Congressional Influence on State Lobbying Activity

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Abstract

The mobilization of interest groups is affected not only by social and economic "supply" factors but also by government-related "demand" factors as well. We add to a growing literature noting the impact on interest-group mobilization of government activity by examining how federal policy activity in an issue-area stimulates interest-group activity at the state level in the same issue-area. Empirically, we do this by introducing the federal hearings data used by Leech et al. (2005) into the model of state lobbying registrations used by Gray et al. (2005). We find that Congressional hearings have significant direct and indirect effects on the mobilization of state interest organizations in the following year. Groups may be pleased or upset with the idea of further federal government activity in the issue-areas that concern them, but if they see increased policy activity, they mobilize. Leech and colleagues showed this effect at the federal level; we show here that it occurs at the state level as well.

Congressional Influence on the Demand for State Lobbying

Demand for lobbying can be created by government.[1] Traditionally, scholars have looked at social, demographic, economic and other "bottom-up" factors in explaining the mobilization of interest groups, as discussed by Truman, Olson, and taken for granted in the literature for decades. Increasingly, however, scholars have recognized that government activity, far from being only the *result* of interest-group activity, can also be its *cause*. Heinz et al. (1993, 24) defined an interest group this way:

> It is at the intersection of public policy and the wants and values of private actors that we discover interests. What we call the interests of the groups are not simply valued conditions or goals, such as material riches, moral well-being, or symbolic satisfaction. It is only as these are affected, potentially or in fact, by public policy, by the actions of authoritative public officials, that the valued ends are transformed into political interests that can be sought or opposed by interest groups.

Given this view of what is an interest group, it makes sense that as government activity expands into areas previously not the object of any public policy activities, interests are created and interest groups are mobilized. Jones and Baumgartner (2005) documented substantial increases in the range and scope of federal government activity across the post-1947 period, and the growth of government is well known. The result of this is that many social or economic groups that may once have had no interest in public policy and which did not therefore lobby or need to be involved in politics have had to become active as public policy has expanded into a greater range of areas affecting larger segments of the population. For any given interest group, this governmental activity may be welcome or it may be seen with hostility; it does not matter. In either case, groups that once were just "associations" have become "interest groups" as their "private wants" have intersected with "public policy."

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The responses of social groups to the increased scope of public policy can be seen in many ways. Long-term social mobilization is apparent as there are thousands more interest groups now at the federal and state levels than there were in the 1950s. The "interest-group explosion" noted by Berry and others was mostly a social phenomenon, to be sure (that is, it stemmed originally more from social movements and economic diversity than from government "pull" factors). However, once established, the new social programs created in the Great Society generated the need for continued group activity as groups sought to monitor the continued functioning of these programs, and to influence their future direction. So we can see a long-term link between public policy and group mobilization. A shorter-term component is also apparent. Leech et al. (2005) noted that Congressional hearings were systematically related to the number of groups registering to lobby at the federal level, after controlling for economic and other factors expected to explain the mobilization of groups. This analysis was based on patterns of group registration across 74 issue-areas in repeated six-month time periods. During those periods when there were more Congressional hearings, more groups were mobilized. Policy activity stimulates lobbying; the relationship is clearly multi-directional, but this study showed clear mobilization effects on lobbying communities of government action in a given issue area.

Our focus here is on still another aspect of this process—the mobilization of groups at the *state level* in response to policy activities at the *federal level*. In a manner parallel to that of Leech et al., and using similar data and methodological approach, we find that federal government activities lead to the mobilization of groups in those same issue-areas in the states in the following time period. As in the Leech et al. analysis we include appropriate controls for potentially confounding factors such as the growth in state-level economic activity, taking advantage of Gray and Lowery's previously established Energy-Stability-Area (ESA) model and adding the new federal hearings data to their model, so we are confident that we have controlled for appropriate baseline conditions to assess the *additional impact* of Congressional hearings on state interest-group mobilization. We also note an indirect effect in addition to the direct one. This is because federal policy activity leads not only to subsequent group mobilization at

the state level (the direct effect) but also to increased legislative activity in the states as well. Of course groups will mobilize even further in response to new policy initiatives at the state level, so this indirect effect further reinforces our findings about the importance of federal policy activism in generating state-level interest-group mobilization. In all, we add further evidence to a growing body of literature about the myriad ways in which government action affects, and is not only caused by, interest-group mobilization.

