the other side, perhaps the more diverse side can gain influence by appearing (to legislators) to represent the interests of a larger set of subconstituencies.

Where group resources have long been studied as a source of group influence, diversity among organizations has only been studied recently. Owing to its relative novelty, the concept of diversity within lobbying coalitions has given rise to several, somewhat overlapping, sub-types of diversity.¹⁰ Phinney (2017), in the most exhaustive treatment of diversity between organizations within lobbying coalitions to date, describes three ways in which interest groups within a coalition can represent diverse interests. First, "professional" diversity maps most closely onto differences in organizational type, suggesting that groups representing an industry or profession might have access to different kinds of information and advocacy strategies than a citizen group or research organization. (see Phinney 2017, Table 3.1, p 117) Interest

¹⁰In addition to the types of across-organization diversity discussed here, diversity can also arise within organizations in ways that have political consequences. Strolovitch (2006) examines intersectionality within interest groups representing disadvantaged populations and finds that such groups, within their own organizations, often replicate structures of power and privilege that underrepresent the interests of intersectionally marginalized subgroups within the populations they represent; e.g. women's rights groups have historically overrepresented the interests of white women vis-a-vis those of women of color. These maintained power structures shape organizational culture and advocacy strategies and thus may condition interest groups' influence as well.

diversity, as I have conceptualized it, ignores organizational type and focuses more on the potential populations of voters that groups represent. Thus, the two concepts are distinct.

"Policy domain" diversity, which Phinney defines as coalition members that are generally concerned with different issue areas (e.g. healthcare vs. green energy), is also distinct from the concept of interest diversity I have elaborated here. Individual organizations may tend to focus their lobbying in some issues more than others, but I argue that such differences in focus result from the priorities of the subconstituencies that those groups represent. For example, teacher's unions purport to represent a subconstituency common in many legislative districts – public school teachers. As such, they often become involved in education policy. However, teachers' unions have also lobbied extensively on issues such as family leave, health care benefits, anti-union legislation, public budgets, minimum wage, and other issues less directly related to education.¹¹ Thus, while organizations may have a general issue orientation, they end up lobbying on a wide range of issues, according to bills that impact their members' interests. In this sense the two concepts are distinct; though, policy domain diversity may *result* from interest diversity within a coalition.

Third, Phinney argues that coalitions can represent different interests through their members' diverging partisan and ideological affiliation. Ideological diversity can also result from, but is not the same thing as, interest diversity. Subconstituencies may have interests that lead them to prefer a general policy direction relative to the status quo. This may lead to differing ideological tendencies across industries. (see Bonica 2014) If interests that happen to be ideologically varied can find common ground on an issue, a coalition may result that is both ideologically diverse and interest diverse. However, there is plenty of within-industry ideological heterogeneity as well. (again, see Bonica 2014) Thus, a bill that garners the opposition of an entire industry may in doing so garner the opposition of non-interest-diverse actors with a wide range of general policy preferences. Hence, ideological diversity is once again distinct from interest diversity.

In addition to the types of diversity described by Phinney, a study by Crosson and Heaney (2016)

¹¹Teachers' union lobbying can be examined on the Maplight website: <http://maplight.org/us-congress/interest/L1300/bills>, accessed May 3, 2017.

offers a fourth type of diversity.¹² Using a survey of coalition leaders, Crosson and Heaney examine how different issue characteristics incentivize coalition leaders to seek diverse partners. They focus on what they call issue diversity, which is when a coalition's members emphasize different issue areas. (p. 6) This would seem to suggest that issue diversity is equivalent to Phinney's concept of policy domain diversity. However, in assessing coalition leaders' emphasis on issue diversity, they ask coalition leaders to report how important they believe it is to seek new coalition members that "represent... DIFFERENT concerns, issues, and/or interests than other coalition members." (p 15, emphasis original) This reflects a conceptualization very similar to interest diversity as elaborated here, insofar as differences in "concerns, issues, and/or interests" are very likely driven by differences in subconstituencies a group represents. However, the concepts are slightly different in emphasis: "issue diversity", like policy domain diversity, emphasizes the differences in issue priorities between groups, even though the question Crosson and Heaney use to assess its importance is somewhat more expansive than that, while "interest diversity" emphasizes the subconstituency interests that connect groups to legislators.

3.2 MEASURING INTEREST DIVERSITY

With the concept of interest diversity in mind, we turn to identifying indicators of interest diversity among lobbying organizations. Measuring interest diversity requires us to identify a coherent and meaningful set of interest groups, then to assess the subconstituencies represented by those groups. Before turning to available data sources, it is important to determine what types of "sets of interest groups" are substantively interesting. Scholars have generally examined interest group activity either across issue areas (Leech, Baumgartner, La Pira and Semanko 2005; Baumgartner, Larsen-Price, Leech and Rutledge 2011; LaPira, Thomas and Baumgartner 2014) or across or within the context of individual bills or policy initiatives. (for a review, see Hojnacki et al. 2012; Baumgartner and Leech 1998) Examining interest group activity across issue areas is important for understanding the government's issue agenda and its congruence with the priorities of interest groups versus those of the broader public. Given the

¹²Crosson and Heaney also discuss what they call "ideological diversity", which is when a coalition includes members with divergent general policy preferences. This is functionally identical to Phinney's conceptualization of ideological/partisan diversity, and is distinct from my conceptualization of interest diversity in the same ways.

importance of assessing such congruence, assessing interest diversity within broad issue areas may be useful; this can be done by assessing interest group activity across individual bills, then aggregating those to their general issue area. At the same time, understanding the role of lobbying on particular bills is important for assessing the viability or effectiveness of individual lobbying tactics (Victor 2007; Heaney and Lorenz 2013) as well as for assessing conditions under which interest groups can influence legislative or policy outcomes. (Baumgartner et al. 2009; Grossmann and Pyle 2013) However, attempts to do so must keep in mind that, of course, not all groups lobbying *on* a bill are lobbying *for* the bill; that is, lobbying on a bill can be divided (albeit somewhat roughly) into groups lobbying in support of the bill and those lobbying against the bill (and, by extension, in favor of the status quo). It has been repeatedly shown that lobbying success, and the tactics that help secure it, vary according to which "lobbying side" a group is on. (Baumgartner et al. 2009; McKay 2012*b*) Given the importance of studying lobbying influence on legislation, and the importance of distinguishing bill supporters from bill opponents when doing so, we focus on measuring interest diversity across bills, and, in particular, across sides (supporters versus opponents) of bills.¹³

The data used to measure interest diversity at the bill- and bill-side-levels come from the transparency organization Maplight. Maplight collects public statements of organizations' positions on specific bills. The data used here come from 2005 to 2014 (the 109th to 113th congresses), and are derived from over 76,000 positions taken by over 13,000 unique organizations across 5390 bills covering a comprehensive array of issues during this period. For each bill-group-position, Maplight includes the bill number, the name of the group, its position (supporting/opposing) on the bill, as well as a designation of the industry or cause (or other subconstituency) the group represents. These last designations come from a taxonomy of "interest group category codes" developed by the Center for Responsive Politics (CRP). These data have previously been used to study interest group activity on individual issues, such as trade (Broz 2014), exchange rate politics (Galantucci 2015), and, at the state level, tobacco initiatives. (Laposata, Kennedy

¹³One might also wish to examine interest diversity within formal or informal coalitions of interest groups, as do Crosson and Heaney (2016), or on the distinct "policy ideas" (c.f. Wilkerson, Smith and Stramp 2015) within bills, as does (Phinney 2017). These are ideal for assessing the antecedents of interest diversity, and doing so is the primary objective of both Phinney's as well as Crosson & Heaney's studies. However, because legislative progress is decided at the level of the individual bill in its entirety (amendments notwithstanding), analyzing lobbying at the bill (and bill side) level remains preferable for present purposes.

and Glantz 2014) These examples show that the data tell us much about the interests at stake within and across bills. This study is the first examination of the entire dataset at once.

I treat these CRP interest group category codes as indicators of subconstituencies represented by groups to which they are assigned. CRP has identified over 400 distinct social causes, identity groups, or businesses a firm might be engaged in, and given each a unique category code.¹⁴ These codes allow for nuanced distinctions between the interests represented by different organizations, including between: food stores and food wholesalers; teacher's unions and trade unions; and groups that are formed on opposite sides of contentious issues, such as pro-choice and anti-abortion. They are then aggregated to 100 "industries" (e.g. dairy vs. livestock or telephone vs. telecomm), and these are further aggregated to 13 "sectors" (e.g. agribusiness, healthcare, or construction) While they may not capture every distinct cause, group, or business, the category-level codes represent classes of organizations that likely share both priorities across policy issue areas and are likely to have similar policy preferences on most bills. Furthermore, local organizations, social groups, or firms within these categories might not lobby Congress, but may have their interests represented by another organization that does lobby and would be placed in the same category. Thus, the category-level CRP interest group codes, as assigned to specific organizations in the Maplight bill positions dataset, are good proxies for individual subconstituencies.

There are many potential ways to measure interest diversity as a function of these category codes. As a source of influence, interest diversity relies on connections between the subconstituencies in a legislator's district and those represented by organizations lobbying on particular bills. Thus, an ideal measure of interest diversity would account for the connections between the subconstituencies (and, hence, category codes) represented by a set of organizations and those important to specific legislators. For example, if examining the groups lobbying on each side of a bill, a measure of interest diversity might operate at the level of the side-legislator dyad, capturing the extent to which each legislator's district subconstituencies mapped onto the organizations on each side of a bill. Assuming one could reliably identify each legislator's important district interest categories, this would then, presumably, be used to predict each legislator's

¹⁴A more detailed description of how individual organizations are assigned to the 400 categories and their parent industries and sectors can be found at the website of the Center for Responsive Politics: <https://www.opensecrets.org/industries/slist.php>, last accessed May 4th, 2017.

position on a bill or the intensity of their support or opposition for it. These could then be aggregated to investigate the extent to which the organizations lobbying on a bill can, through the subconstituencies for which they proxy, mobilize enough support, and avoid enough opposition, for the bill (or provisions thereof) to make legislative progress. Such a measure would precisely capture the specific dynamics that make interest diversity a potential source of influence on individual legislators. However, it would also require the researcher to refine the concept of important district subconstituencies at the district level at a higher level of conceptual detail than I have done here, then validate an additional measure of important subconstituencies at the level of the year-district-interest category, for each of the several hundred unique members of Congress who served between the 109th and 113th Congresses. Instead of undertaking an additional measurement validation task, I assume for present purposes that a set of interest groups representing a larger number of subconstituencies is more likely to include those that are important to a given individual legislator, all else equal. Thus, the more subconstituencies represented among a set of interest groups, the more legislators who will be mobilized to work on issues and take positions according with those of that set.

With this additional assumption in place, I use the number of interest group category codes to measure the interest diversity of organizations lobbying for and against particular bills. To distinguish the *interest diversity* of groups from simply the *number* of them, we examine a set of interest groups and identify each unique CRP category codes among them: the number of these is taken as the diversity of that set of groups. Thus, for each side of a bill – supporters versus opponents – we calculate its interest diversity as the number of unique “interest group codes” among organizations taking that side on that bill. *Supporter Interest Diversity* is thus the number of unique categories among the bill’s supporting organizations, while *Opponent Interest Diversity* is the number of unique categories among the bill’s opposing organizations. To calculate each bill’s total *Interest Diversity*, we sum its Supporter Interest Diversity and Opponent Interest Diversity scores. Finally, because the impact of interest diversity is likely to result from differences between the diversity on each side, we measure *Net Interest Diversity* by subtracting each bill’s Opponent Interest Diversity from its Supporter Interest Diversity. Thus, to the extent that the supporters are more diverse than the opponents, Net Interest Diversity will be larger and

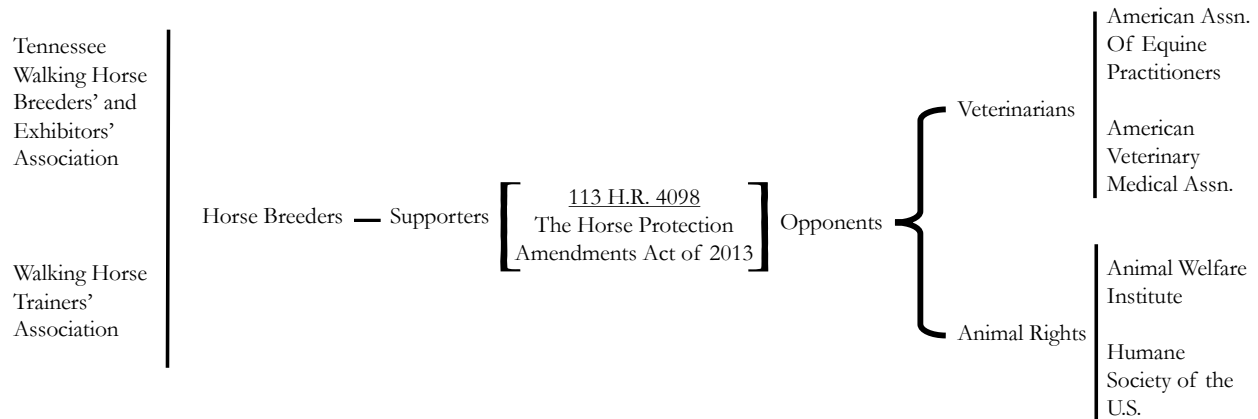
positive; inversely, to the extent that the opponents are more diverse than the supporters, it will be larger and negative.

As an example, consider the organizations lobbying on Rep. Marsha Blackburn's (R-TN) Horse Protection Amendments Act (HPAA) of 2013. Figure 3.1 displays the interests and organizations that lobbied for and against HPAA. The HPAA was supported by two organizations, the Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders' and Exhibitors' Association and the Walking Horse Trainers' Association (left side of the figure). Maplight classifies both of these under the same category: horse breeders. Thus, while the number of organizations lobbying in support for the HPAA was 2, the diversity of those supporters is 1. On the other hand, four organizations lobbied in opposition to HPAA: the American Association of Equine Practitioners, the American Veterinary Medical Association, the Animal Welfare Institute, and the U.S. Humane Society (right side of the figure). The former two are both categorized as veterinarians groups, while the latter two are both categorized as animal rights organizations. Thus, the four opposing groups together represent two distinct categories – veterinarians and animal rights groups; and therefore, the number of opponents is 4 and the diversity of those opponents is 2. The total interest diversity on the bill itself is the sum of the interest diversity scores of the individual sides: 1 (supporters) + 2 (opponents) = 3. Finally, HPAA's Net Interest Diversity of is the result of subtracting the diversity of the bill's opponents from the diversity of the bill's supporters; thus, -1. Illustrating the impact of Net Interest Diversity on bills' legislative fate, the HPAA never received so much as a committee hearing during the 113th Congress.¹⁵

A reader might reasonably point out that diversity in general is often assessed using more sophisticated measures than the number of unique types of individuals or the sum or differences thereof. Indeed, political scientists have relied on various iterations of the Herfindahl Index and Shannon's H score (and other measures) to measure diversity in issue attention as well as in firms' access to opportunities to influence policymaking. (Boydston, Bevan and Thomas 2014; Ehrlich 2011) Given these measures' explicit design to study diversity and long-validated tenure as measures, one might reasonably argue that they are better measurements of a general construct of "diversity". Indeed, these measures are absolutely appropriate in the substantive contexts in which they were developed: to measure the

¹⁵Not to say the horse-breeders' legislative influence in general.

Figure 3.1: Groups and Interests in the Horse Protection Amendments Act of 2013



concentration of individual organisms in a biome across species and to measure the concentration of firms in different industries. However, by focusing on relative concentration rather than variety, the measures underweight precisely what makes interest diversity important: the ability to connect legislation to many subconstituencies back home. For that purpose, it is irrelevant whether, say, a bill was supported by five pharmaceutical companies and one hospital association; what matters is that a legislator can claim credit with both pharmaceutical companies and hospitals based in their district. Thus, the measure of interest diversity I have put forward here benefits from not only being very simple, but also in capturing precisely what makes this type of diversity relevant to legislative politics.

3.3 GENERAL TRENDS IN LOBBYING ACTIVITY AND INTEREST DIVERSITY AMONG MAPLIGHT BILLS

As described above, the Maplight data used to measure interest diversity captures 5,390 bills introduced between the 109th and 113th Congresses, 2005 to 2014. This represents a little less than 9 percent of all normal bills ("H.R." or "S") filed during that period, according to Congressional Bills Project (CBP)

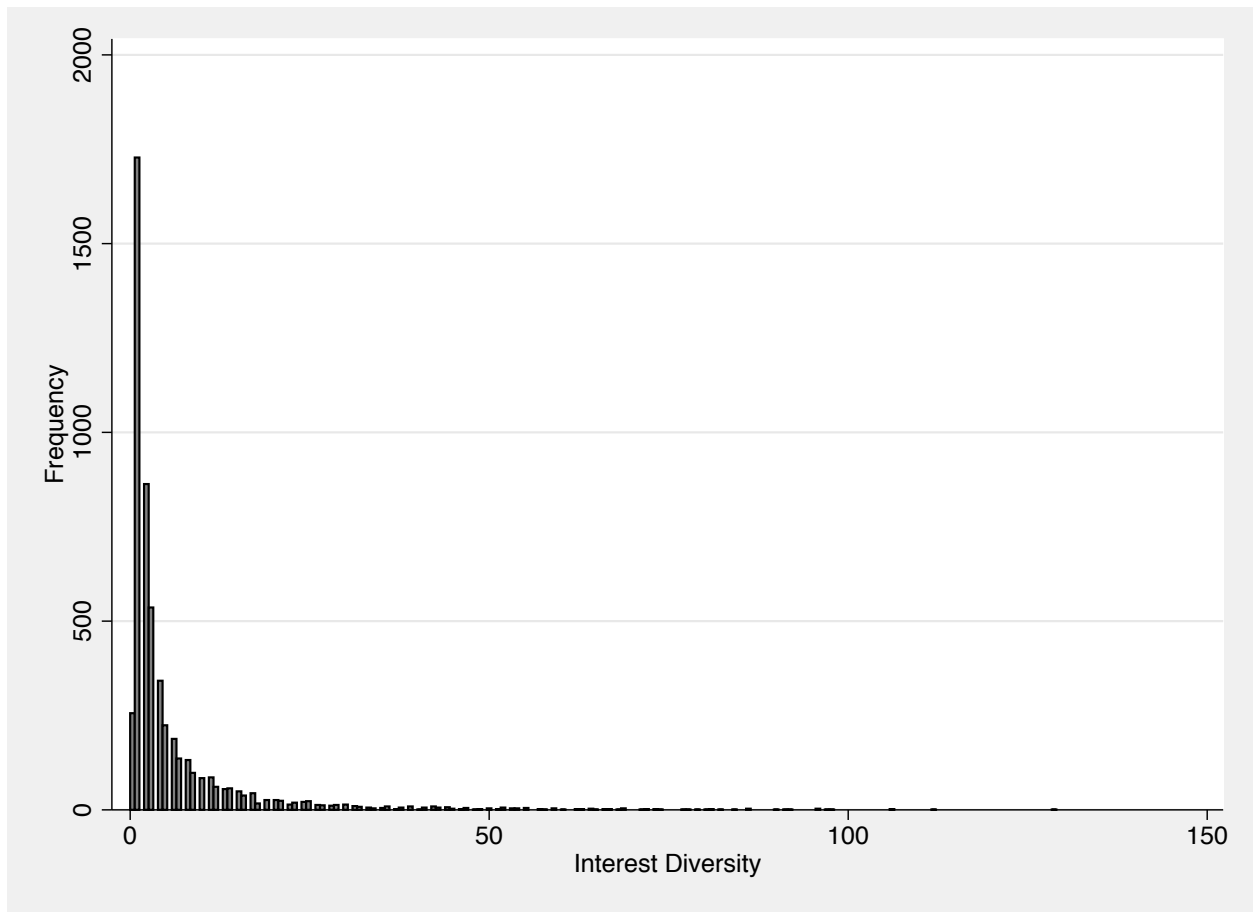
data. Before validating the measure itself, it is important to understand Maplight's bill selection process and how it may impact an assessment of interest group activity on a bill. Maplight research focuses on "newsworthy" bills. In practice, this causes them to virtually ignore commemorative legislation (e.g. renaming post-offices) and over-sample bills that get the attention of actors outside Congress. Among other differences between Maplight data and CBP data, Maplight oversamples several categories of bills: those sponsored by majority party members in their chamber (74 percent of Maplight bills, 60 percent of CBP bills); bills sponsored by members of their to which the bill was referred (59 percent of Maplight bills, 42 percent of CBP bills); and that made non-zero legislative progress (22 percent of Maplight bills were reported from a committee in their origin chamber, compared to 9 percent of CBP). These differences suggest that analyses using Maplight data may only generalize to bills that are similarly "newsworthy"; though, in this respect, it resembles and even expands upon other samples of bills that are identified as substantive or significant through news coverage.¹⁶ With these caveats in mind, we proceed to examine how lobbying activity and interest diversity vary across bills in the Maplight dataset.

Interest diversity varies widely across bills. Figure 3.2 displays a histogram of total interest diversity across Maplight bills. In this case, the value of interest diversity corresponds to the sum of each bill's Supporter Interest Diversity and Opponent Interest Diversity. The figure and data exhibit several clear patterns. First, they are heavily right-skewed, with many bills having very low levels interest diversity, but a few bills having extreme value. Indeed, over 36 percent of maplight bills have have an interest diversity of 1, indicating that they garnered either a single category of supporter or a single category of opponent (but not both at once). This is fairly intuitive. Most bills are not salient, getting the attention of only a few interest groups. (see Grossmann and Pyle 2013; Box-Steffensmeier and Christenson 2014) The example used above, the Horse Protection Amendments Act, is thus fairly typical in its limited scope (indeed, HPA is of higher total interest diversity than 62% of other bills.).

Even among bills that gain traction with a broader array of interests, most still remain small in scope. Fully 90 percent of Maplight bills have a total interest diversity score of 15 or less. These bills are usually less

¹⁶Examples of studies taking newsworthiness as a basis for legislative significance include: Binder (1999); Jones and Baumgartner (2005); Mayhew (1991); Maltzman and Shipan (2008); Howell, Adler, Cameron and Riemann (2000); Clinton and Lapinski (2006); Volden and Wiseman (2014).

Figure 3.2: Histogram of Interest Diversity Among Groups Lobbying on Bills



salient, but end up appealing to diverse interests nonetheless. Many of these bills deal with less broadly salient issues that are intensely important to certain groups. This can happen if social and economic interests happen to coincide, with little organized opposition, on w bill, as was the case of the Synthetic Drug Abuse Prevention Act of 2012 (112-S-3187, interest diversity 15), or if it reauthorizes a relatively small federal program, such as the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 (113-S-1086, interest diversity 12) or if it authorizes a new, smaller program that addresses a non-controversial issue, as in the Melanie Blocker Stokes Mom’s Opportunity to Access Health, Education, Research, and Support for Postpartum Depression Act (111-HR-20, interest diversity 12). Bills at about this range represent very typical legislative efforts that interest groups engage in.

On the other hand, some bills gain the attention of a wildly diverse array of interests. These are often very publicly salient and usually quite controversial. For example, three of the most interest

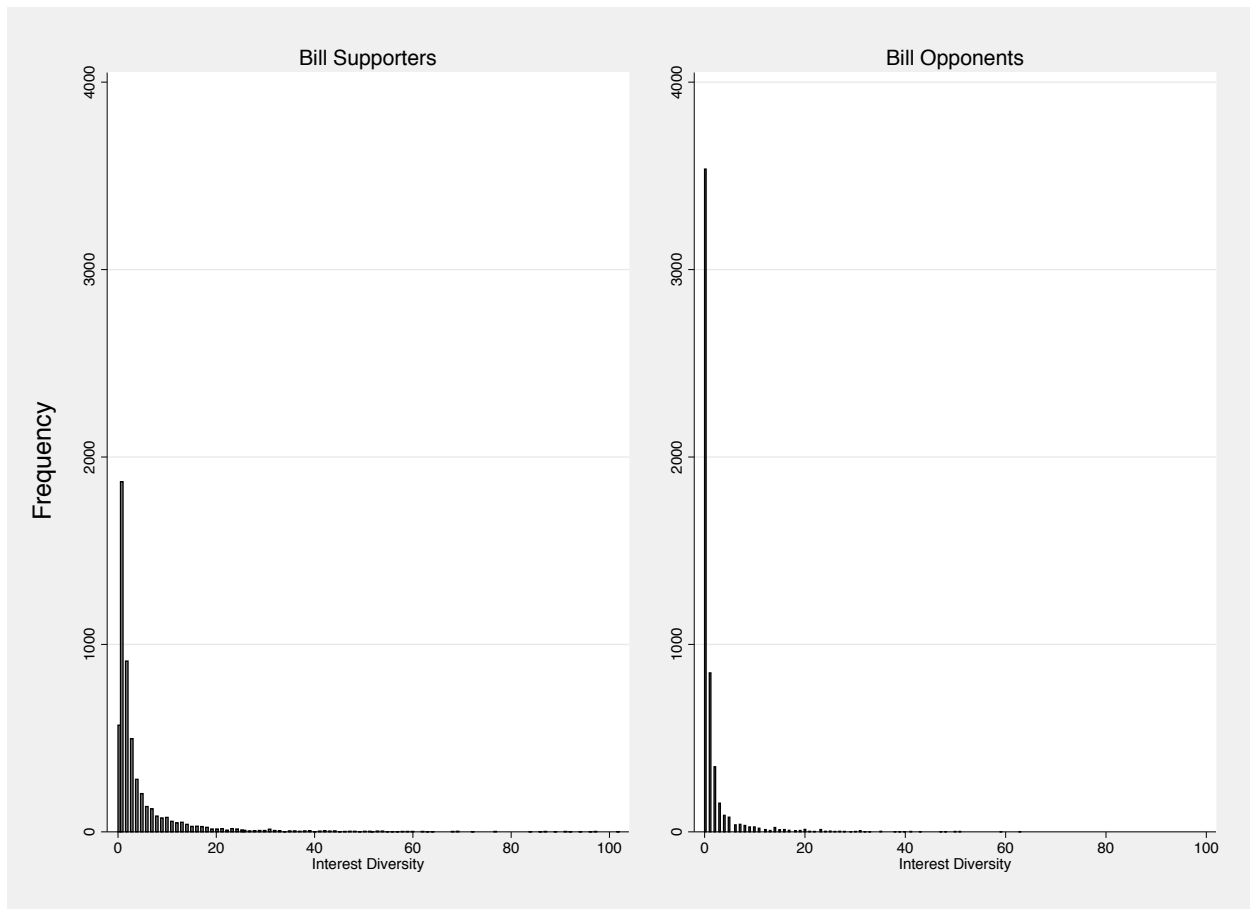
diverse bills in the data are the Stop Online Privacy Act (SOPA, aka 112-HR-3261, interest diversity 129), a precursor (113-S-1900, interest diversity 106) to the bill that ultimately granted President Obama fast-track trade authority to negotiate the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), and Democrats' last attempt at comprehensive immigration reform before losing control of Congress in 2014 elections (113-S-744, interest diversity 106). Because these bills are highly salient, they are also often championed by individually powerful members; indeed SOPA and the TPP bill were sponsored by prominent committee chairmen, while the immigration reform bill was sponsored by now Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY). The fact that these bills are already very much "on the agenda" means that interest groups' key means of influence - bringing and subsidizing lawmakers' attention to particular proposals for dealing with public policy problems (Kingdon 1995; Austen-Smith 1993; Hall and Deardorff 2006) - may be rendered moot for such bills. In these cases, interest group lobbying by individual interests may focus on changing individual bill provisions.

