

Chapter 11: Interest Groups

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter, students should be able to:

1. Distinguish the essential differences between *interest groups* and *political parties*.
2. Understand three basic theories of interest group politics: *pluralist* theory, *elite* theory, and *hyperpluralist* theory.
3. Determine the factors that tend to make an interest group successful.
4. Differentiate between a *potential group* and an *actual group*, and determine how the *free-rider problem* applies.
5. Explain how interest groups try to shape public policy and how lobbyists represent interest groups in influencing the legislative agenda.
6. Describe various types of interest groups.
7. Explain why the authors of the textbook say that the problems of honest lobbying now appear to outweigh the traditional problems of dishonest lobbying.
8. Summarize the implications for the size of government that are generated by the power of PACs and special interest groups.
9. Analyze the appropriate role of interest groups within a democratic environment.