Our empirical approach is simple, as we build on previously conducted research at both the state and federal levels. Leech et al. (2005) examined how hearings activity in Congress influences the lobbying activities of Washington interest organizations. Similarly, Gray et al. (2005) showed how the size of state legislative agendas, as measured by bill introductions, influence state lobby registrations. While using quite different measures, both studies find that legislative activity promotes lobbying activity. We examine how national legislative activity influences the demand for lobbying at the state level by introducing the Congressional hearings data from the Policy Agendas Project (www.policyagendas.org) into the model of state lobbying registrations used by Gray and colleagues (2005). We first discuss several distinct reasons why such a link might be expected and consider several different forms it might take. We also discuss several reasons why such a relationship might not be evident. We then introduce the model of state level lobby registrations using 1999 measures of the density of organized interests and a measure of Congressional hearings activity over several years. Several versions of the enhanced pooled state- interest guild model are then tested to isolate the nature of the linkage between Congressional activity and state lobbying. We conclude the analysis by considering further questions about and future analyses of cross-level linkages of state and national interest systems.

National Influence on State Lobbying

Let us start with the *null hypothesis* that Congressional activity and lobbying in the states may well be unrelated to each other. It is true that we have seen a growing nationalization of state lobbying communities in the sense that they are all now increasingly responding in the same manner to a common set of predictor variables (Lowery and Gray 1994a). And scholars have noted the significant role of state

affiliates of national federations in linking of state and national interest systems (Thomas and Hrebenar 1992; Skocpol, Abend-Wein, Howard, and Lehmann 1993). Yet, despite these observations, state interest communities remain extremely parochial in the sense of being dominated by local rather than national or regional organizations. The vast majority of lobbying organizations are registered in only one state (Wolak, Newmark, McNoldy, Lowery, and Gray 2002). Accordingly, we might well expect that they would be attentive to issues in their home states and not those attracting the attention of Congress.

Even more broadly, it is not clear that state and national policy agendas are so tightly linked. Indeed, we know that state policy agendas vary to a considerable degree (Gray et al. 2005), something that would not be true if all uniformly reflected a national pattern of policy attention. Despite ever more rapid diffusion of innovations, not all states focus on the same issues at the same time. But even if state agendas moved in a common lockstep with Congress in their attention to some issues, much of what attracts the attention of state legislators may well not be what concerns their national counterparts. This would be especially true for a number of issues that are mainly influenced by national or state legislatures. While not part of our analysis, for example, it would seem unlikely that Congressional attention to nuclear proliferation policy would stimulate a great deal of lobbying on this topic in the states – foreign policy concerns would not diffuse so readily. And last, given Baumgartner and Jones' (1993) punctuated equilibrium model, legislative agendas are quite sticky, changing only periodically and with some difficulty. If so, then it is not clear that state policy agendas would respond in anything close to a contemporaneous manner to activity at the national level. In sum, there are plenty of reasons to not expect to find a strong relationship between Congressional activity and state lobbying.

On many issues, however, state and national attention to issues are hardly segmented in a classic layer cake fashion (Grodzins 1966). Many presumptively state issues – including heath maintenance organizations (HMOs), the death penalty, abortion, regulating the definition of marriage, and even the fate of Terry Schiavo – have been the focus of Congressional attention. Federal actions or inactions on all of these issues take place alongside independent state activity. For others, such as the Defense of Marriage

Act of 1996, initial federal activity seems to have stimulated subsequent state legislation. And still other national laws, such as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 or the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996, seem to reverberate through the halls of state capitols in the years following their passage as states are left to struggle with their many intended and often unintended consequences. All of these subsequent state actions were associated with the mobilization of organized interests, a mobilization process kick-started by some federal activity. Yet, if federal legislative activity and state government lobbying are connected to each other, it also seems that such linkages might come in several different forms beyond the simple federal cause and state effect suggested here.