The two bill sides also exhibit distinct features. Figure 3.3 compares the distributions of Supporter Interest Diversity and Opponent Interest Diversity. The distributions are both similar to that of total interest diversity, with strong right skewness and, concomitantly, clustering at zero; 45 percent of the bills have at most 1 Supporter Interest Diversity, while fully 81 percent of bills have at most 1 Opponent Interest Diversity. However, their variances are quite different, with supporters (std. dev. 8.89) much more likely to reach larger values than opponents (std. dev. 4.26). This results in distributions of different means: supporters have an average of 4.6 types, while opponents have an average of 1.4.¹⁷ As a result, though the distributions look similar, supporter interest diversity and opponent interest diversity are only moderately correlated (Spearman's $\rho = 0.17$, $p < 0.0001$ or, among bills having at least one supporter and one opponent, $\rho = 0.28$, $p < 0.0001$). Thus, bills that garner diverse support also regularly attract diverse opposition, but this is not always the case.

Examining interests by bill side also allows us to cursorily assess the reliability of Maplight's assessment of interest groups' positions on bills. Many bills in the data have identical or nearly-identical titles (for

¹⁷Interestingly, the ratio of these (approximately 3.3 supporters per opponent) coincides with other studies at the lobbying side level and find that supporters are much more common, and much less successful, than opponents. (McKay 2012b; Grossmann and Dominguez 2009; Baumgartner et al. 2009)

Figure 3.3: Interest Diversity by Side



example, updating the year in a bill name that includes the year in which it is introduced), indicating that they are likely to be identical or very similar in content. Indeed, while there are 5390 bills in the dataset, there are only 4775 unique bill titles.¹⁸ We would generally expect that, across different iterations of identical or nearly identical bills, interest diversity should remain the same (because the same interests are affected by its provisions) or increase over time (because one or both sides have successfully expanded the conflict (c.f. Schattschneider 1975)). This appears to be case. As one example, 112-S-1223 and 113-S-2171 were both bills filed by Senator Al Franken (D-MN) entitled "The Location Privacy Protection Act" of 2012 and 2014, respectively.¹⁹ The Location Privacy Protection Act was a priority of Franken while he was chairman

¹⁸Bill titles are taken from the current (March 2017) version of the CBP dataset. They are the bills' longer titles, which tend to be more descriptive and also are less likely to include information such as the year of the bill's introduction that would change with each iteration. Interested readers should note that, at the very least, the main results from the third paper are robust to using a random effect for or clustering standard errors on bill titles.

¹⁹The longer title, "A bill to address voluntary location tracking of electronic communications devices, and for other purposes", is identical between the two bills.

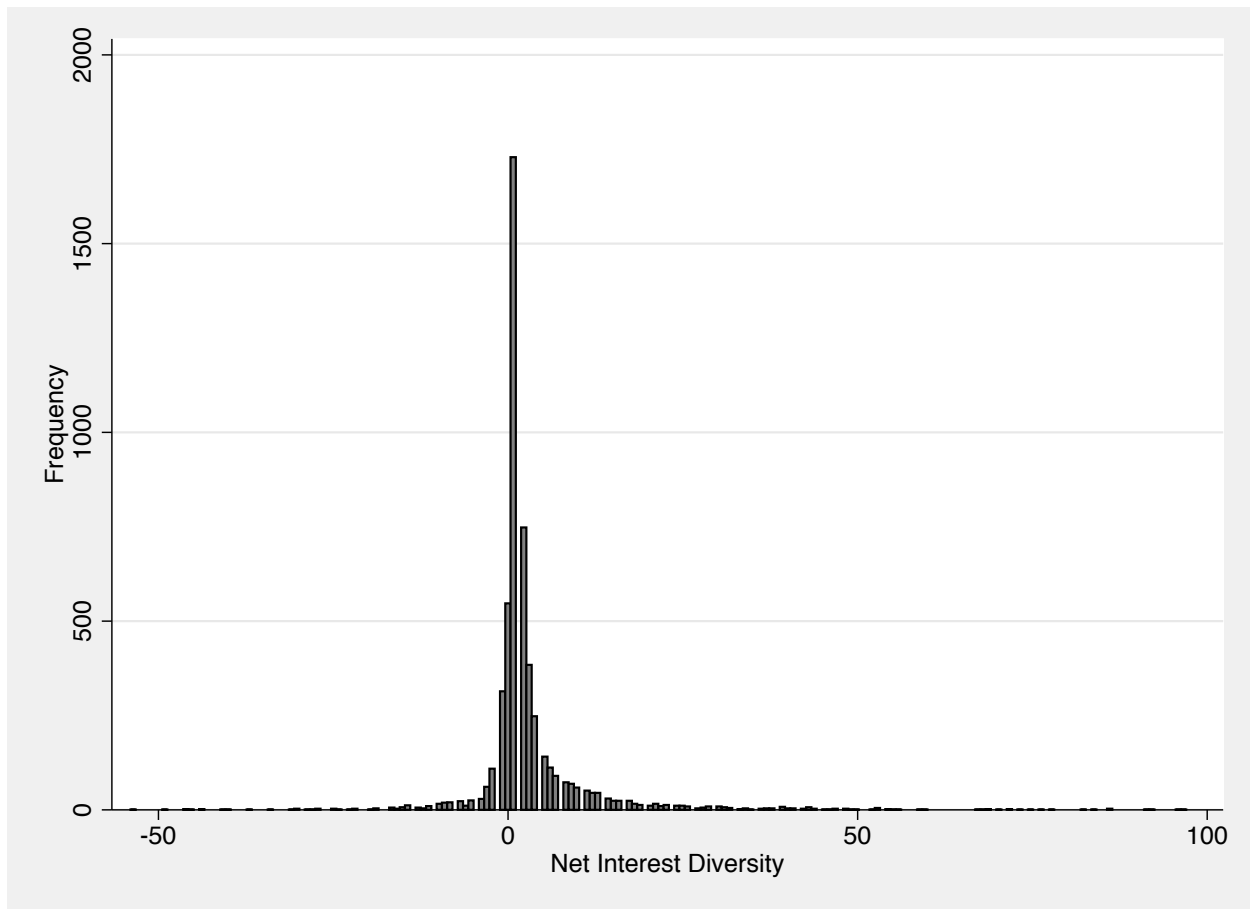
of the Senate Subcommittee on Privacy, Technology and Law. While the specific organizations Maplight reported having lobbied on the bill changed slightly, the interests at play remained similar (consumer groups supporting and chambers of commerce opposed); most importantly for present purposes, the bill's supporter diversity remained steady (at 2) while opponent diversity increased by only one (from 1 to 2) between the two iterations.²⁰ That different versions of the bill, filed more than a year apart, maintain very similar levels of interest diversity across both sides is some (albeit preliminary) evidence that Maplight's data, and my measure derived from it, are reliable.

In addition to measuring interests reliably across identical bills, the measure also captures differences between different versions of the same bill that are introduced concurrently. As an example, the two chambers were controlled by different parties (Republicans in the House and Democrats in the Senate) in 2012 when the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) came up for reauthorization (or, in the absence thereof, expiration). The parties produced competing versions of the reauthorization bill: 112-S-1925, introduced by Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT); and 112-HR-4970, introduced by Congresswoman Sandy Adams (R-FL). As both bills reauthorized the VAWA's enhanced prosecutorial and investigational tools to combat domestic violence, one might expect that, all else equal, interest groups lobbying on VAWA reauthorization would be indifferent between the bills. However, *ceteris non paribus*. The two versions of the 2012 VAWA reauthorization differed in that the Democratic version included additional protections for certain populations – native Americans, undocumented immigrants, and members of the LGBT community – that were (and are) especially vulnerable to domestic violence. The Republican version of the bill lacked these provisions.²¹ Consequently, groups representing liberal interests – particularly, women's rights groups, various labor unions, minority rights activists, immigrants rights activists, and native American rights groups, among others – favored the Democratic version and publicly opposed the Republican version. This difference is reflected in the Maplight data: the Republican (House) bill had one supporting interest and twenty-three opposing interests, while the Democratic bill was supported

²⁰Suggestive of the interest diversity's importance for legislative outcomes, Franken managed to get the 2012 (112th Congress) version of the Act reported from the full Senate Judiciary Committee, but not the 2014 version. When control of the Senate reverted to Republicans with the 114th Congress, Franken introduced the bill again (as 114-S-2270), where it continued to be neglected by the Republican-controlled Judiciary Committee.

²¹Cohen, Tom. "House passes Violence Against Women Act after GOP version defeated", *CNN.com*, Feb 28, 2013: <http://www.cnn.com/2013/02/28/politics/violence-against-women/>, accessed May 7, 2017.

Figure 3.4: Histogram of Net Interest Diversity



by 29 interests and opposed by only two.²² Ultimately, under pressure from President Obama and the many interest groups mobilized on the issue, the Republican-controlled House relented and passed the Senate Democrats' version of the bill by a wide margin. That the version favored by an diverse coalition of interests passed over that opposed by the same diverse coalitios evinces the importance of comparing diversity across sides when investigating interest diversity's potential legislative influence.

As measured by Net Interest Diversity, the difference between Supporter Interest Diversity and Opponent Interest Diversity, interest group conflicts surrounding legislation vary dramatically. Figure 3.4 is a histogram of Net Interest Diversity across Maplight bills, and Figure 3.5 breaks this down by Congress. Three features are clear. First, a significant proportion of bills fall near zero Net Interest Diversity, indicating that supporters and opponents of most bills are evenly or nearly-evenly matched. As suggested

²²Indeed, Maplight reports that many of the specific organizations that supported the Democratic version opposed the Republican version.

from the examination of bills' total and side-specific interest diversities, a large part of this is due to many bills having one supporter and zero opponents. Indeed, the median and modal bills have a Net Interest Diversity score of 1, and for the most part (1141 of 1729 bills with 1 Net Interest Diversity) such bills had a single organization (and, hence, subconstituency) supporting them and none oppose. That many bills have only a single supporter suggests that interest groups lobbying by themselves are either attempting to achieve something other than bill passage in the short run, that they assume that they have access to some other source of influence, or that they might stand to gain if they partnered with organizations representing different subconstituencies. The second feature is that the tails of the distribution of Net Interest Diversity are both long and thin, reflecting the right-skewness of the side-specific diversities. Net Interest Diversity's range runs from -54 to 97, but fully 95 percent of the observations fall in the range of -14 to 16.²³ This indicates that there may be relatively rare aspects of a bill or the issues it addresses that can cause it to garner overwhelming support or opposition. If these aspects can be influenced by a legislator sponsoring a bill, or their opponents, it suggests a powerful means of influencing or circumventing the interest group conflict on that bill. Finally, while there are extreme (less than -14 or greater than 20) values of Net Interest Diversity in each Congress in the data, most observations with extreme Net Interest Diversity are found in the later Congresses. This may be reflective of Maplight's changing research capacity over time, or that the 112th and 113th congresses (which featured divided government under President Obama) produced bills that the interests in the data were simply more likely to be united on.

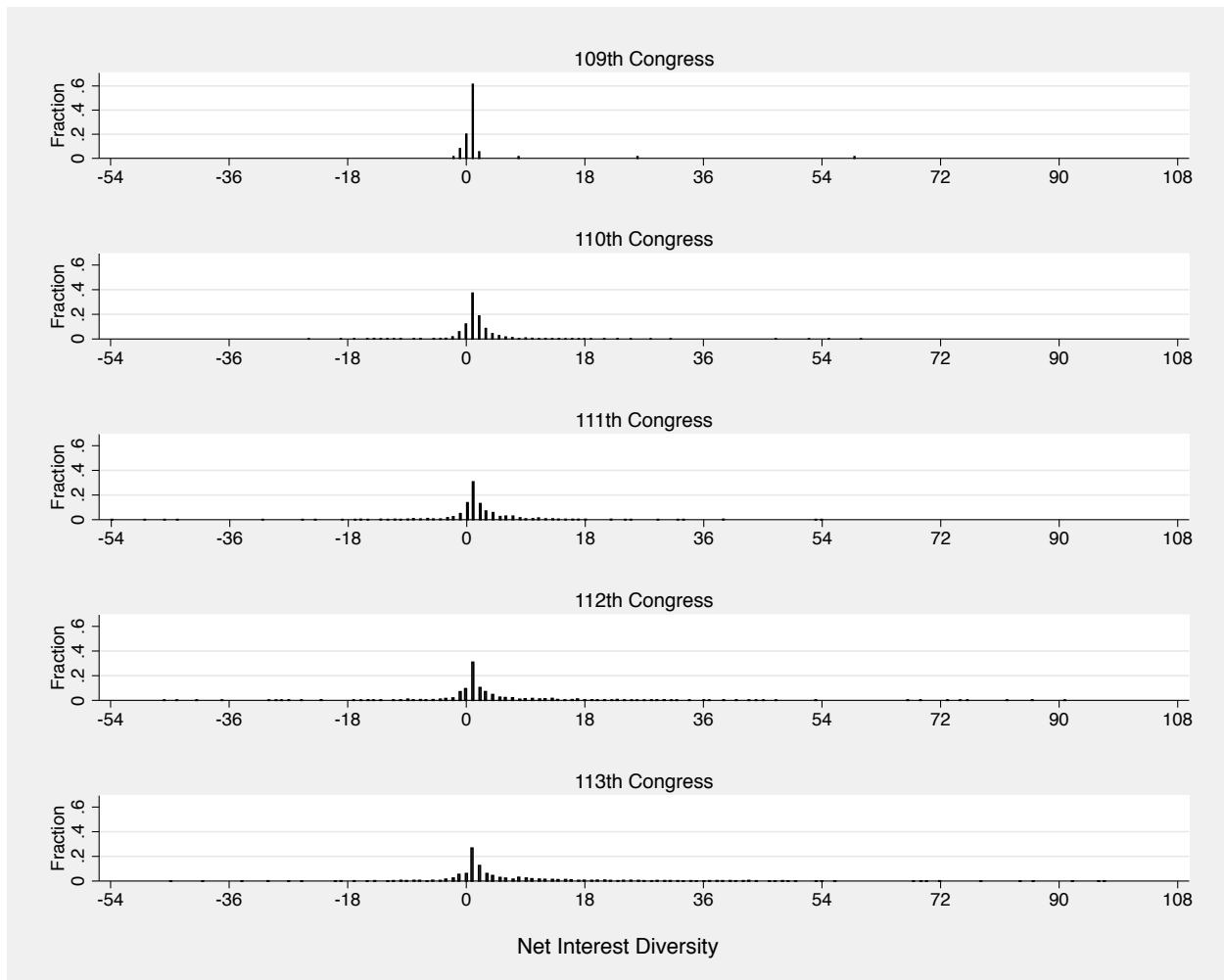
²⁴

It is instructive to consider why bills have different levels of Net Interest Diversity. Some bills gain relatively high Net Interest Diversity because they amount to a large boon for trade, implying that they will be favored by many different industries. The Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act of 2012 (112-HR-6156, Net Interest Diversity 76) extended normal trade relations treatment to Russia and Moldova, while also requiring more intense monitoring of Russia's compliance with its obligations to

²³If one removes all bills with only a single supporter and no other lobbying, 95 percent of remaining observations would still fall in the range of -15 to 19.

²⁴Though it is beyond the scope of this paper to theorize about this, one might imagine that divided government in a more polarized, partisan era may have incentivized interest groups seeking policy changes to form broader and more bipartisan coalitions with one another. This would be reflected in Net Interest Diversity scores further from the median in either direction, which is what 3.5 illustrates.

Figure 3.5: Histograms of Net Interest Diversity, by Congress



the World Trade Organization (WTO). It was opposed by a single union (the International Federation of Professional & Technical Engineers), but supported by groups representing dozens of industries, as well as a few minority rights groups. Similarly, the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010 (111-HR-5297, Net Interest Diversity 22) created the Small Business Lending Fund, increasing credit availability for small business; it was opposed by credit unions but supported by numerous industries as well as teacher's unions and associations focused on supporting businesses owned by racial and ethnic minorities, women, and LGBT people. Highly interest-diverse bills gain most of their diversity from their ability to combine broad support within industry with additional support from specific issue groups.

On the other hand, some bills draw diverse opposition because they are salient, controversial, major reforms that rely on the clout of party leaders, especially under unified government, to pass. The

archetypal example of this kind of bill is the Affordable Care Act (ACA, HHR-3590, Net Interest Diversity -16), which, while supported by health providers and many traditional Democratic-leaning interest groups, was opposed by a litany of health insurers, conservative interest groups, financial services companies, business associations, as well as groups representing many different individual industries. Though getting health providers and consumers to agree to the bill was critical to its viability, the scope of opposition interests made it politically costly. It took many side deals with wavering, more conservative, Democrats to ensure the bill's passage, and, side-deals besides, that passage did not come cheap: Democrats lost heavily in the midterm elections later in 2010, and have not held control of the House since.

To summarize, these analyses show that the interest diversity measure conforms to many general expectations about interest group activity on bills. Most bills are small in scope, with only a few interests getting involved, while a small number generate intense lobbying from many different interests. Interest groups tend to support bills more often than opposing them, suggesting that groups prefer to be proactive in their efforts to attain and maintain desired policy outcomes. Bills with similar content garner similar levels of interest diversity, while competing versions of the same bill garner lobbying from the similar interests, but those interests take opposite positions on each bill. Finally, bills that generate lopsided conflicts tend to do so in predictable ways – joining strange bedfellows or generating multi-industry coalitions – with predictable consequences, e.g. electoral defeat when forcing legislation over the objection of diverse interests. Collectively, these preliminary observations serve to establish the face validity of the measure.

3.4 VALIDATING THE MEASURE: NET INTEREST DIVERSITY AND PATTERNS OF LEGISLATIVE AND INTEREST GROUP POLITICS

I have argued that interest diversity is potentially an important source of interest group influence because it helps members of Congress connect their day-to-day legislative activities with the priorities and preferences of important segments of their constituencies. I have shown that this concept is distinct from

a coalition's size or a bill's attendant political conflict, as well as from other types of diversity that a set of interest groups might exhibit. I have also proposed a measure of interest diversity – the number of unique interest group category codes assigned to individual organizations within a set thereof – and suggested levels at which interest diversity might be useful to measure; among all the organizations lobbying on a bill, among groups on either side (supporting or opposed) of a bill, or as a difference between the diversity of each side. Next, I turn to validating the measure of Net Interest Diversity, the level of the measure most likely to be important in assessing interest groups' influence on legislative outcomes.

Adcock and Collier (2001, particularly p. 538-543) provide a framework for conducting measurement validation that is useful for validating this Net Interest Diversity measure. They offer three criteria that can be used to assess the validity of a measure of a given concept, each of which I will apply to my measure of interest diversity (in particular, Net Interest Diversity) in turn. One of these, convergent validity, cannot be established with respect to this measure of interest diversity: as interest diversity is a newer concept, no broadly accepted measures of it exist with which to compare the measure proposed here. Hence, we rely on the face validity of the measure as the closest available substitute for establishing convergent validity. As established above, the measure of interest diversity and, in particular, Net Interest Diversity, developed here conforms to general patterns of interest group involvement in legislation. The large plurality of bills in the data are supported or opposed by just a few interests, suggesting that most legislative conflicts remain small in scope, while a very small number of bills mobilize many organizations and, among them, many interests. The measure varies in ways that might be expected - e.g. between competing versions of the same bill, or as conflict expands on a bill over time. Thus, the measure is at least face valid.

Of the remaining two criteria, the first is content validity, which focuses on the correspondence between a concept and a proposed measure of that concept. In particular, the measure must capture all dimensions of the concept and exclude dimensions which are not part of the concept. On the former, this measure performs well: the interest group category codes capture a large variety of industries, political causes, and other social groups that correspond to many different potentially politically-relevant subpopulations in many different types of districts. Indeed, these categories were designed by the Center

for Responsive Politics to be as comprehensive as possible, to gain the clearest possible understanding of the forces supporting (and, potentially, influencing) a given member of Congress. It is possible that one could further break down these categories while not merely identifying individual organizations; for example, while pro-abortion rights is a distinct category, all other "women's issues" are lumped into a single category, masking meaningful differences in policy emphasis (e.g. in workforce- versus healthcare-related policies) between women's rights organizations. However, in capturing a broad array of subconstituencies, the measure remains likely to distinguish sets of interest groups that are truly diverse from those that are not.

At the same time, the measure excludes most conceptual dimensions that are close to but still distinct from interest diversity. For example, the measure does not distinguish citizens' groups, unions, business firms, or trade organizations from one another as long as they represent the same interest group category. Similarly, this measure of interest diversity does not capture ideological differences, except insofar as there are theoretical reasons to expect that a group composed of many different interests will have members that have different ideological leanings. Unfortunately, the proposed measure of interest diversity does not in and of itself adequately exclude coalition size. By this measure, the maximum level of possible diversity for a given bill is equal to the number of organizations lobbying that bill. Thus, any finding related to interest diversity could easily be confounded by the number of groups involved.

The most obvious solution for this problem of coincidence between coalition size and net interest diversity would be to divide interest diversity by the number of organizations whose diversity is being assessed. This would create a measure of diversity relative to the number of organizations, or, equivalently, a measure of how diverse the organizations are given how diverse the same number of organizations could be. However, there are several reasons to not use such a measure for testing theories of interest group influence and mobilization. First, it treats a bill supported by one organization as equivalent to a bill supported by an arbitrary number of organizations, so long as those organizations are all of different types; given the prevalence in the data of bills supported by a single organization, such a measure would lack face validity that would have a substantial impact on inferences drawn using that measure. Second, the concept of interest diversity developed here is defined in part by variety, and variety

requires having a number of individuals sufficient to allow them to vary. Third, while the reasons that another actor might care about the number of interests helped or harmed is fairly intuitive (e.g. in the case of legislators, it represents the number of their subconstituencies who might be impacted by a bill), a situation in which the interest diversity of a coalition relative to its potential interest diversity seems unlikely to make a difference to other actors. Hence, it seems unlikely that a measure of diversity relative to organization numbers would be very broadly useful in theory-testing. Thus, a "diversity relative to numbers" measure would trade one type of content validity for another, and would imply a modification to the concept of interest diversity that would not be broadly useful. To address the correlation between the proposed measure of interest diversity and number of organizations lobbying, it is imperative that any analysis seeking to test theories involving interest diversity (as either a dependent or independent variable) adjust for the number of groups involved. Thus, conditional on controlling for the number of organizations, the content validity of the proposed measure of interest diversity remains intact.

Having established the face validity and content validity of the proposed measure of interest diversity, I turn to the third and final criterion offered by Adcock and Collier (2001): construct validity. Construct validity requires that a measure reproduce well-established empirical relationships between the construct it measures and factors that are broadly believed to be causes or consequences of that construct. Thus, we must replicate established findings about the antecedents and consequences of interest diversity, and particularly Net Interest Diversity. To a certain extent, this is impossible to do directly, again because there exist no prior established relationships between interest diversity and other constructs. However, one can analyze simple associations between this measure of interest diversity and factors that are believed to covary with things that are conceptually similar to it. I examine several such factors: bills being supported by political elites in general; bills drawing strong support and opposition; bills impacting many issue areas; bills sponsored by members of the two major parties, particularly when those parties are in the majority; and bills that move through the legislative process. In different ways and for different reasons, these should be associated with different levels of interest diversity. In each of the subsections that follows, I examine the interest diversity of bills across these types of bills and their alternatives in order to establish the construct validity of this measure. In particular, because Net Interest Diversity is most likely to relevant

to whether the interests lobbying on a bill impact its legislative fate, I confine most of my comparisons to that measure.

