

November 3rd

Pick up handout

Take out your HOMEWORK & SS notes &
LA notes on LOGOS, PATHOS, ETHOS

Special Interest Groups

- Any **organized group** whose member share a **common goal**
- Try to **promote their interest** by influencing government **polycymaking & decision making**



Are special interest groups good or bad for democracy?

- *Many distrust → seek to achieve their goals at expense of society*
- Founders → good for government because **pluralism**:
 - Political power should be divided/shared among various groups
 - Competition is good → **checks on tyranny**

What kind of Interest Groups do Americans join?

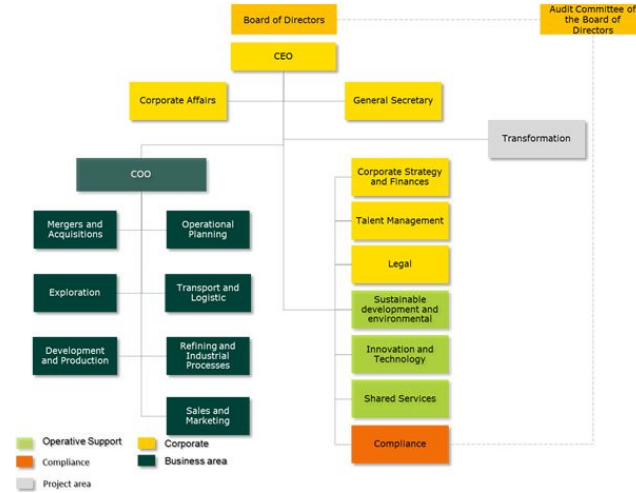
- **Largest categories → economic interest**
 - Business org, trade org, labour unions, etc.etc.
- **Citizen groups → ideology/belief/issues**
 - ACLU, Sierra Club, etc. etc.
- **Government interest groups → all levels of gov**
 - NEA, Governor's Association, etc. etc.



Why do people join interest
groups?

How are interest groups organized & funded?

- Elected board of directors/trustees
 - set policy & decide how the group's resources will be used



- **Fundings:**
 - dues/membership fees
 - fundraising
 - grants from foundations/gov

Political Action Committee (PAC)

- Organization that raises & distributes funds to candidates running for office
- Corporations, labour unions, & interest groups form PACs
- Donations from employees/members into political campaigns

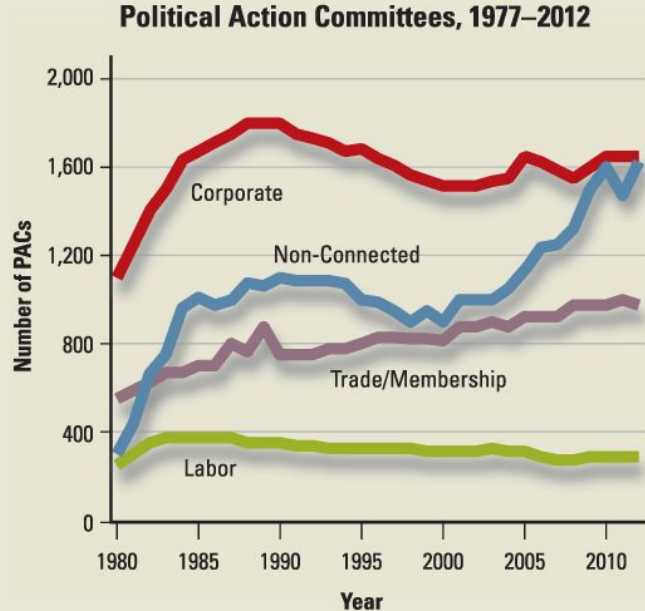


**LEAGUE OF
CONSERVATION
VOTERS**

How much money do PACs raise??

PAC Sponsors

Corporations sponsor the greatest number of political action committees. However, other types of organizations—such as labor unions and trade groups—also establish PACs.



Source: Federal Election Commission, www.fec.gov.

- *Many believe that PACs give too much influence over elected officials*
- Most research shows → PAC \$\$
 - does not buy votes in Congress
 - Gives contributors greater access to lawmakers

Other ways interest groups influence policies

- Lobbying



- Research & Policy Proposal



- Litigation



- Grassroots mobilization



What makes Interest Groups powerful?

- Size & money



- Unity of purpose



- Effective leadership



- Information & expertise