The first is a simple *contemporaneous effect* with both levels of government and their systems of organized interests struggling simultaneously with a common policy disturbance. In this view, lobbying activity and legislative agendas at all levels reflect less each other than real policy issues facing society. Truman (1951, 511), of course, identified the locus of mobilization in disturbances in society. Organized interests engage in political activity to secure redress on these disturbances. More to the point, it is not obvious that organized interests seek such redress at different levels of government in a purely sequential fashion. Moreover, they are not the only political actors with such incentives. Legislative entrepreneurs at all levels of government have powerful incentives to monitor their constituents' concerns (Wawro 2000). Political parties at all levels too win elections by finding issues on which to campaign (Macdonald and Rabinowitz 2001). If legislators, parties, and organized interests at all governmental levels respond swiftly to the same disturbances in society, then we should see the volume of lobbying activity, or the density of organized interests, and the content of legislative agendas at both the national and the state level changing in a contemporaneous and non-causal manner reflecting the public's concerns.

A second possible form of linkage is as a *substitution effect.* In this case, policies are pursued in different venues provided by our federal structure of government in a sequential fashion. This idea was noted by Truman (1951: 323) and further developed by Morton Grodzins (1966), who argued that the federal systems can be viewed as a structure with many cracks. Patterns of influence impeded at one

level may find opportunities for influence at another. Indeed, state officials often frame their attention to problems as a consequence of federal inaction.[2] Thus, in justifying his state's more rigorous than average environmental laws, former California Governor Gray Davis (2002) noted that, "The federal government and Congress, by failing to ratify the Kyoto treaty on global warming, have missed their opportunity to do the right thing. So it is left to California, the nation's most populous state and the world's fifth largest economy, to take the lead." But perhaps an even better example of such a relationship concerns health care policy. Following the 1994 failure of President's Clinton's comprehensive health care proposal, federal attention to health care seemed at an impasse. Congress seemed unable to address even less comprehensive health care issues, such as growing criticism of HMOs or the rising cost of prescription drugs.[3] Scholars such as West, Heith, and Goodwin (1996) and Weissert and Weissert (2002) and journalists such as Johnson and Broder (1996) assigned primary blame for the Clinton fiasco and much of the next decade's stalemate to powerful interests representing the health care industry. As a result of this stalemate, however, the states paid increasing attention to health care policy. Following the demise of the Clinton proposal, many acted by the late 1990s to provide their own prescription drug programs (Gray, Lowery, and Godwin 2007a), to adopt a number of new and rigorous regulations of HMOs that went beyond largely symbolic adoption of a "Patient's Bill of Rights" (Gray, Lowery, and Godwin 2007b), and to take a number of partial (if usually faltering) steps toward the provision of comprehensive health care to their citizens (Gray, Lowery, Godwin, and Monogan 2005). Whether as a cause or effect of all of this state attention to health care policy, organized interests rapidly shifted their attention from Congress to state capitols. Indeed, the health interest sector or guild in the states grew more rapidly than any other during the 1990s (Lowery, Gray, and Fellowes 2005). The key point, however, is that we might well

[2] Another and harsher form of substitution is *preemption* – when federal action essentially precludes state action on an issue. A good health care example occurred in 1974 when Congress enacted the Employee Retirement Income Security Act, which preempts state laws that "relate to" employee benefit programs (including health plans) unless such laws are part of the traditional state function of regulating insurance. We do not examine this form of substitution further since it does not occur all that frequently, concentrating instead on political inaction.
[3] Action on the latter was taken in the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003.

expect a *lack* of Congressional activity on an issue to stimulate state-level attention to it on the part of either state officials and/or state interest organizations.

A third and we think more typical relationship between Congressional legislative activity and the mobilization of state lobbying is a *stimulation effect* reflecting many of the examples we noted earlier. That is, Congressional activity at time one leads to state lobbying activity at a later time. But here too there is more than one manner in which such a causal relationship might find expression. The first is an *indirect stimulation effect* whereby Congressional activity promotes state legislative activity, which in turn stimulates lobbying activity in the states. Congressional activity will necessarily stimulate state law making in those situations, such as the "No Child Left Behind Act," where federal acts have significant consequences for state laws and regulations. In other cases, such a linkage may better reflect a diffusion of legislative entrepreneurship, where state legislators see that there is electoral hay to be made in following a path already trail-blazed by a member of Congress. But in both cases, state interest organizations would be responding indirectly to Congressional activity through the more immediate stimulant provided by the prospect of state legislation passing or failing.[4] A more intriguing and perhaps less expected possibility is that Congressional legislative activity has a *direct stimulation effect* on state lobbying. Indeed, activity at the national level may stimulate mobilization of state interest organizations in a number of different ways. First, in line with Richard Nathan's cyclical theory of federalism,[5] interests adversely affected by legislative proposals under consideration at the federal level may mobilize in the states to protect themselves, particularly if they have stronger representation in a given state than in national politics. Similarly, those encouraged by the emergence of an issue at the federal level may decide that the time is ripe to push for similar actions in their state. So legislative activity at the federal