That the data used here simultaneously exhibit substantial median-clustering, long tails, and right skew has implications for any analysis based on these data, including the present one. In particular, no variant on the interest diversity measure (including Net Interest Diversity) is distributed normally. For the purposes of the simple comparisons of interest diversity across bill types and features, I make two adjustments for this non-normality. For correlations of interest diversity with another continuous variable, I use Spearman's rank correlation coefficient (ρ).²⁵ When comparing levels of interest diversity across discrete categories of bills, I use Welch's t-tests to account for unequal variances and use cube-root transformations of the interest diversity measures to achieve a normal distribution (the graphs still plot the original, untransformed versions of these measures).²⁶ The particular non-normality in my data also impacts the categorical comparisons because I rely on box whisker plots to illustrate differences across categories. First, long, thin tails produce many observations outside of the bounds of the upper and lower adjacent values that define the "whiskers" of a box-whisker plot. Keeping such outside observations in a box-whisker plot when the tails of the plotted distribution are so large renders the plot less informative. Thus, outside observations are excluded from all box-whisker plots presented below. Second, the strong median clustering in the full sample of bills means that most subsamples themselves exhibit strong clustering around the same median. However, this gives us a useful heuristic for evaluating differences between bill categories: the presence of different medians between categories imply substantive differences in interest diversity between those types of bills. With these caveats in mind, we proceed to examine how interest diversity replicates established patterns of legislative tactics and interest group mobilization.

²⁵Spearman's ρ assesses how well the relationship between two variables can be described as a monotonic function; it serves a similar function as the more common Pearson's r but does not make the same normality assumptions.

²⁶Cube-root transformations have the advantage of working well for data that include both zeros and negative values and that are right-skewed. As all versions of the interest diversity measure have zeros and are right-skewed, and Net Interest Diversity also has negative values, the cube-root is the most appropriate transformation of those commonly used for this purpose.

Broad and Bipartisan Legislative Support

As policy entrepreneurs, legislators face numerous tactical decisions in attempting to pass legislation. One early set of decisions involves coalition-building. A key skill of successful legislative entrepreneurs is their ability to build support for their proposals among other legislators. (Volden and Wiseman 2014; Wawro 2000; Arnold 1990) One manifestation of such support is legislative cosponsorship. Cosponsorships represent a public commitment of (at least) passive support for the cosponsored bill. (Fowler 2006; Koger 2003; Wilson and Young 1997; Campbell 1982) Though large numbers of cosponsorships do little to ensure the passage of a bill, legislators, especially rank-and-file legislators, still expend significant effort to recruit them. (Campbell 1982; Straus 2013) Thus, a bill with a relatively large number of cosponsors has a commitment of at least passive support from a large number of legislators. Such support may arise because a bill's content is in some sense naturally non-controversial, or because the sponsor (like Upton on the CURES Act) has actively sought to build a large coalition of support for the bill among political elites.

There are two cosponsorship patterns that should coincide with interest diversity. We should expect bills with larger numbers of cosponsors to also exhibit higher levels of support among interest groups. Assuming that interest groups are also more likely to support a bill that is broadly agreeable, then bills with large numbers of cosponsors should also have garnered large numbers of supporters among interest groups. Insofar as interest diversity among a set of organizations is, in my measure, capped by the number of groups in that set, a larger number of groups supporting a bill (particularly relative to the number opposing the bill) may also be more diverse. Hence, bills with large numbers of cosponsors should also have higher relative diversity in their interest group supporters. In addition, rather than simply being broad, the cosponsors of a bill may also be bipartisan. Harbridge (2015) finds that even when the majority party exercises strong agenda-setting powers, it has incentives to maintain a reputation for competent and responsible governance that in turn incentivize majority party leaders to allow onto the agenda bills with bipartisan appeal. These incentives may allow a legislator to secure legislative progress for their proposals by partnering with legislators of the other party. Indeed, Volden and Wiseman (2014) argue that a common practice of the most effective lawmakers in the U.S. Congress is to routinely seek partnerships

across party lines. Bills able to appeal to legislators with such varying preferences may also appeal to interest groups with varying preferences.

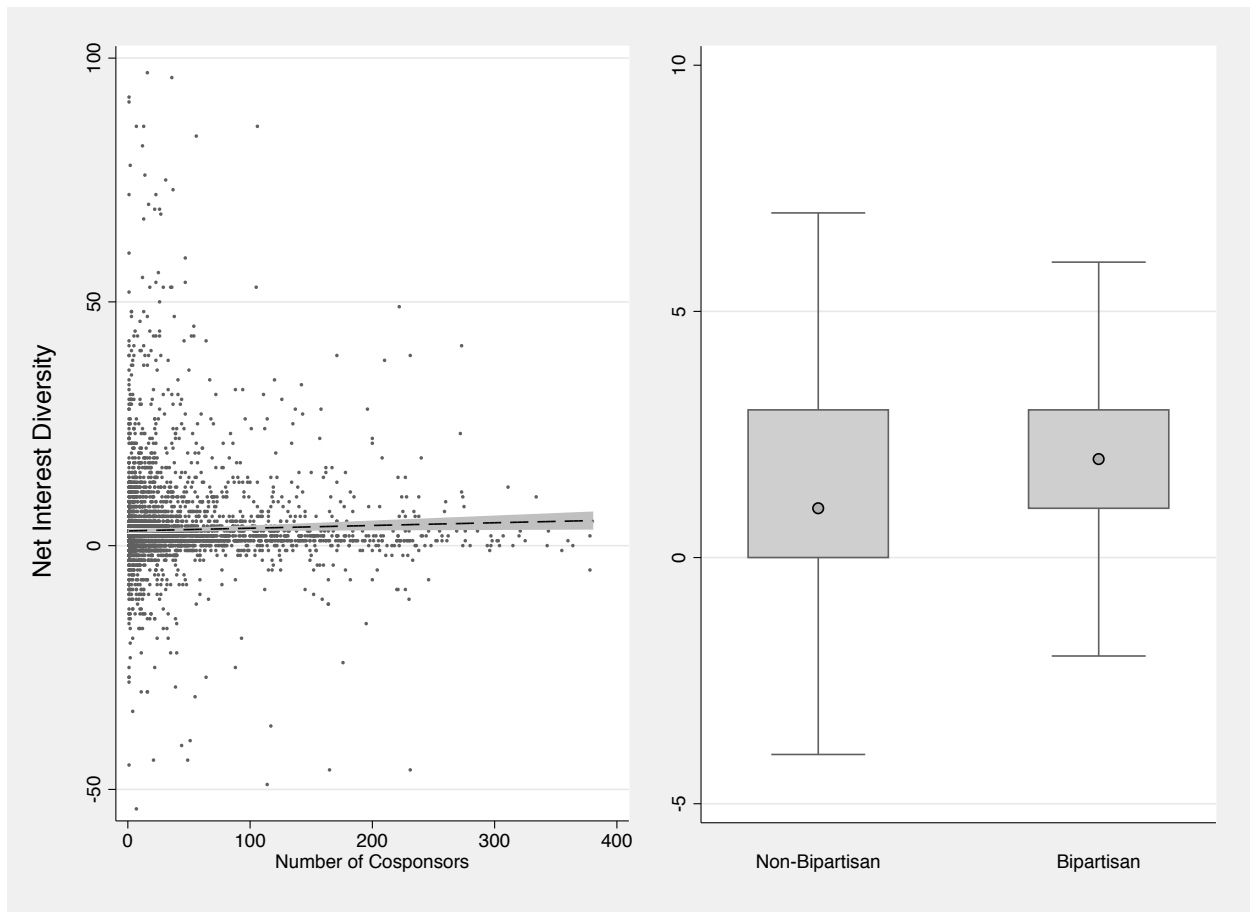
To explore these possibilities, we examine how levels of Net Interest Diversity vary across bills with many or bipartisan cosponsors. Web-scraping of Congress's official website as well as data from the Congressional Bills Project dataset were used to determine, for each bill in the Maplight data, the number of cosponsors it ultimately received, both in total and in each of the two major parties. Obtaining the final number of cosponsors a bill received is straightforward: that information is available in the Congressional Bills Project dataset. To classify bills as bipartisan, we examine how these cosponsorships were distributed across parties. Replicating the measure of bipartisanship used by Harbridge (2015), we code a bill as bipartisan if it has at least one cosponsor and at least 20 percent of a bill's cosponsors came from each party (30% of bills in the dataset).

Using these measures, we perform simple comparisons of Net Interest Diversity across different cosponsorship patterns. These comparisons are summarized in Figure 3.6. As demonstrated in the left panel of Figure 3.6, the correlation between Net Interest Diversity and the total number of cosponsors a bill received is positive and statistically significant ($\rho = 0.16, p < 0.0001$). Next, we compare bills that are bipartisan to those that are not. Similarly, we find that bipartisan bills exhibit statistically significantly higher levels of (cube-root) Net Interest Diversity ($\Delta_{95\%C.I.} = [0.166, 0.295]$, Welch's $T_{3399.12} = 6.961, p < 0.0001$). This also represents a substantively significant difference: indeed, bipartisan bills not only have higher mean Net Interest Diversity, but also higher median diversity. As discussed above, median changes are particularly substantively meaningful among these data because the data as a whole, as well as most random subsets of it, are strongly clustered at the median. Thus, as expected, we find that bills with many or bipartisan cosponsors tend to also have higher levels of Net Interest Diversity.

Diversity as a Response to Strong Opposition and Controversy

Crosson and Heaney (2016) as well as Phinney (2017) argue that interest groups have incentives to build diverse coalitions in response to strong opposition from other actors. However, they differ in the "other

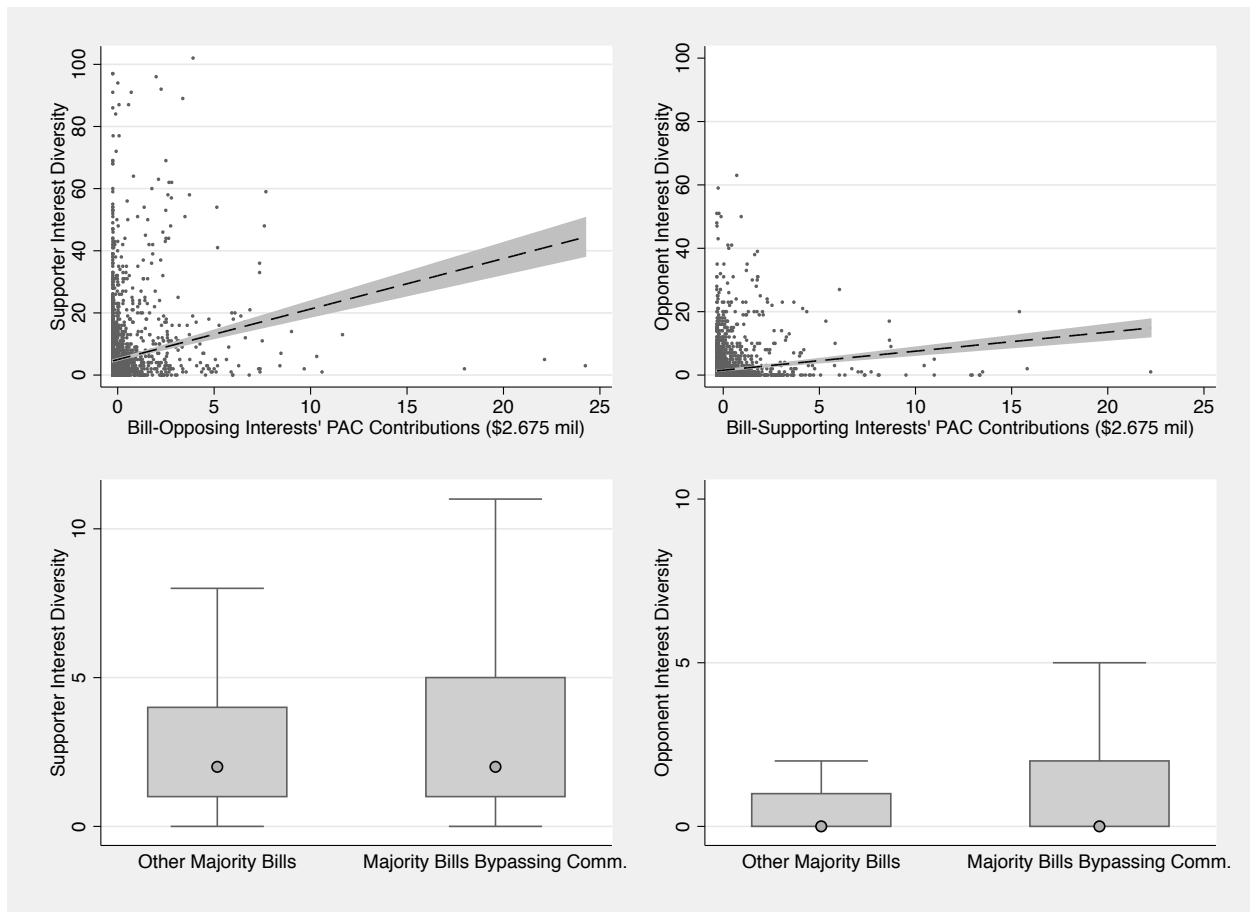
Figure 3.6: Number and Bipartisanship of Cosponsoring Legislators



Left is a scatterplot of Net Interest Diversity against each bill's number of cosponsors: the dots represent each observation; the dashed line represents the linear fit of the scatterplot, while the light grey area around it represents the 95% confidence interval around the linear fit. The right panel is a box-whisker plot of Net Interest Diversity by a dichotomous indicator of whether at least 20 percent of a bill's cosponsors came from each party. Outside observations are excluded from the right panel.

actors" whose opposition may spur the formation of diverse coalitions. Crosson and Heaney measure the impact of controversy surrounding a coalition's issue priorities on their subjective importance of issue diverse coalitions (see above) by asking coalition leaders to rate "How controversial is the [coalition's] issue in terms of the likelihood that attentive constituencies are to disagree about the issue?" (p 16). Attentive constituencies may include engaged citizens, but most commonly such attentive constituencies take the form of organized interest groups or social movements. Thus, Crosson and Heaney find that coalition leaders find issue diversity important in their coalition-building efforts when the issue the coalition works on draws opposition from other interest groups. Phinney, on the other hand, measures controversy

Figure 3.7: Strong Opposition as an Incentive to Seek Diverse Partners



Top panels are scatter plots (with linear fit and 95 % confidence interval thereof). Bottom panels are box-whisker plots, with outside values excluded to ease graphical interpretation.

among both interest groups and policymakers, coding a policy position as having "strong opposition" to the extent that its opposing side includes many or powerful interest groups or legislators. Though, as discussed above, the types of interest group coalition diversity conceptualized in both studies are at least somewhat distinct from interest diversity, both studies are seeking to understand coalition diversity in general, with each type of diversity being instances of the broader "diversity" construct. Thus, one might expect that antecedents to the kinds of diversity they study, particularly controversy or opposition, might also be correlated with interest diversity. Thus we consider how interest diversity covaries with opposition from interest groups and powerful legislators.

In contrast to other analyses in this section, which examine Net Interest Diversity, here I examine how

strong opposition correlates with interest diversity on each side of a bill. Thus, if opposition to a bill is strong, we would expect the supporters of the bill to have higher interest diversity. Equivalently, if support for a bill is strong, we should expect the opponents of the bill to have higher interest diversity. We take campaign contributions from political action committees representing the interests on each side of a bill²⁷ as a rough indicator of the "strength" of the individual interests on that side. Interests generally thought of as relatively powerful – e.g. real estate companies, investment companies, defense contractors, and pharmaceutical companies – are also among the largest campaign contributors. Thus, we would expect that as the campaign contributions from interests on one side increase, there should be higher levels of interest diversity on the *other* side. We find this is the case for both sides. As the upper panel on Figure 3.7 demonstrates, Supporter Interest Diversity is positively correlated with bill opposing interests' PAC contributions ($\rho = 0.144, p < 0.0001$), while Opponent Interest Diversity is positively correlated with bill supporting interests' PAC contributions ($\rho = 0.090, p < 0.0001$). Thus, it appears that bills with strong interests on one side tend to have interest diverse organizations on the other side.

Identifying powerful legislators supporting a bill is harder. The sponsor of a bill is not necessarily the legislator putting the most power behind it. However, the majority party leadership is able to exercise considerable power on behalf of legislation, particularly when the majority party caucus is in broad agreement on the bill. (Aldrich and Rohde 2001) One manifestation of such leadership power are instances in which bills bypass deliberation in committee. Such bills are ultimately reported from a committee, or passed by the parent chamber, without having received a markup - a formal meeting to consider amendments to a bill. By excluding a committee from deliberating on the bill, party leaders indicate that they both have settled on a specific policy proposal and that they want to move it through the legislative process as quickly as possible. (Bendix 2016) Given the power of party leaders, a bill that

²⁷The specific quantity used here is calculated by identifying the interest group category code of each organization on a side, finding the total value of all PAC contributions that interest made to federal candidates in that year, summing across all organizations on that side, then dividing by \$2.675 million (the equivalent of maxing out a single organization's PAC contribution to every member of Congress). Thus, category codes' contributions may be double-counted (or more) within a side. This does not bias the analyses presented here so long as high-contributing interests and low-contributing interests are equally likely to be represented by many organizations on a given bill. There may be reasonable arguments that this is the case. However, alternative measures - PAC contributions from individual organizations on a side, or single-counting each interest category code, leave out potential information that campaign contributions might convey about the intensity of an interests' preferences on a bill. Faced with imperfect measures regardless, the measure used here is adequate for present purposes.

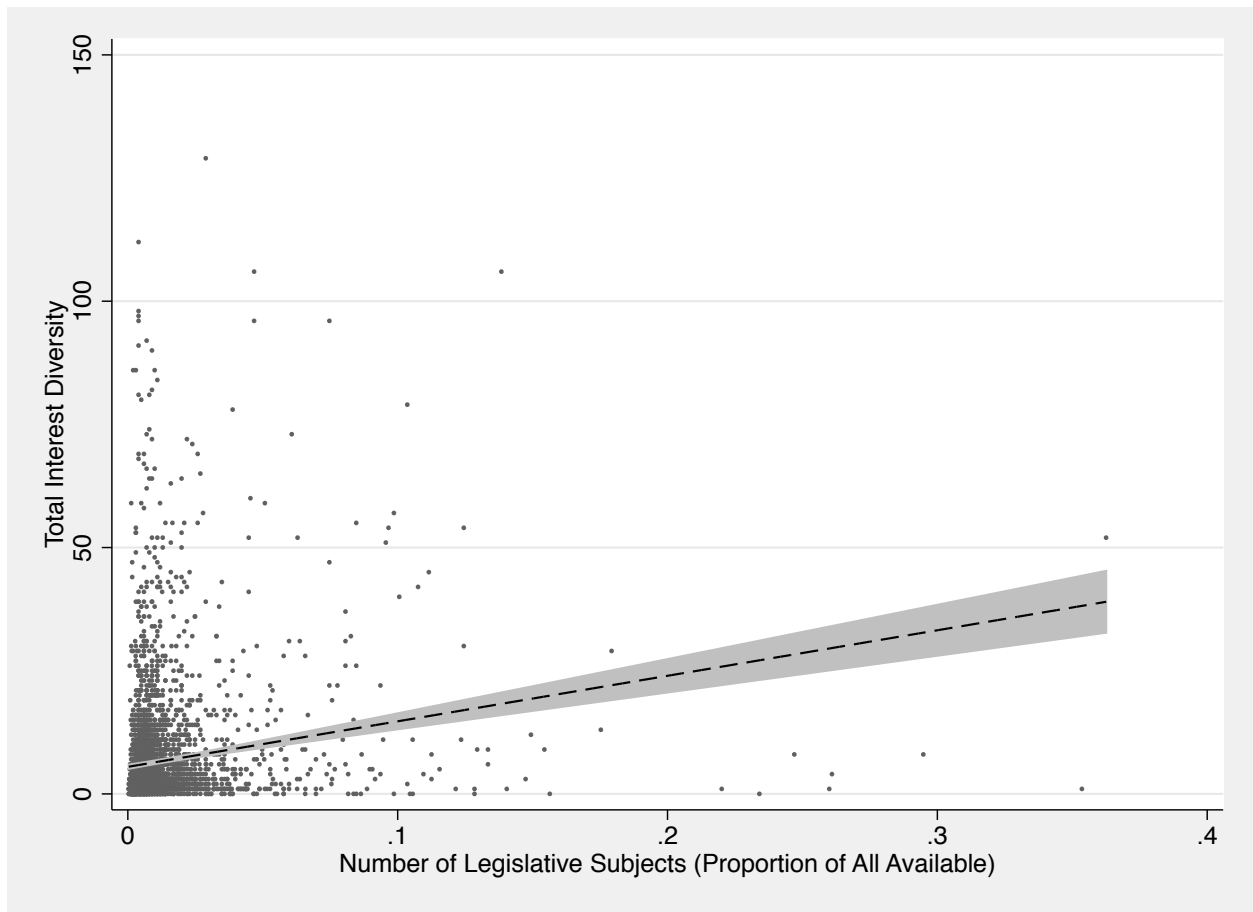
has been reported or passed without receiving a markup indicates that that bill is supported by strong legislators. Thus, such bills should be expected to have diverse opponents, but *not* diverse supporters.

To examine this, we compare interest diversity among majority-sponsored bills between bills that bypassed committee deliberations and those that did not. Bendix (2016) identifies bills that bypassed committee markup using official data on bill statuses from Congress. Using the same indicators, we identify all bills in the dataset that are recorded as having either been reported from a committee in the origin chamber or having passed that chamber but that did not also have a recorded markup of the bill. Of the majority party bills in the dataset, 420 (10.55 percent) did not receive a markup but were reported from a committee or passed by their parent chamber regardless. The bottom panels of Figure 3.7 illustrate how interest diversity on each side varies over whether a bill bypassed committee or not, for majority party bills only. Differences between supporter interest diversity for committee-bypassing and non-committee bypassing majority-party bills run counter to expectations, with committee-bypassing bills exhibiting *less* diverse interest group supporters ($\Delta_{95\%C.I.} = [-0.181, -0.018]$, Welch's $T_{504.644} = 2.413, p < 0.01$). On the opponents' side, there is a statistically significant difference in interest diversity between bills that bypassed committee and those that did not, with committee-bypassing bills drawing more diverse opponents than bills that do not ($\Delta_{95\%C.I.} = [0.118, 0.284]$, Welch's $T_{504.022} = 4.752, p < 0.0001$). The difference between these differences is also statistically significant ($\Delta_{95\%C.I.} = [0.127, 0.522]$, Welch's $T_{5622} = 3.230, p < 0.01$), as is the difference in Net Interest Diversity Between committee non-bypassing and bypassing bills ($\Delta_{95\%C.I.} = [0.144, 0.405]$, Welch's $T_{506.994} = 4.127, p < 0.0001$). Thus, committee-bypassing bills have less diverse supporters and more diverse opponents, and reduced Net Interest Diversity.

Omnibus Bills as Vehicles for Many Interests

We would expect to find more diverse lobbying on omnibus bills. Omnibus bills, which cover many issue areas and contain many distinct policy proposals, are used to package controversial proposals among more popular proposals. This helps leaders pass such controversial proposals over the objection, or perhaps without the understanding, of other legislators as well as the White House. (Curry 2015; Krutz 2000;

Figure 3.8: Omnibus Bills and Total Interest Diversity.



Plot contains only majority-party bills. Dots represent each observation. The dashed line represents the linear fit of the scatterplot, while the light grey area around it represents the 95% confidence interval around the linear fit.

Sinclair 2011) Because of their issue breadth, omnibuses are more likely than narrower bills to be relevant to many different subconstituencies at once. To the extent this causes organizations representing those subconstituencies to lobby on the bill, we would expect a more diverse array of organizations lobbying on omnibuses than on narrower bills. Thus, we examine the Total Interest Diversity, rather than the Net Interest Diversity, of omnibus bills.

Indeed, omnibus bills generate more diverse lobbying. Following Krutz (2000), I measure omnibus bills according to their key distinguishing characteristic: issue breadth. Here, issue breadth is measured according to the proportion of available Congressional Research Service (CRS) Legislative Subject codes comprising those assigned to a bill.²⁸ Because omnibus bills are primarily a tool of the majority party, we

²⁸The CRS coding system changed in late 2008, drastically reducing the number of possible Legislative Subject Codes.

compare issue breadth to interest diversity across majority party bills only. As depicted in Figure 3.8, there is a moderate positive correlation between issue breadth and total Interest Diversity ($\rho = 0.220, p < 0.0001$). This confirms the expectation that bills relevant to many types of interests draw lobbying from many types of interests.