[4] We should also note that such an indirect effect is also possible in the substitution form of linkage.

[5] Nathan argued that when society as a whole favors governmental action in a new field or of a new kind, proponents will find it more efficient to concentrate their energy on achieving policy change at the center. But when there is diminished support for governmental action in the society, i.e., during conservative periods, proponents are likely to be most successful in those states where there happens, for whatever reason, to be support for such action. Thus states will move into policy areas as the national government moves out or does not take initiative.

level may have a direct and relatively rapid effect on the mobilization of interests at the state level. Leech et al. (2005) already showed that the level of Congressional activity in a policy area generated more subsequent lobby registrations in Congress; here we ask if the same effects might also extent to the states. As in the national case studied by Leech and colleagues, the mobilization may be both proactive, as those who are pleased to see the activity and push for more, as well as counter-active, as those whose interests are threatened by the legislative initiatives mobilize to protect themselves.

Exploring the Linkage

Data and Operationalizations

Our analysis builds on Gray et al.'s (2005) test of the Energy-Stability-Area (ESA) model of interest system density using a pooled model with interest guilds and 50 states. Their dependent variable – the main focus of our analysis – was lobbying activity as measured by state lobby registrations across 15 interest guilds in 1997.[6] We measure interest activity with the density of lobby registrations by interest guilds in 1999. The lobby registration data have been described more fully elsewhere (Gray and Lowery 2001).[7] Not all of the registration data discussed in that earlier study could be used in the Gray et al. (2005) analysis. Of the 26 categories of interest guilds in the population, Gray et al. (2005) excluded several smaller guilds or economic sectors because they could not be readily linked to a guild-specific component of GSP, their measure of the area or supply term of the ESA model.[8] In the end, they analyzed 16 interest guilds representing banking-finance, construction, communications, hotels and

[6] Previous work indicates that the stringency of state lobbying registration requirements has little impact on the density (Lowery and Gray 1997; 1994b) and diversity (Gray and Lowery 1998) of state interest communities.
[7] Briefly, lobby registration lists were gathered by mail or web page from state agencies responsible for their maintenance. After purging the lists of state agencies in states requiring their registration, organizations registered to lobby – rather than individual lobbyists – were coded by organizational type (membership group, institution, or association) and interest content (26 guilds of substantive interests) using directories of organizations and associations and the web pages of individual organizations. A second coder then examined the coding assignments with discrepancies resolved via discussion between the two coders. Only 1.58 percent of the 35,928 organizational lobby registrations in 1997 and a similar number in 1999 could not be coded by type or substantive interest.
[8] These included the organizations in the military/veterans, good government, tax, environment, religion, women's issues, and civil rights guilds. Similarly, the small business and the services-of-business guilds were excluded because of their extreme issue diversity, which made it difficult to identify their discrete interests in the bills being considered by state legislatures. Second, the small police/fire guild was combined with the local government guild.

restaurants, agriculture, manufacturing, legal, transportation, insurance, health, utilities, natural resources, education, local government, welfare, and sports and recreation representing 76.09 percent of registrants. Four additional guilds are dropped from our analysis (manufacturing, hotels and restaurants, sports, and construction) because they could not be readily matched with an exclusive set of the Congressional hearings data, which we discuss further below. In the end, our pooled analysis examines 12 interest guilds with a total of 22,686 lobby registrations or 61.38 percent of state lobbying communities in 1999.[9]

The key independent variables beyond the hearings measures are the area and energy terms of the ESA model (Lowery and Gray 1995). As the potential membership of an interest guild increases, it is expected to support a larger number of lobby registrations. But this relationship is also expected to be curvilinear or density dependent with the rate of growth of lobby registrations in response to increases in the size of the potential membership of a guild expected to slow as the size of the potential membership becomes larger.[10] Gray and Lowery have used a variety of measures in polynomial specifications to test the density dependent impact of variations in the size of the potential membership of guilds across states.[11] All produce similar findings with the choice among them largely dependent on the availability of data at different levels of aggregation. In this analysis, we need to assess the relationship between the size of the potential membership of guilds and lobby registrations across states and guilds. We opt, therefore, for an intermediate measure of the size of the potential membership of the interest guilds: the 1997 gross state product (GSP) generated by each guild in each state.[12] Guild-specific GSP is included in a polynomial specification with its nominal value expected to have a positive association with

[9] Interest organizations frequently move on and off state lobby registration rolls as specific issues wax and wane (Gray and Lowery 1995a). For example, 17.35 percent of the interest organizations registered to lobby in the states in 1997 were not registered in 1998. Of those registered in 1998, 27.48 percent were not registered in 1997. Thus, there is considerable churning in state interest systems (Anderson, Lowery, Gray, and Newmark 2005).
[10] Lowery and Gray (2001) report that density dependence results roughly equally from the depression of the birth rates of new registrations and the enhancement of death rates of older organizations in crowded interest systems.
[11] These include very narrow indicators that are highly specific to each guild (Lowery and Gray 1995), intermediate measures such as the number of firms associated with each guild (Lowery, Gray, and Fellowes 2005), and highly aggregated measures such as total GSP in a state (Lowery and Gray 1998).
[12] Guild-specific GSP is strongly correlated with the number of firms in a state associated with the guilds' interests (Lowery, Gray, and Fellowes 2005), another intermediate measure of the area term of the ESA model.

registrations and its squared value expected to generate a negative coefficient.

Lowery and Gray (1995) use two measures of the energy underlying the mobilization of state interest organizations. The first is *interest uncertainty*. As party competition increases, the likelihood of sudden policy change increases. This uncertainty should encourage both those favored by current policy as well as those disadvantaged by the status quo to engage in political activity. Lowery and Gray tap interest uncertainty with a folded Ranney index of party competition. We measure party competition with a folded Ranney index for the 1995-1998 period (with the values of non-partisan Nebraska as the average of the values of its neighbors). Since this measure is inversely coded, negative coefficients indicate that party competition promotes mobilization. Lowery and Gray's (1995) second energy term concerns *constituent interest*, the specific concerns of a guild that are its focus for lobbying. This measure builds on the strategy originally pioneered by Bowling and Ferguson (2001), measuring constituent interest by the size of the issue agenda of concern to each guild by the number of bills considered in state legislatures in 1999 tapping issues of concern to it.[13] The bill count data was collected from the "State Full Text of Bills" database on Nexis Academic Universe.[14] In most cases, we used their search terms to code the number of times that a state bill was considered with content germane to each guild's interests.[15] In some

[13] Several measures of state agendas were considered. Ferguson (1996) measured the governor's legislative agenda in all 50 states through a content analysis of the 1994 "state of the state" speeches. Fording, Woods, and Prince (2002) analyzed thirty-seven 1999 "state of the state" speeches, identifying nine different policy initiatives pursued by governors. Perhaps the measure best matching our needs is Gerald Wright's collection of roll call data for all 7,424 legislators between 1999-2000 (Wright and Windburn 2002). While each of these measures of legislative agendas has virtues, our analysis requires a measure of legislative activity in many different issue areas, a level of specificity that is not reached by extant measures. Further, we required a measure of the entire state legislative agenda, and not only bills of high priority to governors or those with roll calls. Given that we spend a considerable part of this analysis considering contemporaneous and lagged effects of the hearings variable, some might ask about the exclusively contemporaneous inclusion of the bill count data in the ESA model as our measure of agenda size. However, Lowery, Gray, and Fellowes (2005) fully examined a variety of specifications for the agenda size variable, finding that a simple contemporaneous inclusion clearly proved to be the superior specification.