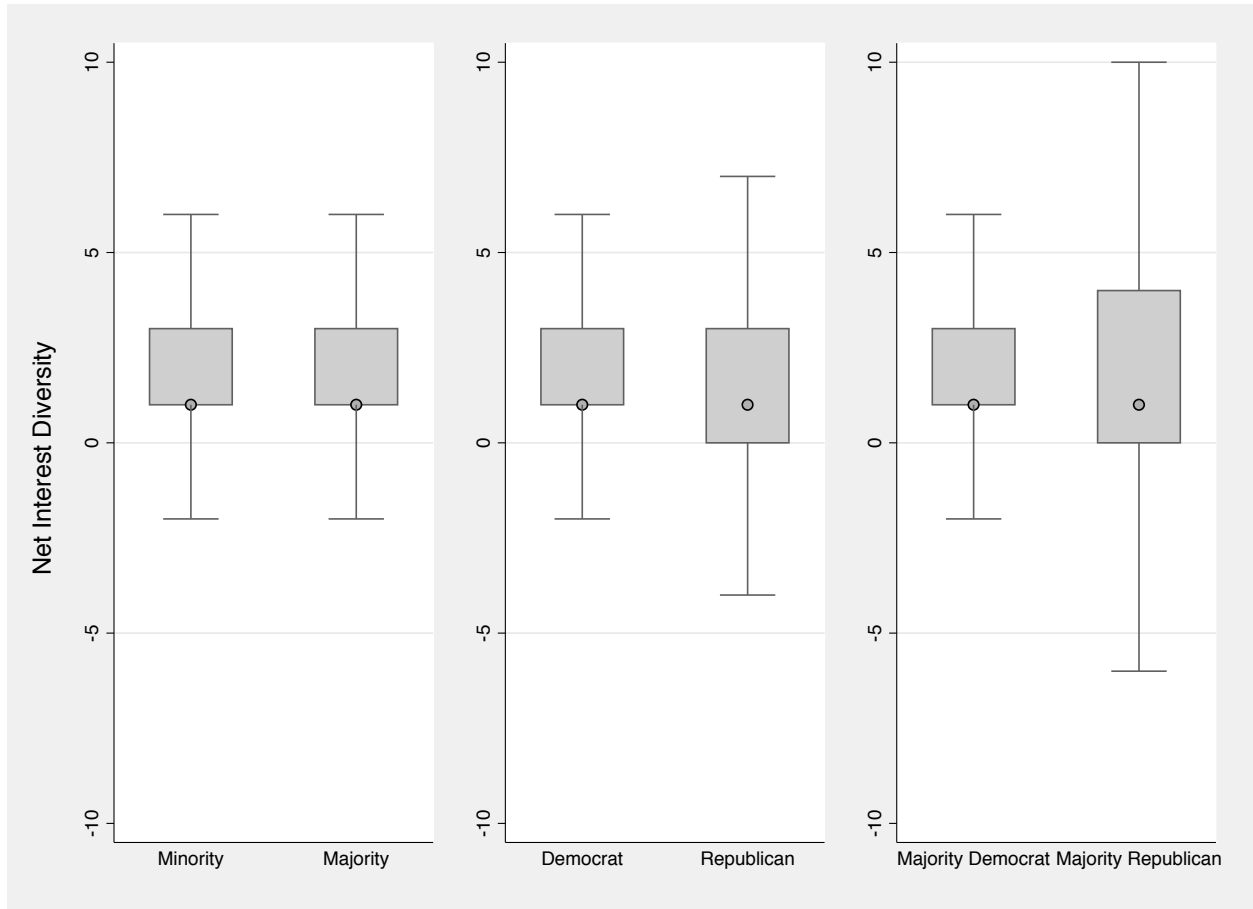
Majority Party Power and Asymmetric Partisan Networks

Parties and party power structure lobbying activity. The majority party has significant procedural advantages in both chambers of Congress, which generally serve to block bills that majority legislators (or, at least, a majority thereof) dislike while facilitating the passage of bills around which the majority party is unified or that are necessary to pass to preserve the party's collective reputation. (Aldrich and Rohde 2001; Den Hartog and Monroe 2011; Cox and McCubbins 2005) Unsurprisingly, it has been found that lobbying tends to be directed towards bills sponsored by majority party members. (Grossmann and Pyle 2013) Thus, we would generally expect that majority party bills tend to receive more lobbying in general. As a function of the data - supporters tend to be more numerous and more diverse than opponents - one would expect that this general tendency to lobby majority party bills more frequently would imply that, by my measure, majority party bills might have higher Net Interest Diversity than minority party bills.

In addition to responding to majority party power, interest groups also interact within the parties themselves in different ways. While parties are often thought of as formal organizations, instantiated by the Republican National Committee and the Democratic National Committee, they are better understood as extended networks of politicians, party organizations, activists, outside interest groups, and other actors. (Koger, Masket and Noel 2009) These partisan outside interests, while participating in elections and supporting candidates, also form legislative coalitions within their party network in support of party priorities and across party networks in pursuit of "grand bargains." (Grossmann and Dominguez 2009) One key difference between the parties is in the density of their interests' collaboration. While both parties have interests that are integral to their networks, Grossmann and Hopkins (2016) find that

Thus, bills from the first two Congresses in the dataset have much larger raw counts of Legislative Subject Codes. To account for this, we use the proportion of codes available in a given Congress that comprised the codes assigned to a bill as the final measure of its issue breadth.

Figure 3.9: Party and Party Status



Box-whisker plots of Net Interest Diversity, with outside observations excluded.

Democratic-aligned groups are more likely to collaborate with one another on pushes for legislation, while Republican-aligned groups tend to be both fewer and less likely to collaborate. This finding suggests that we should expect more diverse groups lobbying in favor of bills sponsored by Democratic Party members.

We examine these party influences on interest diversity by comparing Net Interest Diversity across party status and bill sponsor party. Both the party of a bill's sponsor and the majority or minority status of that party in the sponsor's chamber (i.e. the bill's chamber of origin) are public information and are included in the Congressional Bills Project dataset. Figure 3.9 summarizes these comparisons. The proposed measure of Net Interest Diversity is not consistently associated with party status: mean (cube-root transformed) Net Interest Diversity is slightly higher for majority party bills than minority

party bills, but this difference is not statistically significant ($\Delta_{95\%C.I.} = [-0.095, 0.035]$, Welch's $T_{2931.39} = 0.9103, p = 0.819$). Further analysis reveals that while the bills have similar though statistically-distinguishable means, their distributions are different: majority party bills have higher standard deviation (9.63 vs. 6.49) and also higher skew (3.49 vs. 3.10), indicating that they are more likely to exhibit values farther from the mean, and the longer tail will favor positive values of Net Interest Diversity. Thus, even though their central tendencies are not substantively different, majority bills are more likely to have extreme and positive values of Net Interest Diversity than minority bills.

On the other hand, contrary to expectations, Republican bills tend to have slightly higher Net Interest Diversity than Democratic bills. However, when comparing the cube-root transformation of Net Interest Diversity across parties, this difference is statistically significant, though small on average ($\Delta_{95\%C.I.} = [0.060, 0.192]$, $T_{3913.54} = 3.749, p < 0.001$) Once again, the distinction between raw and transformed versions of Net Interest Diversity here indicate that one category – in this case, Republican sponsored bills – has both much higher standard deviation (10.41 vs 7.87) and somewhat higher skew (3.60 vs 3.24). This difference in results between comparing raw and transformed Net Interest Diversity across party lines is somewhat abated when only considering bills filed by members of each party when it was the majority party in the sponsor's chamber. In this case, while raw Net Interest Diversity is on average about 1.5 points higher for majority-party Republicans than majority-party Democrats, cube-root-transformed Net Interest Diversity is slightly higher for majority-party Democrats than majority-party Republicans, though not as consistently as when all bills are considered ($\Delta_{95\%C.I.} = [-0.029, 0.151]$, $T_{1876.28} = 1.325, p = 0.094$) This is largely because majority Republicans have much higher standard deviation than majority Democrats (12.48 vs 8.07), though in this case they have less skew (3.03 vs. 3.44). These results suggest that Republican bills tend to be more polarizing – that is, likely to result in values of Net Interest Diversity that are further from the mean – but that more often than not this results in bills that are supported by a relatively diverse array of interests.

Among the comparisons I have presented in attempting to establish the proposed interest diversity measure's construct validity, that between Democrats and Republicans is the only one that indicates an association clearly contrary to that found in existing work. It is worth considering potential explanations

for this discrepancy.²⁹ To review, Grossmann and Hopkins (2016) use data that contain information about which interest groups were cited by lawmakers when debating a bill or amendment on the floor. Identifying these citations in the 2001-2002 Congressional Record, they create a network of which groups are cited together when a lawmaker is arguing for or against legislation, making the assumption that co-citation indicates collaboration between groups. They find that Democratic-leaning interests are much more likely to be cited together (and hence, the democratic legislative network is more dense), and that Democratic lawmakers cite many more groups when making floor speeches; one consequence of this is that Democratic bills appear to have the support of a broader and more diverse array of interest groups than do Republican bills.

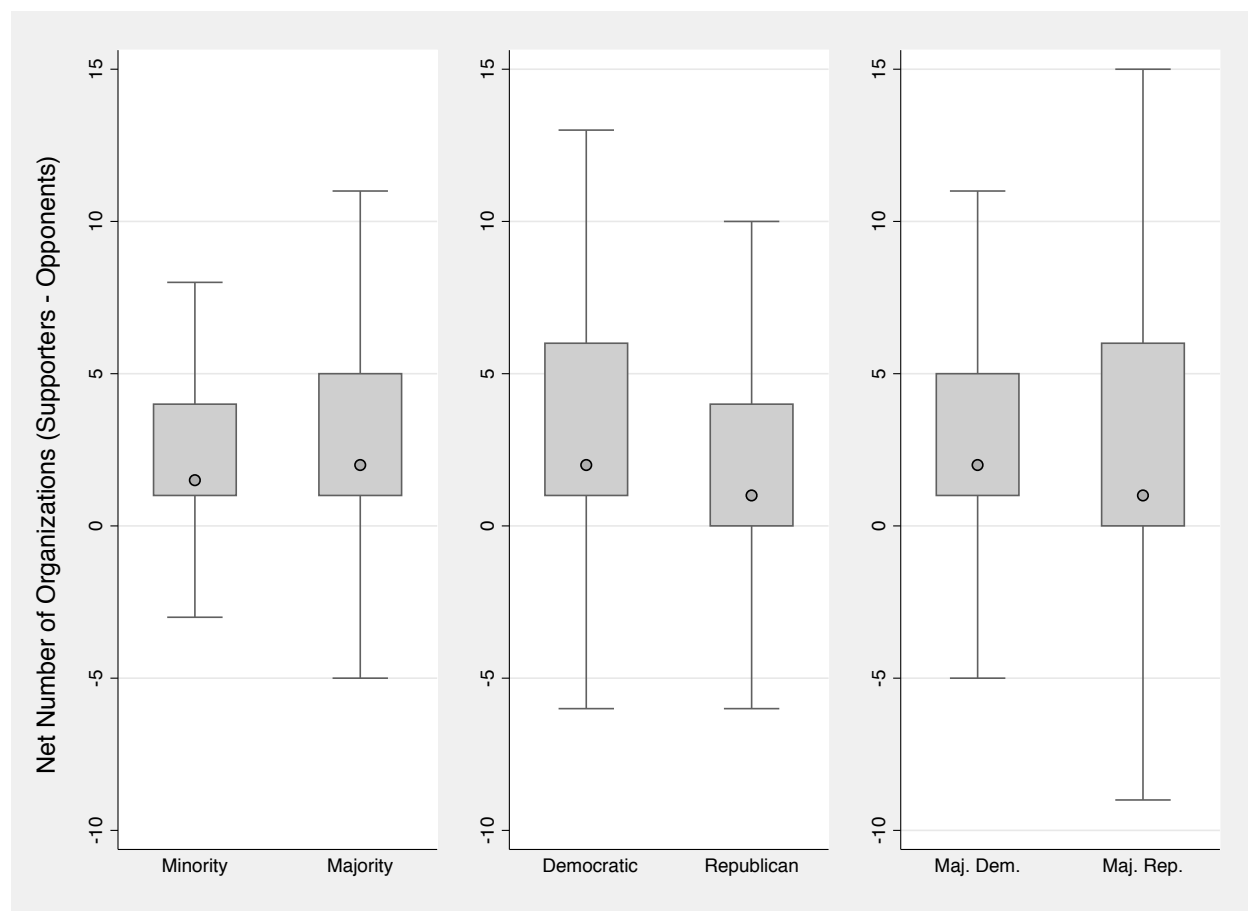
There are at least four potential explanations for the discrepancy between the results of Grossmann and Hopkins (2016). The first potential explanation for our different findings is that their data come from a time period (2001-2002) prior (though close) to that from which my data are derived (2005-2014). In this case, both our findings may be true, conditional on institutional alignments, structural influences (such as party polarization) or other factors that vary over time.

The second potential explanation is that the interest group category codes used to generate the interest diversity score recognize more variations of industry interests than they do of unions or issue groups. Insofar as the former tend to favor Republican positions and the latter tend to favor Democratic positions, the measure could be systematically biased to detect more diverse support from the kinds of bills that tend to be sponsored by Republicans. This argument is supported by my finding that Republican bills not only exhibit higher mean Net Interest Diversity, but also higher variance and (generally) positive skew. Such an argument would, of course, depend on one's prior beliefs; because those are precisely what we are considering here, an argument saying these are wrong because they differ from previous findings would be non-falsifiable. Nevertheless, this suggests that assessing cross-party differences in interest diversity may be difficult to do using this measure.

The third potential explanation is that while I am measuring interest diversity, Grossmann and Hopkins are measuring (in effect) the number of organizations sharing a position. Figure 3.10 replicates

²⁹The alternative being, of course, to prematurely admit a weakness in construct validity.

Figure 3.10: Party and Party Status: Net Number of Organizations (Supporters - Opponents)



Box-whisker plots (outside observations excluded), by party status (left), party (center), and party for majority party bills only (right).

the box whisker plots of Figure 3.9, replacing Net Interest Diversity with net numbers of organizations lobbying for the bill (number of supporters minus the number of opponents) as the y-axis variable. When analyzing party and party-status at the organizational level (rather than the interest level), my measure replicates the findings of those of Grossman and Hopkins: Democratic bills garner more (net) organizations supporting them than do Republican bills.

The final potential explanation is that the data-generating processes for the two sources of interest group positions are quite different. Grossman and Hopkins use citations by lawmakers of groups' positions on legislation, while I use the public positions taken by groups themselves. Intuitively, lawmakers are likely to be strategic about the groups whose agreement they are willing to use to justify

their positions, citing some groups and failing to mention others. While groups' public position-taking is also likely strategic in its initiation,³⁰ groups have few incentives to hide that they have an interest in the outcomes of a particular piece of legislation, particularly on bills appearing to be gaining salience or moving through the legislative process. This is likely to hold among the bills in my data, because Maplight selects for research bills that gain a measure of salience or that move through the legislative process (see above). Given each dataset's generating process, I submit that the Maplight data is generally a more accurate representation of interest groups' position-taking on bills. Thus, while my results and predictions of prior work disagree slightly on the correspondence between bill sponsor party and interest group activity, these disagreements do not imperil the construct validity of my measure.

Legislative Progress

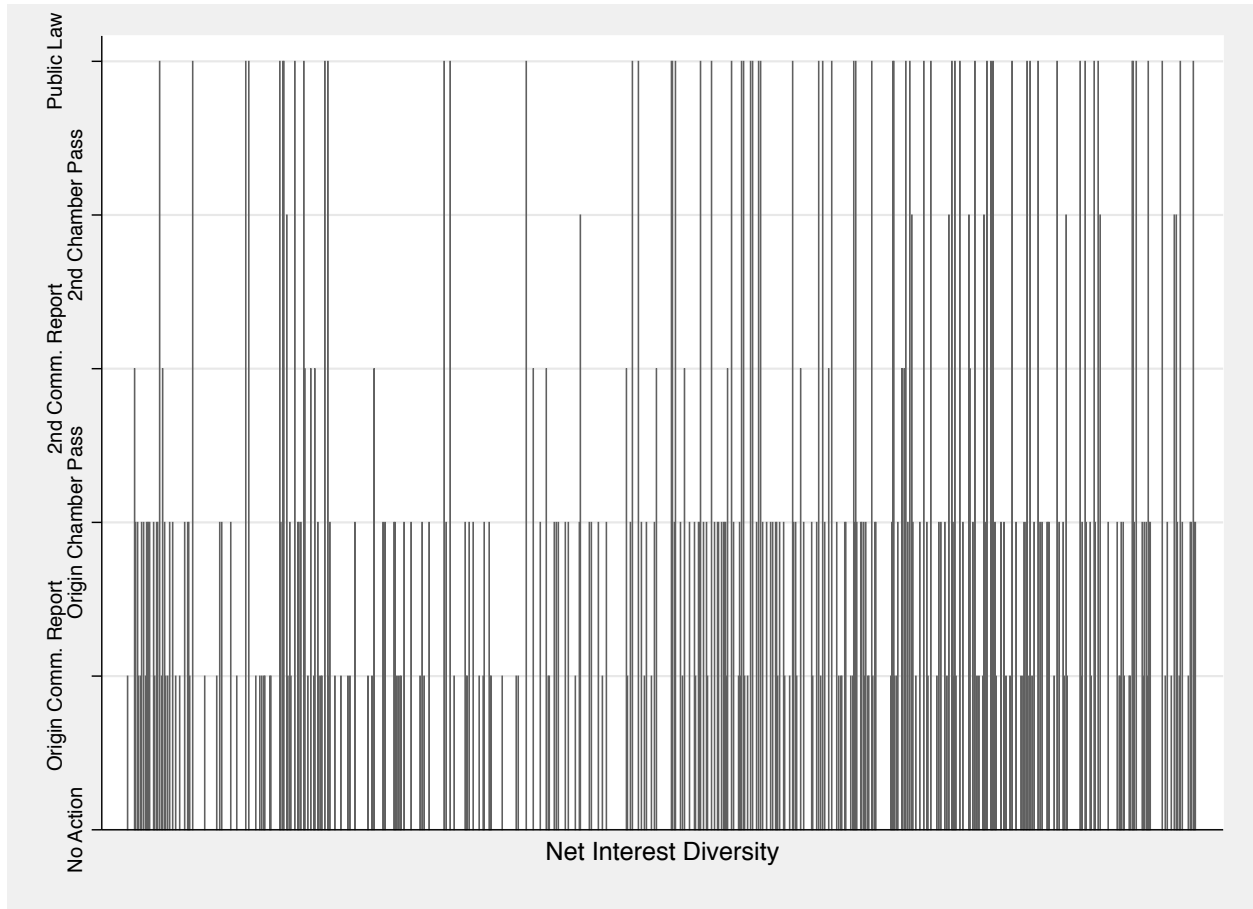
Differences in interest diversity matter to the extent that they help or hinder groups' lobbying efforts. One key goal of interest groups is to secure collective benefits for group members, namely favorable policy outcomes. (Olson 1965; Baumgartner et al. 2009) If interest diversity helps groups secure favorable policy outcomes, then it should be the case that there is a positive correlation between Net Interest Diversity and the movement of bills through the legislative process and into law. Here, we assess the strength of this correlation.

There is a consistent association between Net Interest Diversity and bills' legislative progress.³¹ Bills' furthest legislative progress was assessed using an ordinal measure, with increasing values indicating further progress (0 = bill made no progress, 1 = was reported from committee in its origin chamber, etc., and 5 = bill became law). Statistical tests reveal that there is statistically significant differences in mean Net Interest Diversity across levels of bill progress (James's Wald $\chi^2(5d.f.) = 33.29, p < 0.001$, Likelihood Ratio $\chi^2(5d.f.) = 30.80, p < 0.001$), though this does not result in a consistent linear relationship between Net Interest Diversity across levels of legislative progress (Spearman's $\rho = 0.0193, p = 0.16$)

³⁰One can imagine lobbyists trying to calculate whether it is preferable to bring attention to a bill by taking a public position on it.

³¹Readers of the third paper of this dissertation project, which is based on analysis in Lorenz (2016), may be interested to know that that paper's main results hold when the DV of committee consideration is replaced with the ordinal measure of legislative progress that is used here (and an mixed effects ordinal logit model is estimated).

Figure 3.II: Net Interest Diversity by Bill's Legislative Progress



20% random sample, $N_{bills} = 1069$. Vertical lines represent individual bills, and the height of each line denotes that bill's progress through the legislative process. If viewing on a screen, it is recommended that the reader zoom in to more accurately see how few of these bills (374) made any legislative progress.

Figure 3.II depicts this mixed association. It orders a random sample of 20 percent of bills in the data by Net Interest Diversity,³² then draws a line upward to a level indicating its level of the ordinal measure of each bill's legislative progress. If it were the case that Net Interest Diversity was positively associated with a bill's legislative progress, we would expect to observe more lines extending further upward as one moves from left to right on the x axis of Figure 3.II.

This is indeed what we observe. The higher end of the x axis, representing bills with higher Net Interest Diversity, features more bills that make any progress at all (i.e. less white space), and those

³²The values of Net Interest Diversity are modified slightly, by introducing random noise, to allow for each point on the x axis to represent one and only one bill.

bills that do make progress tend to make more progress to the extent that they have higher Net Interest Diversity (more lines reach higher on the right side of the plot than on the left). This suggests that at one or more stages of the legislative process, Net Interest Diversity is associated with bills progressing further.³³ At the same time, a number of bills make substantial legislative progress despite having low (large but negative) Net Interest Diversity. As the example of the ACA illustrates, these sorts of bills might reflect a (soon-to-be electorally punished) use of powerful policymakers' clout to overcome the objections of diverse interests.

3.5 CONCLUSION

In this article, I developed the concept of interest diversity as the relative degree of observable variety of subconstituencies represented by a coalition (or other set) of organizations. After elaborating this concept and distinguishing it from other features of interest group coalitions, including other types of diversity, I developed a measure of interest diversity based on the interest category codes assigned to organizations found to be taking positions for or against bills. I validated this measure by showing that its general patterns of variation correspond to intuitions and expectations of interest group activity on bills, then by showing that this measure covaries with other aspects of legislative politics, bill construction, and legislative progress in ways that correspond to existing theories. This analysis was primarily concerned with variation in Net Interest Diversity, the difference in interest diversity between a bill's supporters and opponents. Having validated the measure, we turn to discussing how to use it: namely, to study interest group influence on legislation.

I opened this analysis by contrasting the legislative fate of two recent major Republican healthcare-related bills, the American Health Care Act (AHCA) and the 21st Century Cures (CURES) Act. Both bills were expansive and controversial, and both were championed by powerful members of

³³One other graphical point bears mentioning. Though Figure 3.11 does not appear to show it, the large majority of bills in the dataset (3572 out of 5390) made no legislative progress at all. The reason that this does not appear to be the case in the graph is because, even with additional random noise, there simply is not enough room in the size of the page to clearly depict all bills, even in the 20 percent random sample: thus, bars overlap to some extent, which artificially inflates the apparent typical legislative progress of bills in the sample. Smaller subsamples could address this graphical issue, at the risk of becoming less representative. Experimentation with different-sized subsamples did not change the apparent association between Net Interest Diversity and Legislative Progress as described above.

the majority Republican caucus; Speaker Paul Ryan and Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Fred Upton, respectively. However, where Ryan attempted to force the initial version of the AHCA through the House and over to the Senate in a matter of weeks, Upton spent years building consensus and bundling his favored provisions of the CURES Act with the research priorities of other legislators. Where the CURES Act ultimately passed with broad bipartisan support, the AHCA died unceremoniously, and attempts to negotiate within the fractured Republican caucus to revive it have not, as of this writing, generated a more viable alternative.

In addition to their ultimate fate, the two bills differed markedly in the breadth of the support and opposition each was able to garner from organized interests. According to recent Maplight data, the CURES Act was supported by 150 organizations representing 26 distinct interests, and opposed by only 7 organizations representing 5 distinct interests, for a Net Interest Diversity of 21. This would³⁴ place it in approximately the 96th percentile of the dataset used here. By contrast, the AHCA was supported by 32 organizations representing 17 subconstituencies and opposed by 82 organizations representing 32 subconstituencies, for a Net Interest Diversity of -15.³⁵ This would place it below the 1st percentile of the Maplight data. Clearly, the difference in diversity of interest group support across the two bills was substantial. The findings of this paper suggest that such differences are neither coincidental nor inconsequential. Indeed, bills with higher levels of Net Interest Diversity are more likely to progress further in the legislative process overall. This would suggest that the CURES Act benefitted from the diverse array of supporters it received, while the AHCA suffered for its failure to secure similar interest group support.³⁶

This analysis did uncover two limitations of the measure that any subsequent analysis making use of

³⁴Both the CURES Act and the AHCA were introduced in Congresses outside of the coverage of the Maplight data used here.

³⁵NB: these come from the original version of the AHCA. As of this writing, a newer version of the bill passed the House and is awaiting action in the Senate. Interest group positions on this new version are not yet available on Maplight's website.