[14] The database is maintained by LexisNexis, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc, and is available at http://www.nexis.com. The database contains bill text files for all bills considered by each statehouse in a calendar year and provides a separate listing for each revised version of a bill in the database. For example, Alabama House Bill 175, which appropriated $4,564,831 to the Department of Public Health in 1997, was listed five times in the database: one entry was the introductory version, three were revisions, and the fifth was the enacted bill. Each bill is assigned a set of subject codes at the time of consideration.

[15] Alternative coding modes were considered, including keyword text searches and bill summary searches. But these were deemed to be infeasible or unreliable because of database limitations.

cases, however, additional subject search terms were created when the provided search terms did not include a term corresponding with our guild topics. The finance guild, for example, includes both banks and real estate organizations. In such cases, multiple search terms were employed tap this diversity.[16]

So far, all of the measures were employed by Gray et al. (2005) in their analysis of the demand for state interest organizations. The critical innovation of this analysis is the inclusion of data on Congressional hearings as used by Leech et al. (2005). At the federal level, lobbyists must disclose their activities in each of 74 different policy domains. Leech and colleagues took the numbers of Congressional hearings as compiled in the Policy Agendas Project and matched them with as many of these 74 issue-areas as possible. The Policy Agendas Project categorizes hearings into 226 distinct subtopics, and Leech and colleagues were able to establish fits for about two-thirds of the policy topics, covering 85 percent of the lobbying activity. Here we do the same thing for the state interest guilds as previously identified by Gray et al. (2005). Of the 26 interest guilds identified, corresponding Policy Agendas Project topic and subtopic categories were identified for 19 of these. Appendix 1 shows these correspondences.

To assess the robustness of this enhanced ESA model, we first present OLS results without dummy controls for states or interest guilds. Looking at this simple model is essential, we think, given potential problems of collinearity associated with the use of guild and states dummies. That is, the party

[16] The search terms for the 15 guilds were as follows, with the search terms in parentheses: Agriculture (agriculture), Finance (banking, real estate), Communications (media, telecommunications), Construction (construction), Education (education), health (health), Insurance (insurance), Law (legal), Local Government (municipality, public employees, police, fire), Manufacturing (manufacturing), Natural Resources (gas, oil, minerals), Transportation (highways, transit, airports), Utilities (utilities), and Welfare (social services, charities). Two issues concerning our measure of the size of the policy agenda facing each interest guild deserve further comment. First, we do not believe that the search terms provide a comprehensive count of all of the bills the several guilds attend to as they lobby state legislators. Rather, the measure is designed to tap variations in legislative activity across states and across guilds. After reviewing the issue counts, we are quite confident that they tap this variation. States with extensive natural resources, for example, generated much higher bill counts than those without oil, natural gas, or mining industries. Second, as noted earlier, some bills are counted more than once if they were revised as they moved through the legislative process. Rather than a drawback, we view this aspect of the coding scheme as quite appropriate for our purpose. That is, the attention of organized interests should be heightened as bills proceed further on the road toward becoming law. Our coding scheme taps this greater energy. In 1999, the average guild in the average state generated 117.72 bill counts with a standard deviation of 179.41.

competition variable varies only over states, not interest guilds. And the agenda size and hearings measures vary only over states, not guilds. Using dummy controls in these situations, thus, risks rather severe collinearity problems. But we will see that successive introduction of the guild and state dummy controls does not alter the core elements of our findings.

While the main part of our analysis will focus on the direct impact of federal hearings frequency on lobbying registrations in the states, we will also conduct an additional set of tests of the indirect effects of hearings on state lobby registrations through their impact on the size of state legislative agendas. That is, federal hearings activity may lead state legislators to introduce bills on the subjects of the hearings, which would in turn be expected to influence state lobby registrations given the logic of the ESA model. The dependent variable in this second set of tests is agenda size as measured by bill counts, which we have already discussed as one of the energy terms of the ESA model. The key independent variable in this analysis is the Congressional hearings measure, as just discussed. To control for rival explanations of bill introductions, we include a full array of state dummy variables in these models, although we do not report their coefficients. Since the agenda and hearings data vary only over states and not over interest guilds, we do not include in these models dummies for the interest guilds.