³⁶Lorenz (2016) found that a two-standard deviation increase (a difference of just under 18) in Net Interest Diversity was associated with a 10 percent increased probability that a bill would receive committee consideration. The difference between the AHCA and the CURES Act, 36, was just over twice that, implying a 20 to 21 percent difference in the probability of receiving committee consideration, all else equal. Of course, the impetus of party leaders compelling the AHCA to be considered meant that the bill was going to be reported from committee regardless, but this example illustrates the potential degree of difference in legislative progress between bills that differ in Net Interest Diversity to the extent that the AHCA and CURES Act did.

it should take into account. First, the Maplight data, and the Center for Responsive Politics taxonomy it uses to assign interests to bills, allows for many more distinctions between and within industries than it does within issue groups and other social causes. One manifestation of this choice (appropriate though it may be for clarifying the influence of industry on individual legislators) is that Republican bills, which traditionally tend to favor industry more than Democratic bills, appear to be much more diverse in their support. There is a normative argument to be had around whether that reflects "ground truth", and I leave it to other research to have that argument. For now, suffice to say that comparisons of my measure of interest diversity across the two major parties are likely to be impacted by design of the interest taxonomy. Second, my proposed measure of interest diversity is highly correlated with the number of organizations lobbying on the bill. This could create two issues in hypothesis tests, particularly if interest diversity is an independent variable. If the number of groups lobbying on the bill is not taken into account, then they may confound any relationship between interest diversity and some other variable. On the other hand, if the number of organizations are taken into account, e.g. through covariate adjustment, the high correlation between number and diversity of organizations will likely introduce collinearity into the model, which in expectation will artificially inflate the standard errors on both variables' associated coefficients. Models should still include both variables, and interpretation of results may need to be modified to account for this feature of the data.

These issues with the measure of it notwithstanding, as an alternative to other sources of interest group influence, interest diversity has a normative appeal. Because interest diversity is based on connections between lawmakers and specific communities in their districts, legislators supporting bills with diverse support are in all likelihood doing what a large number of their constituents would want them to do. In this sense, if interest diversity is found to influence legislative outcomes – in a more thorough analysis than that presented here – that speaks well for the quality of representation in American lawmaking.

Chapter 4

Lobbying Coalition Diversity and Interest Group Influence on Congressional Priorities

What makes lobbying influential in the U.S. Congress? Observers and would-be reformers of Congress often lament that lawmakers are drawn away from pursuit of the common good by the influence of lobbyists representing wealthy special interests. This lament is not unfounded; since the latter half of the twentieth century, lobbying and other forms of political spending have exploded, and lobbyists themselves are ubiquitous in Washington. For example, in 2015 there were tens of thousands of registered lobbyists, and lobbying expenditures totaled \$3 billion; during that election cycle, organizations contributed nearly half a billion dollars to federal candidates' campaigns through affiliated political action committees (PACs). Lobbying's sustained ubiquity suggests that interest groups and advocacy organizations believe that their political investment is paying off, presumably in accrued policy influence.

However, evidence of such influence is mixed. Prior work has disagreed about the influence of interest groups in driving legislative outcomes, as well as the factors that make groups influential. (Baumgartner et al. 2009; Gilens and Page 2014; Grossmann 2012*a*; Hojnacki et al. 2012; Burstein and Linton 2002) This mixed record extends to whether differences in lobbying resources - particularly campaign contributions and lobbying expenditures - lead to more influence on legislators' behavior or legislative outcomes. (Wawro 2001; Esterling 2007; Hall and Wayman 1990; Kalla and Broockman 2016; Hojnacki, Marchetti, Baumgartner, Berry, Kimball and Leech 2015) Thus, the conditions under which interest groups can influence lawmaking remain unclear. There are at least three conceptual reasons for this lack of clarity. First, while lobbying manifests as communications between lobbyists and individual

legislators, most individual legislators have little independent influence over the fate of legislation. Thus, the noted relationships between lobbying strategies - particularly resource-based accounts of lobbying intensity and campaign contributions - and legislative behavior may hold but have little impact on congressional lawmaking. Second, while lobbyists want to change legislative outcomes, what they *do* is attempt to facilitate or inhibit the movement of policy proposals through the the legislative process; this process is marked by discrete stages in which different legislators, with different lobbying-relevant attributes (e.g. expertise or campaign resources), hold power. Few recent studies have examined what lobbying factors help or hinder bills' progress through individual stages of the legislative process. Finally, while understandable, the focus on resources (or near proxies thereof) as a source of influence has hampered scholars' ability to identify alternative sources of influence.¹ Can lower-resource groups "win" in Washington? If so, how?

One potential alternative source of influence is diversity within lobbying coalitions. Such coalitions form when several organizations coordinate their efforts on an issue for which they share a position. Some coalitions are diverse - the organizations comprising them vary meaningfully in their general policy preferences, their organizational styles, or the industries and social causes for which they advocate. Phinney (2017), in the most in-depth treatment of coalition diversity to date, emphasizes how diverse coalitions that formed around the various issues within the welfare reform initiative of the 1990s were a product of issue-level dynamics; the competitiveness, salience, and policy uncertainty surrounding an issue. Crosson and Heaney (2016), working across multiple policy areas, finds that lobbying coalition leaders believe diversity is important in recruiting new coalition members, particularly when the issue they are working on is competitive, when the coalition is relatively new, or when trying to ensure a bill's passage through the legislative process. This research is important for understanding how diverse coalitions come about, but cannot directly answer the question of whether diversity makes one side of a legislative debate more likely to succeed.

This study demonstrates that the diversity among groups lobbying on a bill impacts that bill's

¹The notable exception to this focus on resource-based arguments is the growing body of work on the role of interest groups' positions in networks of information transmission and policy collaboration. (McKay 2012a; Carpenter, Esterling and Lazer 1998, 2003, 2004; Heaney 2006; Heaney and Lorenz 2013)

consideration in committee. We develop a theory of indirect lobbying influence on chairs' committee agenda-setting decisions. According to this theory, committee chairs, in selecting bills for consideration before their committee, balance their perception of bills' electoral and policy value to them with their predictions of those bills' ability to move further in the legislative process. Lobbying influences the latter prediction by changing the intensity of rank-and-file legislators' support or opposition to a bill. To the extent that one side of a bill (i.e. its supporters or opponents) is comprised of organizations representing a relatively diverse array of industries, social causes, and other subconstituencies - a side attribute we refer to as "interest diversity" - it will be more effective at mobilizing rank-and-file legislators. Observing interest diversity, therefore, allows the chair to assess each side's ability to mobilize other legislators and changes her incentives to include the bill in her committee's agenda in the first place. To test empirical expectations arising from this argument, we analyze new data on over 13,000 organizations' positions on over 5000 bills introduced in Congress between the 109th and 113th Congresses (2005 through 2014). We find that the relative interest diversity of the lobbying coalitions supporting or opposing a bill is associated with differences in the probability that that bill will receive consideration in committee. We further show that these differences increase substantially among bills introduced by majority party members during periods of non-unified government, and argue that this indicates that it is indeed interest diversity's impact on bills' legislative viability that makes it influential on committee agenda-setting decisions. We conclude by discussing the implications of these findings for coalition leaders as well as for collective understanding of the relationship between lawmaking and interest group influence.

4.1 LOCATING LOBBYING'S LEGISLATIVE INFLUENCE

Lobbying efforts influence legislators' priorities more than their positions or votes. Indeed, legislators' floor votes are dominated by party coordination, legislators' personal ideology, and constituency demands. (Fleck and Kilby 2002; Snyder and Groseclose 2000; Snyder, Ansolabehere and Stewart 2001) Because of this, votes are difficult to change through lobbying. Lobbyists appear to recognize this. Among others, Hojnacki and Kimball (1998) have noted that legislators tend to direct lobbying toward their existing allies. Meanwhile, Wawro, (2001) finds that PAC contributions do not cause members of

Congress to vote in ways discordant with their policy preferences; instead, contributions go to legislators already likely to support the group's positions. This suggests that legislators' floor votes are highly constrained, and thus lobbying legislators to change their floor votes is unlikely to be a productive lobbying strategy. However, legislators have substantially more discretion in how they allocate their time, effort, and staff resources across issues. (Hall 1996; Fenno 1973; Sulkin 2005) This discretion, in turn, makes legislators' issue priorities much more amenable to lobbying than their votes. (Austen-Smith 1993; Hall and Wayman 1990; Esterling 2007; Hall and Deardorff 2006) Thus, it is the *intensity* of individual legislators' preferences, rather than the preferences themselves, that lobbying can influence. However, while lobbying activity is associated with the movement of bills through the legislative process and with policy change, (Grossmann and Pyle 2013; Dusso 2010; Baumgartner et al. 2009; Mahoney and Baumgartner 2015) most individual legislators have neither the ability to move their own bills through the legislative process, (Volden and Wiseman 2014) are not able to set the agendas of committees or the floor, (Oleszek 2011) and do not occupy pivotal voting positions (c.f. Krehbiel 1998) they might leverage to gain attention to their issues. Thus, while we know that lobbyists can influence legislators' personal priorities, it is not clear how this influence at the individual level is converted to influence on the fate of legislation.

One potential site of lobbying's influence on lawmaking is at the committee stage. Congressional committees are targeted for and responsive to interest group pressure. Most lobbying efforts occur at the committee stage and target relevant committee members. (Drutman 2010; Hojnacki and Kimball 1998, 1999) In the aggregate, it has been shown repeatedly that lobbyists respond to the policy agendas of congressional committees, such that issue areas on which lobbyists are active are much more likely be those of congressional committees than the issue areas associated economic activity, federal outlays, public salience, and the President's policy priorities. (Leech et al. 2005; Baumgartner et al. 2011; LaPira, Thomas and Baumgartner 2014) This lobbying focus on committees not only makes individual lobbying efforts more successful, (Evans 1996) but also facilitates mutual reputation-building between lobbyists and legislators that leads to long-term partnerships. (Kroszner and Stratmann 1998; Ainsworth 1997; DeGregorio 1997) Once these relationships are established, committees come to rely on signals from

regulated interests - in particular, a lack of conflict between them - as an indication to consider policy changes. (Price 1978) Given the close relationships between interest groups and the committees that cover the areas important to their interests, lobbyist influence is most likely to occur at the committee stage. However, while existing work importantly demonstrates an association between government activity and lobbying, these studies do not suggest a mechanism for this association. Thus, committees are where interest groups' lobbying efforts are most likely to be influential, but at this point it is unclear what lobbying influences in committee, or what factors make lobbying more likely to succeed in doing so.

One part of committee deliberations that may be amenable to lobbying are committees' legislative agendas. The committee stage remains a critical winnowing point in the legislative process, with many bills' ultimate fate being neglect by the committee to which they were referred. (Adler and Wilkerson 2012; Krutz 2005) Key to committee agenda-setting processes are committee chairmen. Granted power over their committee's schedule and the contents of hearings, (Oleszek 2011) committee chairs have the nominal ability to determine which bills are considered in their committee and which are ignored. However, existing research on committee agenda-setting itself focuses on the informational and political constraints committee chairs face in making agenda-setting decisions. Krutz (2005) argues that committee agenda-setting serves to winnow the immense set of bills referred to a committee down to just the few that will move through the legislative process. Given the enormity of such a task, the primary obstacle to effective committee agenda-setting is informational - i.e. how to identify which bills are best for advancing one's policy goals. Under such constraints, chairs employ heuristics - a co-partisan sponsor, signs of costly effort, and cosponsorships - to identify which bills to allow onto the agenda. Evans (2001), rather than examining how committee chairs *identify* their preferred bills, examines the constraints on chairs' ability to *promote* them. The primary such constraint is political: when committee members' preferences on an issue are heterogeneous and intense, it is more difficult for committee leaders to move legislation through the committee. This suggests that the ability to find consensus among committee members is a key skill for effective committee leadership.² Elsewhere (Lorenz 2015), we demonstrate that new committee chairs

²Fleisher and Bond (1983) find that consensus among committee members is key to committees' ability to prevent floor amendments to committee-approved bills. This suggests that committee leaders capable of finding consensus in committee, or who face committees with relatively homogenous or non-intense preferences, are more likely to be able to protect their bills on the floor.

have some discretion to redirect the priorities of their committees towards the issue areas they prioritize. Together, these studies suggest that chairs are active participants in setting their committee's agenda, but are also constrained by limited information and the need to anticipate the policy preferences of downstream legislative actors. To the extent that it can affect chairs' efforts to overcome these constraints, lobbying can influence committee chairs' agenda-setting decisions.

However, lobbying committee chairs is unlikely to succeed. Existing theories of lobbying and persuasion find that lobbyists gain influence by helping legislators overcome a limitation in one of several respects: campaign resources, (Denzau and Munger 1986; Ansolabehere, de Figueiredo and Snyder 2003) information about ongoing policy debates, (Austen-Smith and Wright 1994; Schnakenberg 2017; Hansen 1991) or capacity to work on different legislative issues. (Hall and Deardorff 2006; Bauer, Pool and Dexter 1964; Milbrath 1963) However, in each of these respects, committee chairs are significantly advantaged over other legislators. Indeed, compared to other legislators, chairs generally accrue higher levels of campaign contributions, (Box-Steffensmeier and Grant 1999; Esterling 2007; Fourniaies 2017) have higher levels of expertise, activity, and interest in their committees' issue areas, (Volden and Wiseman 2014) and have separate, additional staff dedicated specifically to chair's needs in committee. (Deering and Smith 1997) Because of these advantages, existing theories of lobbyist influence would generally predict that chairs, compared to other legislators, should be less influenced by individual attempts at lobbying the chair herself. This leaves two possibilities. Perhaps lobbying does not influence committee agenda-setting, and interest groups influence some other aspect of the policy or legislative process. On the other hand, interest group influence on committee agenda-setting may arise from groups' ability to mobilize individual rank-and-file legislators. The question remains, how?

4.2 COMMITTEE AGENDA-SETTING AND THE LOBBYING OF RANK-AND-FILE LEGISLATORS

Building from several assumptions about committee agendas and lobbying, we describe a theory that connects the lobbying of individual legislators to changes in committee agendas. In this theory,

policy-motivated committee chairs infer the value and legislative viability of different proposals before their committee by learning the interests at stake on a given bill. This learning is possible because organizations representing these interests actively lobby legislators on the bill. This lobbying affects how legislators allocate their attention, and thus whether they provide a bill with sustained support as it moves through the legislative process. By appealing to a broad set of legislators, lobbying can build or undermine this supportive coalition and thus affect the likelihood that a bill will make legislative progress. Anticipating this coalition-building, chairs adapt their agenda-setting decisions according to the lobbying taking place on a bill.

Assumptions

We make several important assumptions.³ First, Committee chairs have substantial discretion over some portion of their committee's scarce agenda space. While party leaders do tend to get involved in highly salient issues where the parties diverge, for other issues (and even for technical details of salient or partisan issues) chairs retain substantial control over their committee's agenda.⁴ (Maltzman 1997; Aldrich and Rohde 2001; Berry and Fowler 2015; Adler and Wilkerson 2012; Lorenz 2015; Walker 1977)

Second, legislators, including committee chairs, are policy motivated, especially in the issue areas of their committees' jurisdiction. (Kingdon 1989) Legislators strategically engage in costly work that serves to promote legislation. (Hall 1996; Wawro 2000) Moving legislation through the legislative process not only serves any policy goals a legislator might have, but also allows them to more credibly claim credit with their constituents (Hall 1996) and to develop a reputation for legislative effectiveness that can be a source influence within their chamber. (Fenno 1973; Volden and Wiseman 2014)

Third, once a chair allocates consideration to a bill, the bill only becomes law if several key legislators

³In addition to the common assumption that all actors are rational and thereby intend to make decisions that further their personal objectives, given their incentives and the information they possess. We also assume that lobbying is costly and that chairs can observe which groups are lobbying on a bill prior to making a decision about whether to grant that bill consideration.

⁴Readers familiar with the recent research on Congress might argue that chairs are highly constrained agents of the majority party. Indeed, chairs are now selected primarily for their party loyalty and fundraising ability, (Jenkins and Stewart 2016; Deering and Wahlbeck 2006; Cann 2008, though see also Kellermann and Shepsle 2009) and are rewarded with bill-writing authority to the extent they support party positions. (Bendix 2016) While these may be the case, they do not necessarily imply that committee chairs have no discretion - just that they may be expected to help the collective party enterprise and not create problems that would demand the party leadership's attention.

in both chambers all approve it, as well as the President. To be reported (i.e. passed) from committee to the chamber floor, a bill must secure the approval of a simple majority of committee members (in addition to the committee chair). This can be difficult if the committee is polarized or intensely interested in the bill's issue area. (Evans 2001) In both chambers, the majority party shapes the floor agenda to its' members' benefit. (Cox and McCubbins 2005; Den Hartog and Monroe 2011; Aldrich and Rohde 2001) On the chamber floor, for most bills, pivotal voters' preferences determine whether a bill can lead to a lasting policy change. (Krehbiel 1998) Then the equivalents of all these actors must be satisfied in the other chamber, and the bill must avoid the president's veto. Any one of these actors can unilaterally kill a bill by voting against it at the appropriate stage of the legislative process.

Fourth, committee chairs and other legislators estimate the legislative viability of bills with uncertainty. (Kingdon 1995, 1989; Jones and Baumgartner 2005; Krehbiel 1991; Arnold 1990) Legislators are constantly inundated with information about different public problems and policy alternatives for addressing them. Prioritizing under these conditions is challenging. (Jones and Baumgartner 2005) Even once priorities are set, choosing policy alternatives is difficult for two reasons. First is the disconnect between the language chosen for a bill and the consequences - both material and electoral - of that bill. Second, because legislators generally take positions on legislation they are not directly involved with only after that legislation has been initially put on the legislative agenda, a committee chairman evaluating a bill's prospects for passage must predict the positions and potential opposition among legislators to a bill without being able to observe that opposition prior to granting the bill consideration.

Finally, lobbying may affect the activities of rank-and-file legislators who share the preferences of the interest group or whose reelection depends on satisfying the interests represented by the group. (Esterling 2007; Hall and Wayman 1990; Hojnacki et al. 2012; Austen-Smith 1993; Hall and Deardorff 2006; Austen-Smith and Wright 1994; Hansen 1991; Wright 1990; Kollman 1998) Lobbying manifests as an interaction between lobbyists and the individual legislators they seek to influence. That influence may involve granting the interest group access to the legislator (Hansen 1991; Hall and Lorenz 2015; Kalla and Broockman 2016) or increasing involvement in the group's issues. (Hall and Deardorff 2006; Hall and Wayman 1990; Esterling 2007) The most relevant implication of this is that lobbying can, under

shared preferences and issue priorities, mobilize legislators sharing the group's preferences to more actively support or oppose a bill.

The Committee Chair's Calculus

Given the foregoing assumptions, we can characterize the committee chair C 's decision-making as the allocation of scarce agenda space among bills referred to her⁵ committee. In doing so, she is free to allocate agenda space in order to maximize her own utility. Specifically, C seeks to allocate her committee's agenda across bills $b \in B$ (where B is the set of bills referred to C 's committee) such that she maximizes the utility she expects to gain from her committee's agenda subject to her committee's consideration budget constraint. Thus, she is trying to find $\max \sum_{b \in B} (EU_C(b|Consideration))$, where $EU_C(b|Consideration)$ is the expected utility to the chair from a bill b given that it is granted consideration.

Chairs evaluate bills referred to their committee in order to optimally allocate a budget of committee consideration in a given period. Because the chair, like other legislators, is incentivized to pass valuable legislation and has some discretion over her committee's agenda, she will preferentially allocate the committee's agenda to proposals likely to remit benefits to her directly. However, because the chair's utility is derived from policy *changes* and policy changes require the assent of pivotal legislators at various stages, a chair's valuation of a bill will be conditioned by her assessment of the likelihood that it will pass. Thus, for each $b \in B$, C thus has expected utility: $EU_C(b) = V_C(b) \times Pr_b(Pass|Consideration)$, where $V_C(b)$ is the value of b to C and $Pr_b(Pass|Consideration)$ is the probability that b will pass the chamber, given that C grants it consideration.

Given this utility calculus, the chair's revealed priorities (i.e. her committee's agenda) will be ordered as follows:

- I. Bills where $V_C(b)$ is high and $Pr_b(Pass|Consideration)$ is High.

⁵For clarity in the prose, we refer to committee chairmen with feminine pronouns, lobbyists with male pronouns, and other legislators with the singular or plural "they" and related pronouns.

2. Bills where $V_C(b)$ is high but $Pr_b(Pass|Consideration)$ is Low OR Bill where $Pr_b(Pass|Consideration)$ is high and $V_C(b)$ is positive but low.
3. Bills where $Pr_b(Pass|Consideration)$ and $V_C(b)$ are positive but low.⁶

A chair's agenda-setting decisions depend upon her perception of bills' value ($V_C(b)$) and prospects ($Pr_b(Pass|Consideration)$) with respect to potential topics of committee consideration. Forces that influence $V_C(b)$ and $Pr_b(Pass|Consideration)$ thus influence committee chairs' agenda-setting decisions.

Interest group lobbying may help a committee chair overcome a critical challenge. This challenge is that the chair has incomplete information about bills' legislative viability. The chair, seeking to improve her inferences about the effectiveness of her agenda-setting decisions, will look for cues in the political environment. (Krutz 2005; Simon 1985) Lobbying provides such cues because of how groups select into lobbying. To the extent that lobbying is costly, groups lobby only on issues where they have interests at stake. Groups represent defined (if not necessarily narrow) sets of interests, industries, social groups, and other sub-constituencies. Thus the set of groups lobbying on a bill can be informative about the interests at stake in the bill. The chair has the opportunity to observe lobbying prior to granting a bill consideration, and thus can benefit from this information in doing so.

Lobbying can affect the chair's perception of the probability that a bill will make substantial legislative progress. Lobbying does so by modifying the direction and intensity of rank-and-file legislators' policy preferences. This feeds directly into a bill's legislative viability. To make legislative progress and ultimately pass, a bill needs many individual legislators' sustained efforts and support. In particular, each additional stage of legislative progress requires satisfying at least as broad a range of actors as were required to get to and pass the previous stages.⁷ Because of this, ultimately *passing* a bill requires a potentially very wide range of legislators' simultaneous active support. Lobbying can affect a legislator's intensity of support

⁶ We assume that the chair will exert her agenda power block legislation where $V_C(b)$ is ultimately negative or where $Pr_b(Pass|Consideration)$ equals zero.

⁷This is because at each legislative stage the additional agenda-setter or pivotal voter is either more extreme in their policy preferences than those from previous stages or not. If they are more extreme, it broadens the range of legislators who must be simultaneously satisfied in order to get to and move on from that stage. If the pivotal voter at the latest stage is as or less extreme than others, then getting to and passing that stage requires the same breadth of legislative appeal as did getting through the previous stages.

for legislation to the extent that a lobbyist and target legislator share policy preferences or issue priorities. (Hall and Deardorff 2006; Austen-Smith and Wright 1994; Kingdon 1989) The ability to mobilize many legislators toward one position on a bill affects whether that bill has the broad appeal necessary to pass. Because a chair is incentivized to grant consideration to legislatively viable bills, the influence of lobbyists on the breadth of a bill's appeal affects the chair's calculus in granting that bill initial consideration. Thus, the factors that allow the groups on one side of a bill to appeal to many legislators make those groups more influential over committee chairs' agenda-setting decisions.⁸

Lobbying Side Attributes and Inferring Legislative Viability

Interest group influence does not happen in isolation. In most cases, more than one group is lobbying on a bill at any given time. Groups often clash on particular issues, (Baumgartner et al. 2009; McKay 2012b) thus forming what Baumgartner et al. (2009) refer to as two lobbying "sides" - supporters of a policy proposal ("status quo challengers") and opponents of that proposal ("status quo defenders"). Within a side, interest groups routinely lobby as part of formal or informal coalitions with one another. (Hula 1999; Hojnacki 1997; Phinney 2017) These distinctions between sides are important; recent scholarship has found that interest group policy influence is a function of the attributes of coalitions and sides rather than of individual groups. (Baumgartner et al. 2009; Heaney 2006; Hojnacki et al. 2012; Mahoney and Baumgartner 2015; Nelson and Yackee 2012) This analysis focuses on three such side attributes. The first two attributes - side size and campaign contribution levels - come from prior accounts of how lobbying influences committee action. In contrast to these, the theory developed here contends that chairs benefit from having a reputation for promoting successful legislation. As we describe below, the diversity of the industries and causes favoring (or opposing) a bill can indicate its legislative viability, and thus inform chairs' choices to promote committee agenda-setting. To the extent that each of these attributes weighs on chairs' agenda-setting decisions, their balance across interest group sides is expected to condition a bill's

⁸While they do not ask specifically about legislative viability, Baumgartner et al. (2009) do find that roughly eleven percent of their lobbyist respondents included assessments of the bill's support or opposition among other constituencies or other members of Congress in their arguments in support or opposition to a bill. While not necessary for this study's theory to hold, the fact that lobbyists do use such arguments with some regularity suggests that they believe legislators may be swayed by them.

probability of committee consideration.

Side Attributes: Size

General alignment of interest groups across lobbying sides can have a substantial impact on whether a policy change is adopted. Gilens and Page (2014) find that the balance of interest group alignments between those supporting and those opposing a policy change is an important predictor of policy adoption, even when controlling for the preferences of middle-income citizens and economic elites. This might be because legislators tend to know which individual organizations tend to agree with them on matters of policy, and may follow signals from these groups. (Kingdon 1989) Having a large number of organizations on one side might indicate that side's collective clout or ability to persuade legislators to their cause. Thus, larger sides may be more likely to prevail.

Expectation 1: To the extent that the set of interest groups supporting a bill is larger (i.e. has more groups) than that opposing the bill, the bill is more likely to be granted consideration

However, there are two reasons to doubt that it is sheer numbers that makes a lobbying side effective. First, this assumes that the ability to mobilize a given legislator is equal and/or randomly distributed across group-legislator pairs. This is unlikely to be the case because lobbyists tend to get more access to their allies. (Hall and Deardorff 2006; Hojnacki and Kimball 1998) Second, coordinated coalition work has been shown to be quite costly for individual coalition members. (Hojnacki 1997) It would be counterproductive to engage in coalition work among groups on a side unless that coordination provided benefits beyond what the members could accomplish on their own. Thus, we turn to considering how the composition of a side may inform committee agenda-setting decisions regardless of its raw size.

Side Attributes: Campaign Contributions

One of the most common concerns about the role of organized interests in policymaking is their ability to direct tremendous amounts of money to legislators' campaigns. Campaign contributions can incentivize individual legislators to get involved in issues, (Esterling 2007; Hall and Wayman 1990) to grant access, (Kalla and Broockman 2016) to introduce legislation, (Box-Steffensmeier and Grant 1999)

and, in committee if not on the floor, to win the votes of undecided legislators. (Denzau and Munger 1986; Grier and Munger 1993; Wawro 2001; Witko 2006) Unsurprisingly, they are also coordinated with groups' lobbying activities. (Hojnacki and Kimball 2001; Ansolabehere, Jr and Tripathi 2002) While the relationship between resources and policy success has appeared inconsistent, (Hojnacki et al. 2012) recent evidence suggests that that is because its effects occur at the side-level rather than at the individual level. (McKay 2012a; Baumgartner et al. 2009; Mahoney and Baumgartner 2015) That is, rather than examining the resources of individual groups lobbying on a bill, legislators are believed to compare the campaign resources (among other types of lobbying resources) amassed by interests across both sides of the bill and act according to the balance of these resources.

Expectation 2: To the extent the set of interest groups supporting a bill has higher levels of campaign contributions than that opposing the bill, the bill is more likely to be granted consideration.

Side Attributes: Interest Diversity

Legislators respond to organizations based not just on the characteristics of the organization itself, but on the interests it represents. Each organized interest group represents a subconstituency based around some shared political interest, be it an industry, a demographic group, a local organization, or social cause. Legislators rely on a coalition of subconstituencies in their district to ensure their reelection. (Fenno 1978) Legislators are rewarded for working on the issue areas that matter to these subconstituencies, and grant access to organizations that represent them. (Hansen 1991; Hojnacki and Kimball 1998) However, each group is individually only able to appeal to a subset of legislators this way: i.e. those whose reelection prospects rely on the subconstituencies that the group represents. Thus, individual interest groups are unlikely to influence legislative agendas this way.

A lobbying *side* can collectively overcome this limitation by having a wide range of subconstituencies among its members. We define a lobbying side's "interest diversity" as the number of distinct sub-constituencies represented among its members. For example, consider two interest group sides of a hypothetical healthcare bill: one side consists of three pharmaceutical companies; the other consists of one doctors' association, one health insurance carrier, and one health consumer advocacy group.

While the two sides are of equal size - three organizations - the second side is more diverse because the interests represented by its member groups are more distinct from one another. Focusing on the policy proposals allowed into welfare reform, Phinney (2017) develops a model wherein interest diversity⁹ provides several benefits to an interest group coalition: First, by fostering synergies between the various tactical skills and networks possessed by each member organization; Second, by sending a more heterogeneous, and hence more credible, signal to legislators; Third, because diverse coalitions are harder to maintain than homogeneous ones, the signal they collectively send is costlier and, hence, more credible. Thus, bills favored by a diverse set of interests have the appearance of being "better" bills than those favored by a narrow set, all else equal. Apart from these, the more diverse a lobbying side, the more likely any individual legislator will be to find members of that side that represent important reelection sub-constituencies (Hansen 1991) for them personally, or that will represent a cause or industry that shares their ideological predilections. (see e.g. Bonica 2014) Thus, through both collective and individual-level mechanisms, interest diversity on a side ought to allow that side to appeal to a wide range of legislators.

There is evidence that coalition leaders often foster and promote their coalition's diversity. Both Phinney (2017) and Crosson and Heaney (2016) find that lobbyists actively promote the interest diversity of their coalitions to legislators. To the extent they do so, it means that legislators, including committee chairs, are likely to be made aware of a side's interest diversity. Because the ability to appeal to a wide range of legislators is important for shaping a bill's legislative viability, and interest diversity on a side helps that side appeal to a wide range of legislators, interest diversity is a useful heuristic for chairs assessing the legislative viability of bills. Thus, we expect that to the extent that one lobbying side exhibits more interest diversity than the other, it is more likely to get its preferred outcome in committee agenda-setting.

Expectation 3: To the extent that the set of interest groups supporting a bill is higher in interest diversity than that opposing the bill, the bill is more likely to be granted committee consideration.

⁹The concept of interest diversity discussed here is something of a combination of what Phinney (2017) calls "professional" diversity and "domain" diversity, and is roughly equivalent to what Crosson and Heaney (2016) refer to as "issue" diversity. It does not directly capture the ideological diversity of a coalition, though a side comprised of many different interests is presumably more likely to have variance in policy preferences as well.

4.3 DATA AND RESEARCH DESIGN

Data Sources

To test these expectations, we model the progress of bills through committee as a function of contextual factors as well as attributes of the sets of interest groups taking positions either for (supporters) or against (opponents) it. To capture committee consideration of bills, we use data from the Congressional Bills Project (CBP) and the legislative tracking website Govtrack (www.govtrack.us). We also use the CBP, along with information taken from the Policy Agendas Project (PAP), to account for various contextual factors that are known to impact committee agenda-setting and that interest groups are likely to be aware of when deciding lobbying activity.

Testing the empirical expectations outlined above requires data on interest groups' positions, ideally across many bills. Many lobbying studies rely on data gleaned from reports filed under the Lobby Disclosure Act (LDA). LDA reports contain information about many groups' lobbying activities across issues, and to a certain extent contain information about specific bills lobbied by a reporting group. These are useful for measuring the overall level of interest groups' activity on large numbers of bills (Grossmann and Pyle 2013) or issue areas. (Baumgartner et al. 2011; LaPira, Thomas and Baumgartner 2014; Leech et al. 2005) However, LDA reports do not normally contain information about registrants' positions on a particular bill, making them unsuitable to testing this study's empirical expectations. The second common source of data is to interview or survey lobbyists. (e.g. Baumgartner et al. 2009; Victor 2007; Heinz, Laumann, Nelson and Salisbury 1993, among many others) These can glean nuanced information about groups' positions on bills (or parts of bills), but the high cost of conducting interviews means that they are often limited to small numbers of issues or bills (c.f. Baumgartner and Leech 1998, for a discussion) and they are limited by respondent lobbyists' perspectives and biases. Thus, neither common source of lobbying data is optimal for present purposes.

We introduce new data on the positions taken by organizations on congressional legislation. The non-profit, non-partisan organization Maplight (www.maplight.org) documents the public positions taken by interest groups, advocacy groups, institutions, and firms on specific bills, beginning in the 109th

Congress (2005-2006) and continuing through the present. To perform this documentation, Maplight researchers examine news stories, blogs, websites as well as letters sent by organizations to members of Congress. To date,¹⁰ Maplight has documented 67,827 positions taken by approximately 13,000 organizations on over 5,390 bills introduced during the 109th to 113th Congresses. Each documented position includes the bill number, the organization's name, the organization's industry or cause¹¹, the disposition of the organization on that bill (supporting, opposing, or other¹²), and the citation by which Maplight determined the organization's interest in and position on that bill. We collected these data using Maplight's application programming interface (API).¹³

Sampling

This analysis includes all 4757 regular¹⁴ House (H.R) and Senate (S.) bills during the 109th to 113th Congresses for which Maplight has documented at least one interest group position. These comprise as large a set of "newsworthy"¹⁵ bills as possible rather than a random sample of bills. Maplight data thus has at least one¹⁶ potential issue. This issue is selection on the dependent variable: this analysis models

¹⁰the data used in this paper were collected from Maplight in February 2016.

¹¹These are coded according to an industry/cause taxonomy developed by the Center for Responsive Politics (CRP)

¹²In the analyses reported in this paper, we treat dispositions of "NA" as neutral, an indication of the attention a bill is receiving attention without including that group in either the supporting or opposing side

¹³Maplight data on individual bills has been used in prior political science research that has been focused on individual cases. (Broz 2014; Galantucci 2015; Laposata, Kennedy and Glantz 2014; Moore, Powell and Reeves 2013) The present analysis, as far as we are aware, is the first in political science to use Maplight's entire dataset.

¹⁴While the Maplight dataset includes a number of bills that are appropriations and reauthorization bills, we exclude them from these analyses. For both appropriations and reauthorizations, lobbying is likely to consist of asking for amendments to a planned bill (e.g. a change in a proposed funding level or tweak to an existing program. Thus, while the data include over 5000 bills, these analyses include only about 4700 of them. Appropriations bills were, per the process undertaken by Grossmann and Pyle (2013) identified as including in their bill titles any of the following strings: "making appropriations", "making supplemental appropriations", "emergency supplemental appropriations", "making miscellaneous appropriations", and "supplemental appropriations". Similarly, reauthorization bills were identified by those including the string "reauthorize" in their extended titles. The substantive results reported in this paper are robust to including either set of bills, or both, in the model.

¹⁵Maplight describes its process for selecting bills for research as follows (<http://maplight.org/us-congress/guide/data/support-opposition>, retrieved March 28, 2016.): "Our research team has gathered support/opposition data for thousands of bills to date. We gather this data for newsworthy bills: bills that move forward in Congress or that are mentioned in the news or blogs. We do not research support/opposition for ceremonial bills (such as naming post offices)."

¹⁶A second concern stems from the fact that the extent of bill coverage in Maplight's data has changed over time. The number of bills for which Maplight collected interest groups' bill positions started very small in the 109th Congress (before Maplight's predecessor began focusing resources on collecting data for Congress) and has since stayed at about 9 percent of bills actually introduced before Congress during this period. This may be due to there simply being more bills garnering the attention Maplight uses to identify organizations' positions in later years. More likely is that it may be due to potential variation in the resources Maplight had available for bill position research at different points in time. Regardless, it is possible

the progress of bills through committee, but progress through committee is itself one (sufficient but not necessary) criterion by which Maplight selects bills for research. Indeed, the CBP reports that while only 7 percent of bills in the 109th to 113th Congresses received consideration in committee in their chamber of origin, about 21 percent of bills with group positions documented by Maplight over the same time period were reported from committee. Sample selection procedures correlated with the dependent variable tend to attenuate causal effect estimates. (King, Keohane and Verba 1994) This attenuation suggests, all else equal, that the true effects of interest group lobbying side composition on committee agenda-setting may be larger than those indicated by the results of the analysis presented here.

The Dependent Variable: Committee Consideration

My theory concerns the allocation of consideration to bills in committee. Recent empirical studies of lawmaking have relied on legislative progress variables included in the Congressional Bills Project (CBP) dataset. The CBP dataset contains a pair of variables¹⁷ indicating whether the bill was reported by a committee in each chamber. As a baseline, we collected for each bill whether the CBP indicates that a committee in the bill's chamber of origin *Reported* the bill. However, whether or not a bill is reported from committee is an imprecise measure of whether it was "considered" by the committee. A committee having reported the bill indicates that the chair granted the bill a vote, and that a majority of committee members voted to report the bill favorably. A bill being reported thus indicates that it was both considered and approved.

Committee action prior to reporting a bill also indicates that the committee chair has granted the bill costly agenda space. Prior to reporting, bills may be granted hearings (where witness testimony, usually from representatives of interest groups and relevant firms) and markups (sessions where amendments to the bill are considered). We focus on markups, because the act of holding a markup implies that

that some Congresses have better data than others, in ways that introduce unpredictable biases into the analyses presented here. In order to ensure that the results reported below are robust to such temporal variation in data quality, we reestimated every model reported below on iterative subsamples, each excluding one Congress (i.e. first rerunning the models with observations from the 109th Congress removed, then running the models with observations from the 110th Congress removed, etc.). The results reported below are robust to these tests.

¹⁷In the June 2015 version of the dataset, these variables are "reporth" and "reports" for whether the bill was reported from a House committee or a Senate committee, respectively.

the chair has decided to allow the bill to tentatively move forward. (Evans 2001; Oleszek 2011) It is the most definitive indication, prior to a report, that a bill is on the committee agenda. To collect which bills have received markup, we used web scraping to gather records of bills' legislative progress compiled by Govtrack. These include, for each committee to which a bill was referred, whether the committee held markups on or reported the bill. For each bill, if any full committee in the bill's chamber of origin marked-up the bill, we recorded the bill as having received a *Markup*. Similarly, if any full committee in the bill's chamber of origin reported the bill, we recorded the bill as having received *Reporting* from committee. To capture whether a bill received either form of consideration, we construct a combined *Markup or Reporting* variable.¹⁸ The four variables that measure committee consideration - *Reported (CBP)*, *Markup (Govtrack)*, *Reporting (Govtrack)*, and *Markup or Reporting (Govtrack)* - are highly but not perfectly correlated (the minimum correlation between them is $r = 0.72$). We estimate my primary model on each of these measures.

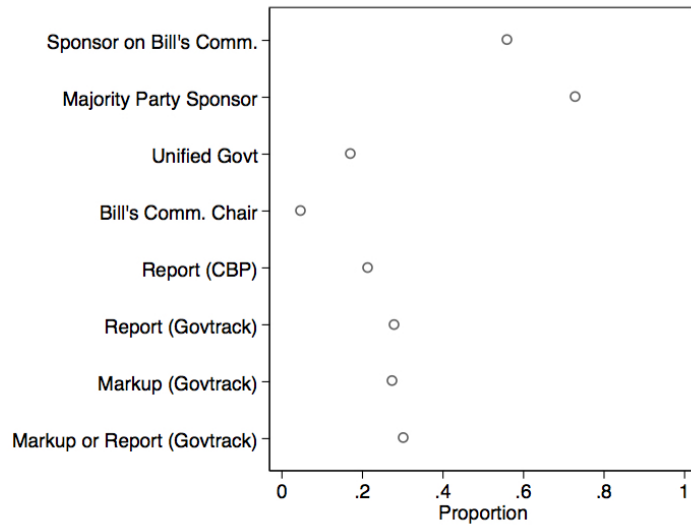
Independent Variables: Lobbying Side Attributes

This study, in line with recent work on interest group influence, argues that attributes of the sets of organizations lobbying for and against a bill are associated with its progress through committee. These attributes are the side's size, campaign contributions, and, as predicted from this study's theory, interest diversity. For PAC contributions and interest diversity, rather than measuring attributes of the specific organizations themselves, we examine their effects at the "interest" level - that is, not the specific organization, but the industry or cause it represents. There are 430 industries and causes within the CRP taxonomy.¹⁹ Descriptive statistics for these variables are depicted in Figure 4.1 and presented in full in Table 4.3 in the Appendix.

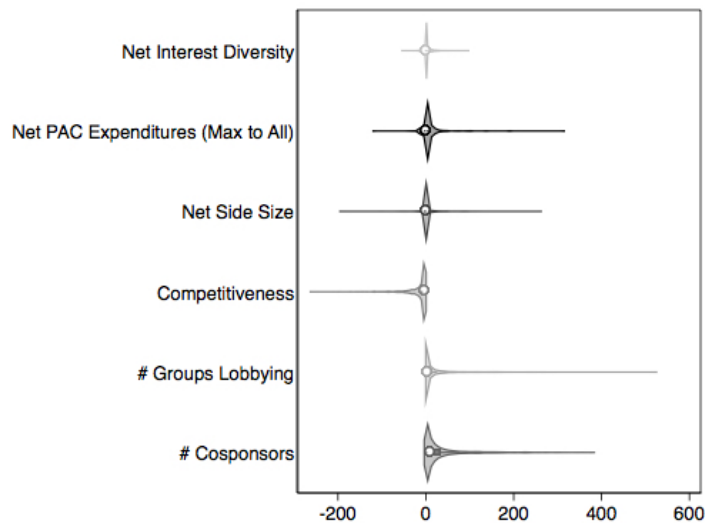
¹⁸In practice, a bill going to markup is highly though not perfectly correlated with it being reported ($r = 0.88$).

¹⁹The Center for Responsive Politics (CRP) has developed a detailed taxonomy of "interest groups", allocating organizations to sectors (e.g. Healthcare vs. Agriculture), subsectors (e.g. Building Trade Unions vs. Transportation Unions, within the "Labor" sector) and finally the specific cause or industry (e.g. Foreign Policy Hawks vs. Foreign Policy Doves, within the "Foreign & Defense Policy" subsector, within the "Ideology/Single Issue" sector); the most specific of these is coded as the organization's "interest group". For more information about these codes and how CRP assigns them to campaign contributions in particular, we refer the interested reader to CRP's methodology page (<http://www.opensecrets.org/industries/methodology.php>, accessed August 19th, 2016). Maplight applies these codes to the organizations that it finds positions for, according to the particular organization's reasons for lobbying a particular bill. More information can be found on its bill positions API page (<http://maplight.org/apis/bill-positions>, access August 19th, 2016)

Figure 4.1: Descriptive Statistics



(a) One-way plots of means of dichotomous variables



(b) Violin plot of continuous variables

Net Supporters' Side Size. mean 6.234 sd 21.722. This variable is simply the number of organizations identified as supporting the bill minus the number identified as having opposed it. Expectation 1 holds that when one side is comprised of more individual organizations than another, the side with more organizations lobbying is expected to win.²⁰

²⁰At the same time, including this variable allows me to disentangle the number of groups lobbying on a bill from the number of *interests* lobbying on a bill. There is an obvious relationship between the number of groups on a side and its diversity. Namely, a side's interest diversity is also its minimum size: thus, to an extent an interest group side is diverse, it is also large, but there are large coalitions that are not diverse.

Net Supporters' Campaign Contributions - \$2,675,000 increments. mean 3.344, sd 14.320. Expectation 2 holds that to the extent that the organizations supporting a bill represent interests with higher levels of campaign contributions than those of organizations opposing the bill, the bill is more likely to receive committee consideration. Using the interest group codes assigned by Maplight to each organization in its bill positions data, we tally the total PAC contributions of each code appearing on a side, from the election cycle during which the bill in question was introduced.²¹ Then, to measure the relative advantage of the bill's supporters over their opponents, we simply net the opponents' total contributions out of supporters' total contributions. Thus, negative values of this variable indicate that the opposing interests gave more contributions than supporting interests. For ease of presentation, we scale the variable in increments of \$2,675,000. This is the number of voting members of Congress (535) multiplied by the maximum an individual PAC can give to an individual candidate in a single election cycle (\$5000).²² Thus, a one-unit increase in this variable is equivalent to one additional interest (i.e. industry or cause) supporting a bill giving the maximum contribution allowable (from a single PAC) to every member of Congress.

Net Supporters' Interest Diversity. mean 3.153, sd 8.948. Expectation 3 holds that if a side's interest diversity rather than its size that makes it able to appeal to a wide range of legislators. In the Maplight data, each organization on each side of a bill is given an interest group category code from the CRP taxonomy of industries and issue causes. To measure the diversity of an interest group side, we identify the number of unique such codes on a side. Thus, to return to the earlier example a side composed of three pharmaceutical companies (all of which have the same "interest group code") has an interest diversity score of 1, while a side composed of one health insurer, one doctor's association, and one healthcare consumer

²¹Two issues arise with counting this data. The first is that many organizations from the same industry or cause (and therefore having the same interest group code) might line up on one side of a bill. In these cases, we double count (or triple count, if the code appears three times on a side, etc.) the contributions from that code. The second issue is that sometimes members of an industry or cause are split on a particular bill. Because we include that code's contributions on both sides, they effectively cancel each other out in the "Net PAC Contributions" measure. By double-counting potentially unevenly split interests, we account for the relative weight of that code's organizations among those lobbying for and against the bill.

²²For additional context, according to the CRP, in the 2013-2014 cycle only four PACs gave \$2,675,000 or more to federal candidates, even including affiliate PACs (e.g. the state affiliates of national organizations) and individual contributions from employees of the PAC, which are not counted against the PAC's limit. The four PACs in question were those affiliated with the National Association of Realtors, the National Beer Wholesalers Association, Honeywell International, and the National Auto Dealers Association.

advocacy group (all of which have different codes) would have an interest diversity score of 3. To discern the advantage or disadvantage in interest diversity that a bill's supporting organizations have relative to the bill's opposing organizations, we subtract the latter from the former, producing a net interest diversity score. Thus, a one-unit increase in this variable means, all else equal, that the supporting organizations gained one additional industry or cause on their side.

Controlling for Circumstances that Generate Diverse Coalitions

Coalition diversity does not arise randomly across issues. Phinney (2017) finds that interest diversity is more likely to arise when issues exhibit three characteristics: One, high salience to lawmakers, interest groups and the general public; Two, uncertainty about the bill's policy effects and political consequences; and Three, a highly competitive debate over the issue where there is opposition but the sides are close enough that a new member on either side might tip the scales. Because these factors are known to be associated with both policy success and interest diversity, they are potential confounds to any estimated relationship between them. If these are also correlated with committee advancement, then they may confound any estimated association between interest diversity and committee agenda-setting. To the extent possible, we control for them to avoid this potential omitted variable bias.²³

Interest Group Competitiveness: $|\# \text{ of Supporters} - \# \text{ of Opponents}|$. mean -9.424, sd 20.54. Interest groups are more likely to join coalitions working on a proposal when the probability that their participation will determine the success or failure of the proposal is higher. We capture this dynamic by determining how close the number of organizations on each side of a bill is to that on the other side. Specifically, we subtract the number of opponents from the number of supporters, take the absolute value of that difference, and then multiply that absolute value by -1. The resulting quantity is a non-positive

²³Readers may notice that, though "political or policy uncertainty" is a factor encouraging interest diversity, we do not control for it in the models reported below. There is to the best of my knowledge no common way of measuring this across many different issue areas. In various robustness tests, we used the bill's number as a rough estimate of this uncertainty: while some bills introduced in many Congresses have some reason to keep a specific number, many do not. Thus, a lower bill number, e.g. "H.R. 70" is likely to be a carryover from a previous Congress, while a bill with a high number, e.g. "H.R. 6500" is more likely to be a new introduction. If one makes the assumption that bills that have been sponsored over multiple Congress are more widely understood than new bills, then it is possible to take a bill's number as an indication of the relative certainty around that bill. Regardless of the validity of this assumption, when bill number was included in the models presented below it was, in each case, substantively negligible and statistically insignificant.

number that captures how closely matched the two sides are: if the supporters or opponents greatly outnumber the other side, then this number will be very negative; as the number of supporters and opponents converge, this quantity gets closer to zero. Bills with evenly matched (and thus maximally competitive) lobbying sides have a value of zero for this variable.

Interest Group Salience: Total # of Groups Lobbying. mean 12.538, sd 25.815. To measure this, we examine the total number of organizations lobbying on the bill, summing the number of supporters, the number of opponents, and the number of groups that Maplight registered as lobbying on a bill but could not identify a specific position on the bill. Controlling for interest group salience serves several functions in the analyses presented here. First, the more salient an issue is among interest groups, the more likely it is to generate lobbying from a wide range of actors. (Phinney 2017) Thus, salience among interest groups is an important predictor of the diversity of each lobbying side, and thus may confound any relationship between interest diversity and bill progress. Second, this variable accounts for Grossmann and Pyle's (2013) argument that the number of groups lobbying on a bill increases that bill's probability of legislative advancement, a possible confound to any association we find between lobbying side attributes and legislative advancement. Finally, this variable accounts for potential reverse causation²⁴ in the model. Grossmann and Pyle (2013) find that more groups lobby a bill that advances through the legislative process. Including this variable in my model allows me a somewhat larger measure of certainty about the causal direction of any observed association between lobbying side attributes and legislative advancement.

²⁴There are potential concerns about reverse causality between net interest diversity and committee consideration. Such concerns would hold that, as a bill moves through the legislative process, not only do more organizations begin actively lobbying on the bill (which I control for), but that more *categories* of interests would begin lobbying on the bill, and that new entering categories would consistently support the bill. If true, this would introduce endogeneity into the models analyzed here and bias the coefficient estimates on net interest diversity; in turn, this would threaten the validity of inferences drawn about the causal relationship between net interest diversity and committee consideration. Previous work has shown that bills that move further in the legislative process attract more organizations lobbying on them, necessitating that I control for the number of groups lobbying on the bill. However, there is, to date, no evidence that this results in consistently more *categories* of groups lobbying on, let alone that late-entry categories of interest groups would consistently favor, bills that move further through the legislative process. Indeed, assuming that this were the case requires that a bill moving through the legislative process effectively becomes more relevant to, and supported by, a wider range of industries and social groups simply because it is clearing stages of the legislative process and *irrespective of the contents of the bill itself*. This might hold in some specific cases, but it is far less clear that it should hold systematically. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that net diversity of the organizations lobbying on a bill, if not their number, is for the most part constant across the legislative process

Factors that make a Bill More Likely to Advance

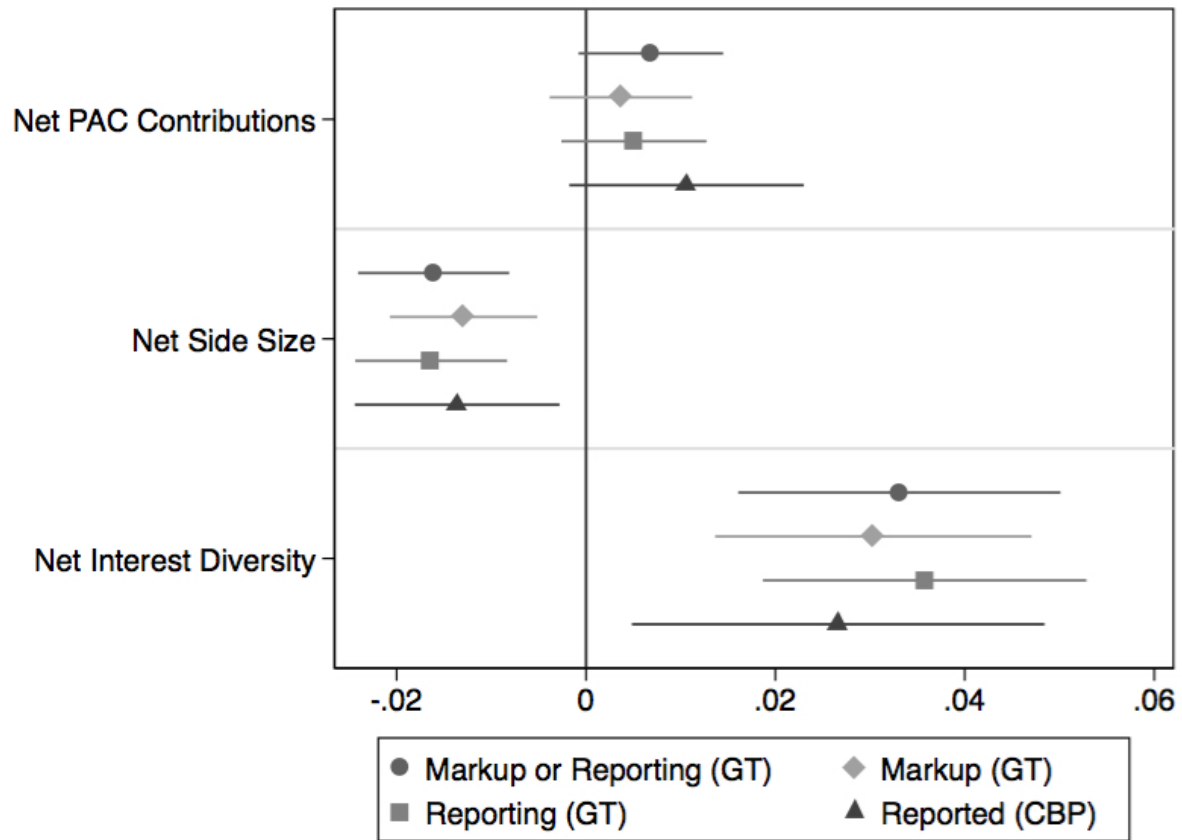
There are common institution- and sponsor- level factors that make a bill more likely to receive committee consideration. As strategic actors and close observers of the legislative process, lobbyists are likely to understand these factors and direct lobbying toward bills that are more likely to make legislative progress. Controlling for these is thus necessary for avoiding omitted variable bias. We include an indicator of whether the sponsor was a *Majority Party Member* of their chamber, indicators of whether they were a *Committee Member* or *Committee Chair* for the bill's committee of referral. These are all factors that are commonly found to be associated with a bill's advancement, particularly through committee. (Krutz 2005; Evans 2001; Grossmann and Pyle 2013) We also include a *Committee Member x Majority Party Member* interaction effect. A bill's ability to garner a large *Number of Cosponsors*, collected from Govtrack, is also a potential signal of its broad support, and thus is not only a potential predictor of lobbying on a bill but also a potential confound of any relationship between interest diversity and committee advancement. (Wilson and Young 1997) We measure *Unified Government* with a dichotomous indicator for whether the Congress in question featured control of the House, the Senate, and the White House by the same party. A bill's *Issue Area* is indicated using the Policy Agendas Project's major topic code, and its *Congress* is a factor variable indicating the Congress in which the bill was introduced.

Empirical Models

We employ mixed effects logistic regression models to assess the relationship between lobbying side attributes and committee considerations, accounting for variation at the Congress and Issue Area levels. Based on modeling advice from Clark and Linzer (2015), Gelman and Hill (2006) and Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal (2012), we present results from a model that includes fixed effects by Congress and random effects by Issue Area. Thus, individual bills are nested within issue areas, and we also account for varying propensities to consider legislation across time.²⁵

²⁵We have also estimated the models under a variety of different modeling assumptions; these include single-level logit models with and without clustered standard errors, probit and mixed probit models, mixed logit models with legislator-level random effects, and a multilevel logit with bills nested within legislators (i.e. their sponsors), again where bills are nested in

Figure 4.2: Coefficients of Key Predictor Variables, Across Measurements of Committee Consideration



This graph presents point estimates (with 95% confidence intervals represented by solid lines) from the four models of committee consideration for the three main coefficients of interest - Net PAC Contributions, Net Side Size, and Net Interest Diversity. The graph demonstrates that results for the two coefficients of interest are similar across the four models.

4.4 RESULTS

The results of the models appear in Table 4.1. In Table 4.1, each column presents the estimated coefficients of a mixed effects logistic regression model in which the same set of covariates are estimated as a model of a *different* measurement of committee consideration, as discussed above. These measurements are: in Model 1, *Markup or Reporting (Govtrack)*; in Model 2, *Markup (Govtrack)*; in Model 3, *Reporting (Govtrack)*; and in Model 4, *Reported (CBP)*. Across all tables, logit coefficients are shown with standard errors. Figure 4.2 shows that, despite using different measures of the dependent variable, the point

both legislators and issue areas, and finally where bills were nested within legislators, issue areas, and congresses. All models produced substantively similar results. Thus, we maintain the most parsimonious strategy that still explicitly models the issue-level variation in the data: a mixed logit regression with issue-level random effects and Congress (i.e. year) fixed effects.

Table 4.1: Lobbying and Committee Consideration of Legislation

Committee Consideration Data Source	(1) Markup or Report Govtrack	(2) Markup Govtrack	(3) Reporting Govtrack	(4) Reported CBP
Net Interest Diversity	0.0331*** (0.00868)	0.0303*** (0.00852)	0.0358*** (0.00872)	0.0266* (0.0111)
Net PAC Contributions (\$2.675mil increments)	0.00686 (0.00390)	0.00368 (0.00384)	0.00506 (0.00391)	0.0106 (0.00632)
Net # of Supporters	-0.0163*** (0.00408)	-0.0129** (0.00397)	-0.0164*** (0.00409)	-0.0136* (0.00552)
# Groups Lobbying on Bill	0.0219*** (0.00398)	0.0192*** (0.00373)	0.0169*** (0.00371)	0.0127** (0.00391)
Competitiveness: (- Net # of Supporters)	0.0181*** (0.00521)	0.0153** (0.00495)	0.0122* (0.00492)	0.0110 (0.00572)
# of Cosponsors	-0.000845 (0.000738)	0.000166 (0.000729)	-0.000877 (0.000748)	-0.00203* (0.000879)
Minority Party Committee Member	1.177*** (0.196)	1.172*** (0.197)	1.188*** (0.203)	1.113*** (0.234)
Majority Party Non-Committee Member	1.236*** (0.172)	1.199*** (0.173)	1.267*** (0.178)	0.844*** (0.209)
Majority Party Committee Member	2.516*** (0.164)	2.327*** (0.165)	2.461*** (0.171)	2.282*** (0.196)
Sponsor is Committee Chair	0.112 (0.161)	0.154 (0.161)	0.185 (0.161)	-0.392 (0.225)
Unified Government	1.327*** (0.333)	1.037** (0.325)	1.371*** (0.327)	5.214*** (0.453)
Constant(bill-level)	-3.061*** (0.225)	-3.085*** (0.226)	-3.269*** (0.228)	-6.784*** (0.403)
Random Effect: Major Topic Code	0.431** (0.154)	0.429** (0.154)	0.404** (0.145)	0.468** (0.173)
Congress Fixed Effects?	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	4757	4757	4757	4757

Standard errors in parentheses. Each column (other than the first, which contains variable names) presents the results of a mixed effects logit model with major-topic code random effects. The columns differ by their dependent variable and its source. The dependent variables for Columns 1-3 were scraped from the legislative tracking site govtrack.us; the dependent variable for Column 4 is taken from the Congressional Bills Project (CBP). Column 1 is a model of the bill being granted a markup or being reported. Column 2 is a model of the bill receiving a markup. Column 3 and Column 4 are models of the bill being reported from a committee in its chamber of origin. The models presented here indicate that: the net number of unique interests supporting a bill (i.e. their "interest diversity" relative to the bill's opponents) is consistently and positively associated with committee consideration of a bill; the relative advantage of PAC contributions (here in \$2.675mil increments, since that is the maximum contribution - \$5000- that can be given by a PAC to a member of Congress per cycle, multiplied by the number of members of Congress - 535) among interests supporting a bill is not strongly associated with committee consideration; and that the relative size of the side supporting a bill is negatively associated with committee consideration of that bill. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

estimates for the three main coefficients - *Net Supporters' Campaign Contributions*, *Net Supporters' Side Size*, and *Net Supporters' Interest Diversity* - in each model fall well within the 95% confidence interval of the other point estimates of that coefficient across models. Thus, we can conclude that the inferences one can draw from the model, at least about the variables of interest, are likely not to be a product of measurement of the dependent variable. While subsequent discussion refers to all models (since the results across them are by and large very similar), the graphical representations presented here will be based on the results of Model 1.

The inferences these results suggest are in some ways counterintuitive. Contrary to expectations, the size of a supportive coalition relative to the opposing coalition (*Net # of Supporters*) is consistently *negatively* associated with groups' ability to move bills out of committee. Across all models,²⁶ the coefficient of Net Side Size is negative and statistically significant. Figure 4.3 displays the marginal predicted probability over the range of values of Net Side Size, for Model 1 of Table 4.1. In Model 1, a shift in Net Side Size from one standard deviation below the mean to one standard deviation above the mean is associated with a 10.8% decrease in the probability that a bill receives committee consideration (when all other variables are at their means). These results complicate existing theories that the size of a lobbying coalition helps it attain its policy preferences, and demonstrate that the noted costs to individual groups of coalition activities (Hojnacki 1997; Hula 1999) may have consequences for the coalition's legislative success.

Furthermore, contrary to the expectation of much public and elite discourse on money in politics, the direct impact of campaign contributions on committee agendas appears to be potentially positive, but both inconsistent and substantively negligible; Figure 4.3 displays the predicted probability of committee consideration (markup or reporting), in Model 1 of Table 4.1, over the range of values of Net PAC Contributions. The coefficient on Net PAC Contributions is marginally not statistically significant ($0.05 < p < 0.10$) across all models. At the same time, even if the impact of campaign contributions on committee agenda-setting were more consistent, the results here suggest any effect is very small. The

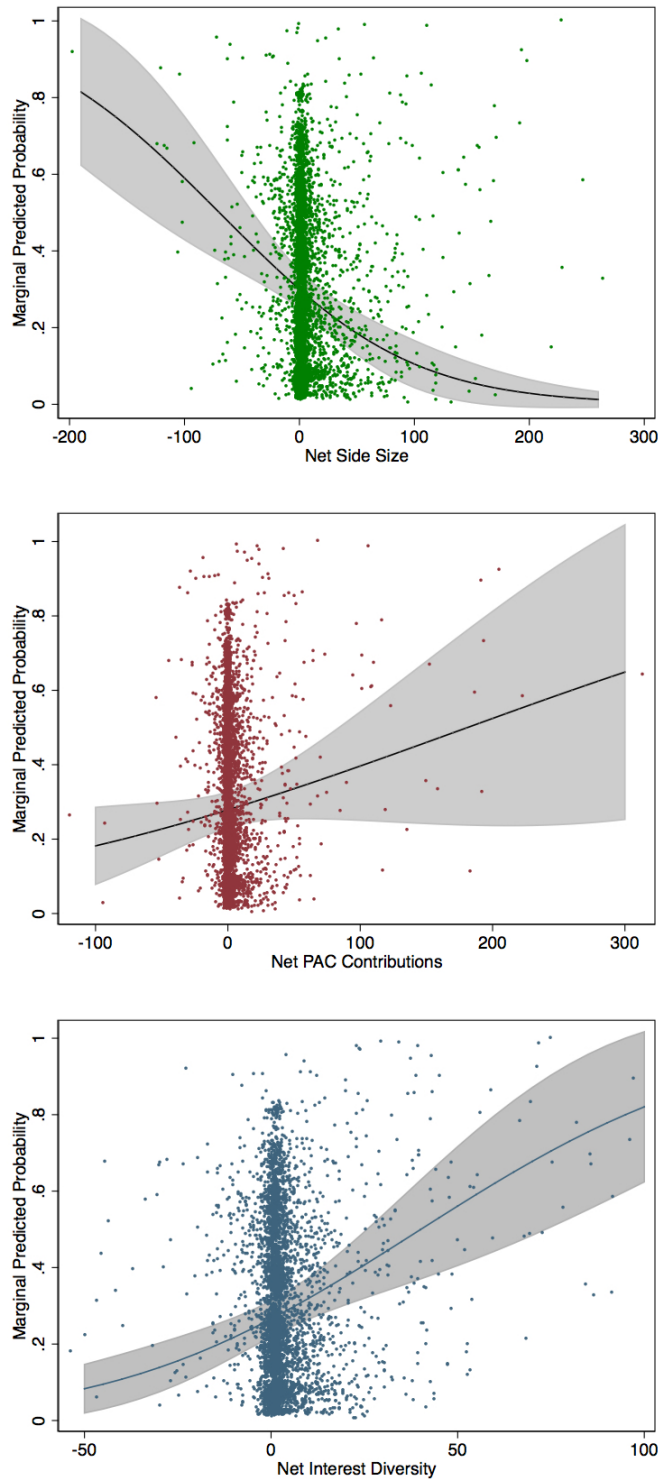
²⁶This result is robust to alternative model specifications. It holds not only in the four models presented here, but in models iteratively excluding one Congress, and models excluding all other lobbying-related variables, and in many alternate model specifications.

coefficient on PAC contributions is by far the smallest lobbying-related coefficient across all models. This result is particularly surprising given the scale of the *Net PAC Contributions* variable: each one-unit increase in this variable represents giving the *maximum* single-PAC contribution to *every* single member of Congress. These results are consistent with the existing literature's mixed evidence of a relationship between contributions and legislative outcomes. Indeed, they suggest that the immediate impact of money in congressional agenda-setting either happens at a different point in the policy process, works by a different mechanism than informing the chair's beliefs about legislative viability, or is dependent on context.

On the other hand, interest diversity is robustly and positively associated with committee agenda-setting across all models. While prior work has found that interest diversity among a coalition arises under certain conditions (Phinney 2017), and that leaders of coalitions actively advertise the diversity of their coalitions to lawmakers (Phinney 2017, Heaney and Crosson 2016), this analysis is the first to show that, over a wide range of bills, relatively high diversity among a bill's supporters (compared to its opponents) is associated with that bill's legislative advancement. Model 1 estimates that, with other variables at their means, a shift from one standard deviation below mean Net Interest Diversity to one standard deviation above mean Net Interest Diversity is associated with a 9.3% increase in the probability that the bill will be granted some form of committee consideration. Given that a one-standard deviation shift in Net Interest Diversity is 8.9 unique industry/cause codes, while a standard deviation shift in Net Side Size is 21.9 organizations, this suggests that the ability to add diversity to an interest group side without significantly increasing the number of organizations on that side is a net benefit for the coalition in question, at least in terms of its ability to gain a bill committee consideration.

We also find that some conditions that lead to interest diversity also have independent associations with committee consideration. The total *Number of Groups Lobbying* on a bill is positively and statistically significantly associated with committee consideration. As Grossmann and Pyle (2013) discuss, this could mean either that there remain unaccounted for attributes of lobbying sides that make them influential on bills' legislative advancement, or that bills that gain committee consideration attract more groups lobbying on them. Except in the model of committee reporting based on the CBP data, Interest

Figure 4.3: Party Status Differences in Marginal Effects of Lobbying Side Variables



This graph presents the marginal predicted probability of committee consideration across the range of values of Net Side Size, Net PAC Contributions, and Net Interest Diversity, using the model of Committee Markup or Reporting presented in Model 1 of Table 4.1. The line represents the average marginal predicted probability at a given level of each independent variable, and the shaded area represents the 95% confidence interval around that estimate.

Group Competitiveness is found to be positively and statistically significantly associated with committee consideration. These results complicate the negative coefficients on Net Side Size, since they are both manipulations of that variable²⁷ However, if one additional group joined the coalition supporting a bill, it would still (in expectation) lead to a net decrease in the probability of committee consideration of that bill, all else equal.²⁸ Taken together, these results suggest that factors that generate interest diversity have separate impacts on committee consideration apart from their ability to incentivize interest diversity; if so, interest diversity would be a partial mediator of the relationship(s) between salience (and competitiveness) and committee consideration.

Estimated coefficients for other controls largely track with existing models of committee consideration. *# of Cosponsors* is statistically non-significant in most models (except receiving a committee report in the CBP data), varies in sign across them, and is a substantively weak effect regardless. *Majority Party Status*, *Committee Membership*, and the interaction thereof are all positive, large, and statistically significant associations. If the *Sponsor is the Chair* of the bill's committee of referral, it appears to not have a consistent association with committee consideration. Conditions of *Unified Government* also tend to make bills during those congresses more likely to receive committee consideration.

Taken together, the results suggest that interest groups play an important role in committee agenda-setting decisions. A very diverse coalition supporting a bill will not overcome majority party legislators' and/or committee members' institutional advantages in getting their bills on the committee's agenda. Instead it is more likely that lobbying plays a role in deciding which majority or committee member bills are likely to be considered. However, though these results are in and of themselves new and in some ways counterintuitive, they do not yet evince this study's theory: that the chair's need to assess legislative viability generates conditions under which interest groups can be influential on committee agenda-setting. To assess this, we turn next to the role of institutional alignments and prerogatives in

²⁷Though it is true that Competitiveness and Number of Groups Lobbying are highly correlated with Net Side Size, the coefficients on Net Side Size remain negative, statistically significant, and approximately the same size when these variables are removed.

²⁸This is a function of summing the coefficients, given how a one-unit change in the number of organizations supporting a bill would affect each variable. A one-organization increase in bill supporters is a one-unit increase in Net Side Size and the Total Number of Groups Lobbying the bill, but a one-unit *decrease* in the measure of Competitiveness. Based on the results of Model One, the resulting change to the log odds of committee consideration would be approximately -0.012 ($= -0.016 + 0.022 - 0.018$).

conditioning interest group influence.

4.5 ANTICIPATED LEGISLATIVE VIABILITY AS THE MECHANISM

This analysis finds that interest group lobbying influences committee agenda-setting because it informs the chair about when bills are legislatively viable. However, up to this point we have only tested whether variation in sides' size, campaign contributions, and interest diversity are associated with committee consideration. Here, we test whether the associations between these factors and committee consideration change with the underlying legislative viability of bills. To the extent that these factors matter more for bills that have a more uncertain (i.e. neither guaranteed to be considered nor guaranteed to be neglected) legislative viability, it supports this study's contention that the chair's need to anticipate legislative viability creates conditions for interest group influence.

We focus on two factors that make bills more or less legislatively viable. These are: First, the party status of the bill's sponsor; and Second, the partisan alignment between the chambers of Congress and the White House. In the contemporary Congress, the majority party has very strong agenda-setting powers in both chambers. (Cox and McCubbins 1993, 2005; Den Hartog and Monroe 2011) My initial results confirm that majority-party legislators' bills are much more likely to be considered in committee than those minority-party legislators. However, majority-party status alone is not a sufficient predictor of committee consideration: committee agendas include only a fraction of bills referred to the committee, even among those bills sponsored by majority party members. In fact, only about a third of majority-sponsored bills (1455 out of 3930) in my data received no committee consideration, while a mere 12 percent (147 of 1460) of minority-sponsored bills were considered.²⁹ Because chairs care about bills' viability, they will examine majority-party members' bills for indications that a bill is legislatively viable relative to other majority party bills. The theory presented above argues that lobbying side attributes can inform the chair of a bill's legislative viability. Thus, the association between lobbying side attributes and committee consideration is likely to be stronger for majority-sponsored bills than minority-sponsored

²⁹Readers might be interested to know that, among bills sponsored by majority-party legislators who are members of the bill's committee, about one-half are granted consideration.

bills.

We also consider the role of institutional alignments among the chambers of Congress and the White House as a moderator for interest group influence on committee agendas. Divided government generally makes it harder - though crucially, not impossible - to pass new legislation. (e.g Mayhew 1991; Kelly 1993; Howell et al. 2000; Maltzman and Shipan 2008; Binder 1999) This is because under divided government and ideological sorting between the parties, the ideological distance between pivotal voters across the stages of the legislative process tends to be larger. In such situations, indications that a bill can appeal to a wide range of legislators including lobbying side attributes, ought to matter more because making legislative progress is more difficult. However, because the majority party in each chamber will still prefer their chamber's majority-party members' bills, we expect that the effects of unified and divided government are primarily constrained to majority party members within each chamber.

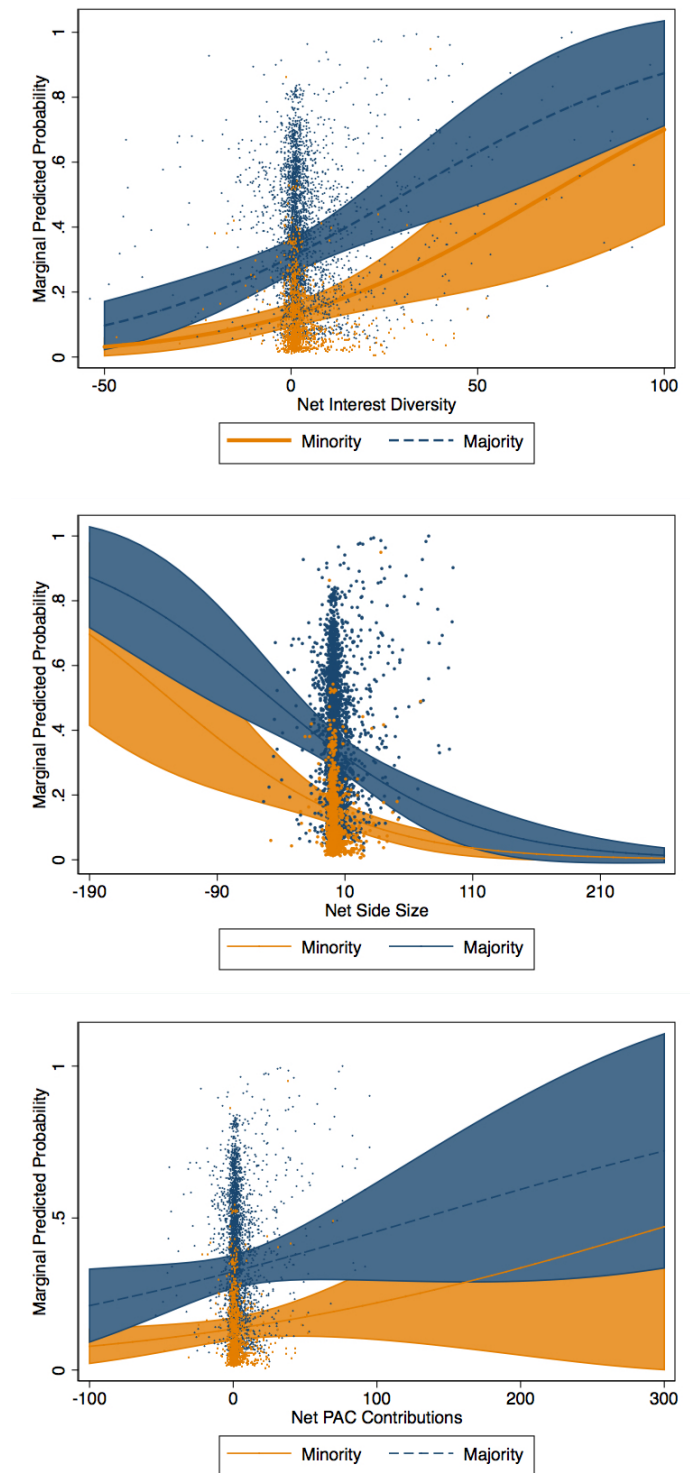
We test these hypotheses in two ways. First, we plot the marginal predicted probability of Consideration³⁰ over the range of values of each independent variable, by whether the sponsor is a member of the majority or minority party. These plots appear in Figure 4.4. They show a clear distinction between majority and minority party members, not just in their predicted probability of consideration, but in the slope of each lobbying side attribute's association with the predicted probability of consideration. For both Net Side Size and Net Interest Diversity, majority party-sponsored bills have larger associated marginal change in the predicted probability of consideration. Thus, for majority party members, increasing interest diversity while minimizing increases in coalition size is especially useful. For minority-sponsored bills under normal conditions, the association keeps the same sign but loses statistical significance. Under normal conditions, PAC contributions do not have a stronger association with committee consideration for either majority- or minority party members.

Second, we reestimate the original model³¹ on various subsamples of the data. Each subsample varies by sponsor party status (Majority, Minority, or Both) and institutional alignment (Unified Government, Divided Government, or Both). Figure 4.5 summarizes the coefficients (and 95% confidence intervals)

³⁰Here, we use the results from Model 1 of Table 4.1, where the dependent variable is Committee Consideration (Markup or Reporting) as measured by Govtrack.

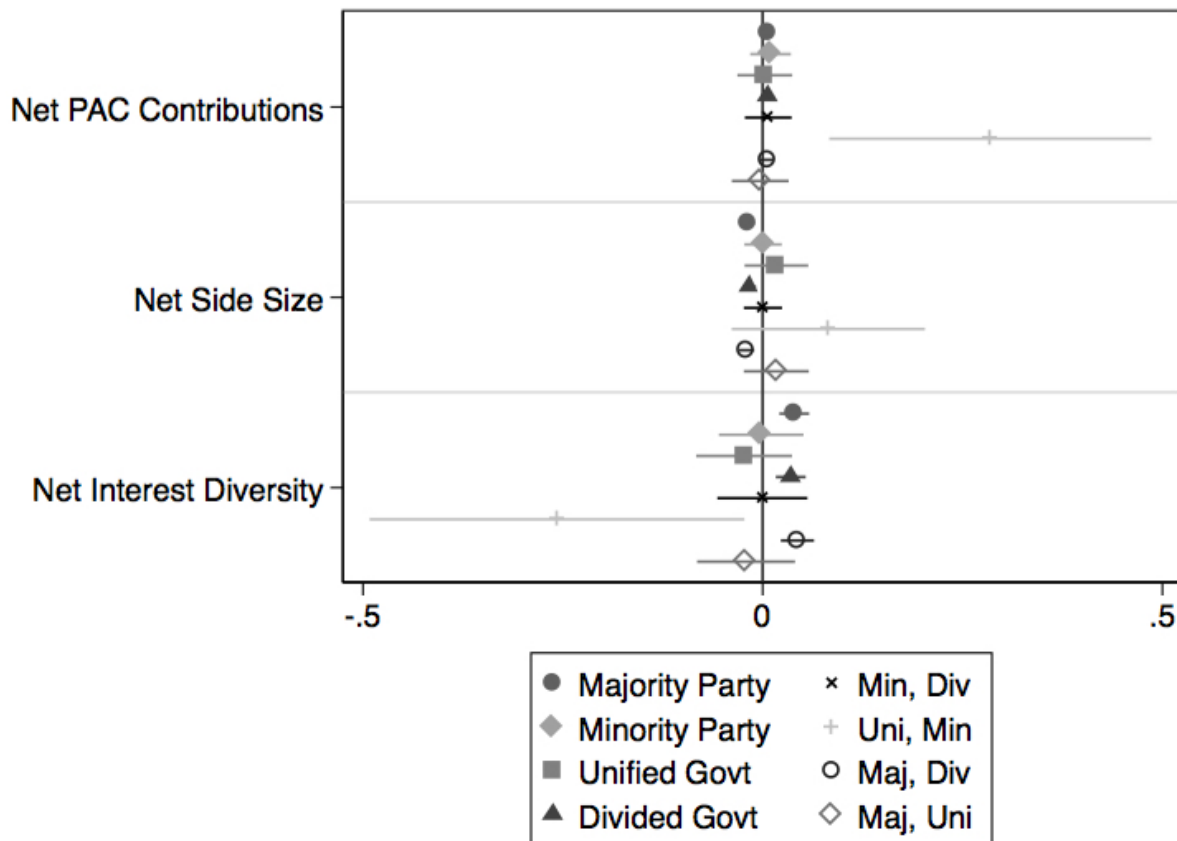
³¹again, Model 1 of Table 4.1

Figure 4.4: Party Status Differences in Marginal Effects of Lobbying Side Variables



This graph presents the marginal predicted probability of committee consideration for majority party and minority party members, across the range of values of Net Side Size, Net PAC Contributions, and Net Interest Diversity, using the model of Committee Markup or Reporting presented in Model 1 of Table 4.1. The line represents the average marginal predicted probability at a given level of each independent variable, and the shaded area represents the 95% confidence interval around that estimate.

Figure 4.5: Coefficients of Key Predictor Variables, with 95% Confidence Intervals, Across Sponsor's Party Status and Institutional Alignment. DV: Markup or Reporting (Govtrack).



for the three main lobbying side attributes, across all iterations of this model; Table 4.2 presents the full results across all eight models. For the most part, these results track with my expectations. The association between Net Side Size is negative and statistically significant for majority-party bills and bills under divided government, and majority party bills under divided government; for minority-party bills, and majority party bills under unified government, the association changes in sign and is, regardless, not statistically significant. With the exception of minority-sponsored bills under unified government, the coefficients on Net PAC Contributions and Net Interest Diversity largely maintain their full-sample direction and statistical significance; once again Net Interest Diversity is associated with committee consideration for majority party bills, bills introduced during divided government, and the combination of both conditions.

The striking and puzzling divergence from previous results occurs for minority party bills introduced under unified government (Model 6 of Table 4.2). Here, the coefficients for both PAC Contributions and Interest Diversity change signs, get much larger, and are statistically significant. This would suggest that while majority-sponsored bills benefit from the signal of broad appeal that Interest Diversity provides, minority-sponsored bills benefit from being backed by a narrow band of wealthy interests. There are at least three possible explanations for this divergence. The first is that the small subsample (140 out of an original sample of over 4700) that represent minority-party bills introduced in unified government (i.e. where that party is totally out of power) are unrepresentative of the full sample for reasons other than their being solely minority party bills introduced under unified government. The second explanation is related to the first: because the subsample is so small, a mixed effects logit model is inappropriate (and, over several estimation attempts, failed to converge). Instead, Model 6 uses a logit model with standard errors clustered on major topic code, though this should provide similar results. (Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal 2012) Finally, it is possible that this result is simply more evidence that the lobbying side attributes that matter really do depend on institutional alignments. Witko (2006) finds evidence that PAC contributions influence voting on non-salient and non-ideological issues. Perhaps minority party legislators, knowing that they won't have an opportunity to pass ideological and salient bills under unified government, (Howell et al. 2000) gear their bill introductions toward the non-ideological, non-salient bills where PAC contributions are most likely to have an impact. However, due to the subsampling and estimation differences between Model 6 and the other models, it is imprudent to draw strong conclusions.

These analyses generally support the theory that lobbying is influential due to chairs' uncertainty surrounding a bill's legislative viability. Majority party bills are not only more likely to be considered in general, but the association between lobbying side attributes (specifically, interest diversity and side size) and committee consideration is substantively larger for majority party bills than minority party bills. This suggests that chairs use their observation of lobbying on bills to help them determine which majority party bills are more likely to garner broad, sustained support. Similarly, the association between lobbying side attributes and committee consideration is stronger in periods of divided government. Because the policy preferences that must be simultaneously satisfied in order for a bill to pass are broader in such periods,

Table 4.2: Lobbying and Committee Consideration of Legislation, Institutional Variation

SUBSAMPLE	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
-Party Status	Maj	Min	Both	Both	Min	Min	Maj	Maj
-Govt Unified?	Both	Both	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y
Net Interest Diversity	0.0395*** (0.00953)	-0.00186 (0.0270)	-0.0232 (0.0306)	0.0352*** (0.00954)	-0.000388 (0.0287)	-0.257* (0.120)	0.0435*** (0.0106)	-0.0208 (0.0313)
Net PAC contribs.	0.00566 (0.00410)	0.00986 (0.0130)	0.00263 (0.0175)	0.00630 (0.00405)	0.00698 (0.0149)	0.285** (0.103)	0.00521 (0.00429)	-0.00304 (0.0182)
Net # Supporters	-0.0188*** (0.00452)	0.000463 (0.0119)	0.0172 (0.0203)	-0.0166*** (0.00427)	0.000314 (0.0122)	0.0821 (0.0617)	-0.0200*** (0.00479)	0.0171 (0.0208)
# Groups Lobbying	0.0249*** (0.00449)	0.000351 (0.0127)	-0.00649 (0.0116)	0.0269*** (0.00461)	-0.0000288 (0.0131)	-0.0247 (0.0531)	0.0319*** (0.00540)	-0.00712 (0.0118)
Competitiveness	0.0208*** (0.00581)	-0.00102 (0.0165)	0.00572 (0.0181)	0.0229*** (0.00589)	-0.00165 (0.0170)	-0.0322 (0.0733)	0.0276*** (0.00677)	0.00421 (0.0188)
# of Cosponsors	-0.000859 (0.000789)	0.00113 (0.00208)	-0.00124 (0.00170)	-0.000820 (0.000824)	0.00201 (0.00226)	-0.0108 (0.00733)	-0.000971 (0.000882)	-0.000797 (0.00181)
On Committee						2.220*** (0.631)		
Min. On Comm.		1.220*** (0.209)	1.970*** (0.590)	1.056*** (0.211)	1.083*** (0.228)			
Maj. Not on Comm.			1.213* (0.551)	1.253*** (0.183)				
Maj. on Comm.	1.296*** (0.0895)		2.585*** (0.526)	2.551*** (0.175)			1.316*** (0.0999)	1.379*** (0.214)
Chair-Sponsored	0.0828 (0.168)	-0.205 (0.693)	-0.519 (0.527)	0.198 (0.172)	0.173 (0.716)		0.156 (0.180)	-0.407 (0.539)
Unified Govt	1.301*** (0.344)	1.011** (0.331)						
Constant (Bill)	-1.756*** (0.178)	-3.694*** (0.379)	-1.640** (0.621)	-2.484*** (0.236)	-2.150*** (0.355)	-2.840*** (0.443)	-1.330*** (0.186)	-0.322 (0.368)
Random Effects:								
Major Topic Code	0.393** (0.143)	1.160* (0.583)	0.0966 (0.0933)	0.480** (0.170)	1.248* (0.622)		0.447** (0.161)	0.0494 (0.0784)
<i>N</i>	3460	1295	789	3968	1157	140	2811	649
<i>AIC</i>	3933.2	768.3	902.5	3819.3	659.7	113.7	3143.4	793.3
<i>BIC</i>	4019.3	835.4	963.3	3907.3	720.4	137.2	3214.7	842.5

Standard errors in parentheses. All models are mixed effects logit models, except Model 6 which is a logit model with standard errors clustered on major topic code. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

all bills in divided government are (weakly) less viable than they would be if introduced during unified government. Under divided government, chairs have greater incentives to value legislative viability in bills they grant consideration. Because lobbying side attributes are more strongly related to committee consideration during divided government, this suggests that lobbying is informing chairs about which bills are still viable. Together, these analyses not only show that lobbying is associated with committee agenda-setting, but it is more strongly associated with committee agenda-setting on bills where legislative viability is particularly uncertain.

4.6 CONCLUSION

This paper connects the lobbying of individual legislators to legislative agendas in congressional committees. Previous scholarship explores the tactical choices lobbyists make, or investigates the conditions under which interest groups gain access to and attention or other support from individual legislators. It less often explores the consequences of lobbying for legislative agendas and outcomes, and has produced mixed results when it has done so. We address this gap by developing and testing a theory of how the lobbying of individual rank-and-file legislators influences the decisions of strategic, policy-motivated committee chairs to grant a bill consideration before the committee. Committee consideration is an important first step for all but the most salient bills. Committee chairs seeking to optimize their committee's agenda want to allocate agenda space to bills that are legislatively viable. Viability can be predicted, we argue, by examining the sets of interest groups lobbying on each side of a bill - that is, either in support of or opposition to it - and, in particular, their collective attributes. Previous scholarship on lobbying suggests three such attributes: One, the number of groups on the side; Two, the campaign contributions by industries and causes represented by that side; and Three, the diversity of the industries, causes, and other subconstituencies on a side. We expect that to the extent these attributes are influential on individual legislators, chairs will take the balance of them between a bill's supporters and opponents as an indication of a bill's legislative viability.

To test these expectations, we use new data on the positions of over 13,000 interest groups on over 5000 bills introduced in Congress between 2005 and 2014, and new data on bill's progress through committee. We find evidence that relative interest diversity among a bill's supporting interest groups is associated with a consistent if modest increase in the probability that a bill will receive committee consideration. PAC contributions among interests represented on a side are inconsistently associated with committee consideration, and though positive the substantive impact is likely to be small. Side size, contrary to expectations, is negatively associated with committee consideration. To test the mechanism of signaling legislative viability, we perform a series of tests to show that majority party bills, particularly those introduced during non-unified government, benefit more from positive net interest diversity and suffer more from increased side size, and provide evidence that minority party bills introduced during

periods of unified government (that is, when the other party controls the House, Senate, and White House) benefit from an advantage in PAC contributions. That is, when bills are by default less viable, the influence of interest group lobbying increases.

This study makes several notable contributions to the study of interest group lobbying. First, it connects research on interest groups, which has focused on how groups lobby to get what they want, to research on lawmaking, legislative agendas, and congressional organization, which typically focuses more on how the needs of legislators affect which issues Congress addresses and which it ignores. Second, it tests several proposed mechanisms of interest group influence - size, contributions, and coalition diversity - and finds that interest diversity has the most general, consistent benefit for gaining committee consideration. Along the same lines, it suggests that what makes a group's lobbying efforts "influential", in this theory, is how much their position-taking changes the chair's beliefs about a bill's legislative viability should she grant it consideration. Third, it provides an original analysis of how partisanship and institutional alignments moderate the influence of these mechanisms on committee consideration. Furthermore, the number of bills considered in this analysis is among the largest of any study of interest groups, enhancing its potential external validity. Taken together, this study's findings suggest that, even as individual organizations pursue narrow, ideological, and parochial interests, lobbying makes congressional agendas more bipartisan and more broad-based than would otherwise be the case.

However, this study also has several limitations. It could be that there are other factors that matter, including the possibility that some third factor affects both lobbying side attributes and committee decision-making. Many other potential mechanisms for apparent interest group influence on stages of the legislative process remain. One particular absence is that it is likely that chairs personally favor interests that are important to their re-election constituency. Also, it is of course plausible that different lobbying attributes matter more at different stages of the legislative process, so it is not valid to conclude based solely on these results, for example, that campaign contributions do not matter very much for lobbyist influence on lawmaking. Finally, while my theory includes reference to both electoral value and legislative viability, my empirical focus here has been on the latter. Direct lobbying of the committee chair may affect her assessment of bills' value as well.

Despite these limitations, this paper raises important questions about the distribution of power and influence in Congress. Given that many groups lobby the same committees across many bills and many years, what sorts of relationships do they develop over time? Do groups that happen to have more experience lobbying in favor a particular legislator's bills become more influential when that legislator achieves positions of power? What are the implications of interest groups' ability to influence committee agendas for how Congress as an institution understands which issues that are most important, and which solutions are the best? Answers to these questions will continue to improve our understanding of the role of organized interests in American politics.

4.7 APPENDIX: SUMMARY STATISTICS

Table 4.3 presents the summary statistics and data sources for all variables appearing in analyses presented in this study.

Table 4.3: Summary Statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean (or Prop.)	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Source
<i>Dependent Variable: Committee Consideration</i>						
Referred or Marked Up (1 = Yes, 0 = No)	5221	.289				GT
Marked Up in Committee (1 = Yes, 0 = No)	5221	.266				GT
Reported from Committee (1 = Yes, 0 = No)	5221	.268				GT
Reported from Committee (CBP) (1 = Yes, 0 = No)	5221	.219				CBP
<i>Independent Variables: Interest Group Side Attributes</i>						
Net Interest Diversity (# of Unique Interests)	5221	3.153	8.948	-54	97	ML & CRP
Net Contribution Levels (Same Year PAC contributions, \$2.675mil increments)	4917	3.344	14.320	-119.630	324.618	ML & CRP
<i>Control Variables: Bill Context and Sponsor</i>						
Side Size (# Supporters - # Opponents)	5221	6.234	21.722	-122	262	ML
Competitiveness (- #Supporters - #Opponents)	5221	-9.424	20.54	-262	0	ML
Interest Group Saliency (Total # of Groups Lobbying)	5221	12.538	25.815	1	524	ML
Legislator Saliency (# of Cosponsors)	5221	30.646	50.318	0	380	GT
Sponsor is Majority Party Member (1 = Yes, 0 = No)	5221	.726				CBP
Sponsor is Committee Member (1 = Yes, 0 = No)	5214	.553				CBP
Sponsor is Committee Chair (1 = Yes, 0 = No)	5214	.049				CBP
Unified Government (1 = Yes, 0 = No)	.171					CBP
Congress Fixed Effects (Congress in which bill was introduced)						CBP
Bill's Issue Area (PAP Major Topic Code)						PAP

This table presents summary statistics for each of the continuous and count variables included in this paper's empirical models. Data sources (and abbreviations) are Maplight.org ("ML"), Govtrack.us ("GT"), Center for Responsive Politics (OpenSecrets.org, "CRP"), the Congressional Bills Project ("CBP"), and the Policy Agendas Project ("PAP").

Chapter 5

Conclusion

This dissertation opened with a question – why does Congress attend to some problems and not others? It provides answers to these questions at both the issue- and bill-levels. In the first paper, "Legislator Priorities and Problem Selection in Congressional Committees", I examine how the issue priorities of individual legislators are translated onto Congress's issue agenda. I argue that formal powers and informal advantages should allow committee chairs to direct their committee's attention to the issues within its' jurisdiction that the chair cares about most. To identify the causal effect of committee chairs' issue priorities on committee agendas, I confine my analysis to committee agendas among committees, and in years, where a sitting committee chair either died in office or resigned in (non-legislative) scandal, and was then replaced with a new chair. Using data on committee hearing topics and legislators' introduced legislation during these committee-years, I show that committee agendas consistently combine the committee's ongoing responsibilities with the priorities of the committee chair. I fail to find a consistent relationship between committees' issue priorities and those of majority party members and leaders.

In the second and third papers, I examine how lobbying by organized interest groups influences the specific bills that are granted consideration in committee. Most accounts of interest group influence focus on the resources – most frequently, lobby expenditures and campaign contributions – that lobbyists can bring to bear on policy debates. In "Interest Diversity in Lobbying Coalitions: an Exploratory Analysis", I conceptualize and validate a measure for a new source of interest group influence. I call this source "interest diversity", and define it as the relative degree of observable variety of subconstituencies represented by set of organizations. When coalitions include organizations representing more subconstituencies, they have the ability to appeal to more legislators. I propose a

measure of interest diversity based on the differences in interest group categories across the organizations lobbying on opposite sides of the same bill. I validate this measure in a sample of bills from recent Congresses by showing it corresponds to well-established patterns of lobbying across bills as well as with the expectations of existing theories of interest group mobilization and legislative politics.

In the final paper, "Lobbying Coalition Diversity and Interest Group Influence on Congressional Priorities", I show that committee leaders respond to the interest diversity of groups lobbying for or against a bill when deciding whether to grant that bill consideration in committee. I argue that policy-motivated committee chairs have incentives to grant committee consideration to bills likely to have the sustained, motivated support of other legislators; this in turn should lead them to favor bills that are supported by organizations representing diverse interests. Using the measure of interest diversity developed in "Interest Diversity in Lobbying Coalitions" as well as new data on the progress of bills through committee, I show that a two-standard deviation increase in net interest diversity is associated with a 10 percent increase in the probability that a bill is considered in committee. I then show that bills with more uncertain legislative viability – those introduced by majority party members or those introduced during periods of divided government – exhibit stronger associations between net interest diversity and committee consideration. These findings suggest that committee leaders use interest group lobbying to gauge the viability of bills.

5.1 CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE

Across the three papers that make up this dissertation, I make contributions to several areas of research. First, this dissertation helps to rehabilitate the perceived agenda power of committee leaders, particularly in the House. Committee leaders have long been either ignored or reduced to trivial roles in theories of legislative politics. This dissertation finds that committee leaders' personal priorities matter for which issue areas are considered by their committees. Because committees' priorities define much of the floor's agenda, this suggests that committee leaders are not only legislatively powerful, but that they can use that power to their personal benefit.

This dissertation's rehabilitation of committee leaders serves as a qualification to partisan theories

of legislative organization. In partisan theories, majority party leaders have significant power to affect Congress's agenda, either by compelling Congress to address issues on which the majority party has achieved consensus or in blocking proposals that the majority of the majority would oppose. Most bills that are reported from committee are considered on the floor, but I fail to find a consistent association between the issues prioritized by majority party members and those considered in congressional committee hearings. This suggests that, for non-salient issues – i.e., the bulk of the congressional agenda – the majority party is more concerned with blocking caucus-dividing provisions than in setting issue priorities. To the extent this holds, the vast powers attributed to majority party leadership may be only narrowly applied.

As an example of this narrow application, take the high water mark of majority party leaders' dominance of committees – House Republicans' attempts to implement their "Contract with America" after sweeping to power after the 1994 congressional elections. Much controversy was made over new House Speaker Newt Gingrich's decision at the onset of the 104th Congress to dictate to the new Republican committee chairs a series of bills aimed at enacting the Contract. However, bills containing the core Contract with America legislation numbered only twenty,¹ fewer than the number of substantive committees in the House. Indeed, House committees reported 561 public bills during the 104th Congress. Even if one assumes that all 561 bills needed to be approved by the Gingrich leadership, the fact that so many of them did not *originate* with leadership suggests that committees still play an important role in designing legislation and setting legislative priorities. My dissertation provides evidence that in exercising this role, committees' priorities are influenced by the personal issue priorities of their chairs.

This disconnect between party leaders' well-evinced dominance in the legislative process and committee leaders' discretion suggests that part of lawmaking may be understudied. At least since Kingdon (1995, first edition 1984), political scientists have understood that there exists a distinction between selecting which problems to address and deciding on which legislative proposals to consider in order to address those problems. However, the vast majority of research on legislative outcomes

¹In fact, the core bills of the Contract with America numbered only ten. However, major sections of these bills were inserted into other bills once Republicans' ambitious plans proved difficult to advance through the Senate and past President Clinton's veto pen.

focuses on the latter, when the former is just as important in understanding why Congress addresses some problems and ignores others. This dissertation addresses this imbalance of scholarly focus by highlighting the issue prioritization role of committees as well as the role of interest group lobbying in shaping which proposals gain the attention of legislators as they select which problems to attend to in committee.

My dissertation also makes contributions to the study of lobbying on lawmaking. Where most studies of interest groups focus on whether individual groups get what they want – e.g., access to or mobilization of individual legislators or preference attainment in policy outcomes – I focus on whether these pursuits result in Congress addressing different legislation than it otherwise might. In finding that interest group lobbying has an impact on the consideration of bills in committee, I show that lobbying’s influence is in a sense much more fundamental than most lobbying studies can assess. Not only do interest groups influence the behavior of individual members and change individual provisions in bills, but this dissertation finds that they change which legislation progresses and which is ignored. At the same time, by covering so many bills in such a broad range of issue areas over such a long timeframe, this is one of the most easily generalizable studies of lobbying that has been conducted to date. Moreover, by both connecting interest group lobbying to individual bills and covering a time frame spanning many congresses and two presidential administrations, this study provides one of the first examinations of how interest groups’ legislative influence varies under different institutional alignments.

On the other hand, though interest group lobbying’s influence may be broader and more fundamental than has heretofore been examined, this dissertation suggests that it is also more benign. In contrast to resource-based accounts of lobbyist influence, my dissertation finds that interest group lobbying strengthens connections between legislators and their districts. By highlighting what individual legislators need (identification of the legislative issues that matter to the distinct groups that make up their districts) and how lobbyists accomplish it (by serving as proxies for those groups in Congress), interest diversity depicts lobbying as an aid to representation. In that sense, while still singing with an upper-class accent, the chorus may not be so un-heavenly after all.

5.2 DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE WORK

Finally, this dissertation has highlighted several potentially fruitful areas for future research. First, I have identified a disconnect in the literature between recent depictions of committee chairs as agents of the majority party constrained to the point of triviality and chairs' ability to ensure that their personal priorities are prioritized by their committees. I suggest that this is because prior studies have examined alternative specification (i.e., which bills to allow onto the agenda) rather than problem selection (i.e., which problems to address through policy change). This dissertation provides a preliminary examination of the latter, finding that the institutional privileges granted to committee chairs afford them the ability to bring institutional attention to the problems that matter most to them personally. However, there are doubtless many other influences on problem selection in Congress. Given the importance of prioritizing problems before legislation can be offered to address those priorities, there is much work to be done in understanding not only *how* problems get selected, but *which* and, perhaps most importantly, *whose*.

Second, while this dissertation provides evidence that interest diversity matters in the first stage of the legislative process – i.e., whether a bill receives committee consideration in its chamber of origin – that does not necessarily mean that interest diversity makes bills more likely to pass or fail. Future studies might investigate whether or under what conditions bills with higher interest diversity are more likely to pass. It is possible that interest diversity provides benefits only at initial stages of the legislative process, while other sources of interest group influence, such as numbers or contributions, play a bigger role later in the legislative process.

On the other hand, this dissertation shows that interest groups bring something other than resources to bear in influencing legislation. It shows that interest diversity is associated with the decision to grant bills committee consideration, and provides a theoretical rationale for why legislators – both committee chairs and the rank-and-file – should respond to diverse interests lobbying in favor of a bill. It also finds that committee consideration of legislation is more strongly and more consistently associated with groups' interest diversity than their PAC contributions. But interest diversity is hardly exclusive in the advantages it grants to organizations and coalitions that benefit from it. Indeed, interest groups engage in many strategies to gain influence in Washington, and these in turn rely on many potential sources of

interest group support. Future accounts of interest group influence might try to think beyond resources, and even beyond diversity, in assessing the factors underlying that influence. Indeed, the normative implications of interest group activity, and the justifications for reforms to that activity, vary dramatically based on what one thinks makes lobbying influential.

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