Findings

Table 1 presents the baseline and enhanced ESA models without inclusion of dummy controls for states and/or interest guilds. The first model in the table presents a baseline predictor of state lobby registrations without inclusion of the federal policy activities measure. The linear GSP term is, as expected, positive and significant in the baseline ESA model as well as in all of the models including variants of the Congressional hearings measure (including all of the models presented in the tables 2 and 3). Also as expected, the squared GSP estimates are uniformly negative and significant, indicating that density dependence sets in as interest communities become large. Similarly, the party competition estimates are negative and significant, indicating – given inverse coding – that registrations increase with

competition. And the size of the state policy agenda – as measured by bill counts – generated positive and significant estimates. All of these results are as expected.[17]

(Insert Table 1 about here)

Model 2 shows the impact of Congressional hearings in 1998 on state lobby registrations in 1999, controlling for the ESA model just explained. All variables in the ESA model retain their significance and the coefficients change only slightly with the inclusion of the new variable. Federal hearings add only modestly to the overall predictive power of the model, but the variable is highly significant. Results suggest that for each additional 10 hearings, about 1.6 additional interest groups would register to lobby in that issue-area in each of the fifty states.

(Insert Tables 2 and 3 about here)

The results presented in tables 2 and 3 add to the models presented in table 1 naïve controls in the form of n-1 guild dummies (table 2) and both the guild dummies and dummies for the 50 states (table 3). We include these results as a check on the robustness of our simpler specifications in table 1, but with the realization that inclusion of the dummies introduces a considerable level of collinearity in the model. As noted earlier, the state policy agenda and Congressional hearings variables vary only by guild and the party competition variable varies only by states. In broad strokes, however, these results are extremely consistent with those presented in table 1. The ESA (model 1) remains a strong predictor and the federal hearings variable increases substantially both in its substantive impact (increasing from a value of about 0.16 in Table 1 to about 0.56 in Table 3, which includes the most extensive controls) as well as in its statistical significance. These results suggest that there are quite substantial and highly robust effects of Congressional hearings activity on subsequent interest group mobilization in the states. Further, from our analysis of lag structures presented in the Appendix, it is clear that the major direct impact of Congressional attention to issues is in the form of a positive, lagged stimulant for the mobilization of organized interests. Neither the simultaneous model nor the substitution model is borne out by the data.

[17] One-tailed tests are used for the ESA model variables given strong prior expectations about them.

(Insert Table 4 about here)

We have noted that Congressional hearings may also have an indirect effect on state lobby registrations by stimulating bill introductions in state legislatures, which in turn stimulates registrations in the manner specified by the baseline ESA model. We provide a simple test of this expectation in table 4, which reports the results from regressing federal hearings on our measure of the size of state policy agendas (bill counts) in 1999. This is far from a complete specification. Still, while their estimates are not reported, our specification also included a full set of state dummy variables to control – if in a naïve manner – for other state-level determinants of legislative activity (Gray and Lowery 1995b). The results of the first model provide little evidence of a contemporaneous impact of federal hearings on the size of state agendas. The estimate of the 1999 Congressional hearings is positive, but generates an estimate that is only slightly greater than its standard error. In contrast, the lagged 1998 hearings variable generates a significant positive estimate, indicating that Congressional hearings in one year have a positive influence on state bill introductions in the following year, which then promote lobby registrations.

The results reported for the last three models in table 4 mirror those reported earlier. Again, inclusion of a single two year lag for hearings in model 4 produces a positive estimate. In this case, however, neither the magnitude of the estimate nor its t-value is quite as strong as that reported in model 2 for a more proximate one-year lag. In terms of a single lag, then, the one-year lag is stronger. When more complex lags are examined in models 3 and 5, the one-year lag again generates strong positive estimates. But we also see significant negative estimates for later lags. Again, we have no clear prior expectations about *both* a positive and negative impact of hearings on the size of state policy agendas. But the most likely explanation for this again lies in the vagaries of Congressional attention to issues, with both more long-term inattention to issues and more recent upswings in hearings serving to stimulate state legislative activity. We do not wish, however, to push this explanation of the *secondary* impact of Congressional hearings on state legislative activity too far. Rather, the key point of these findings lies in the *primary* positive and lagged impact of Congressional hearings on state legislative activity.

Conclusion

Scholars have recently turned their attention to closer analysis of the demand function for interest group lobbying by studying how political activity on the part of organized interests is stimulated by legislative agendas (Leech et al. 2005; Gray et al. 2005). We extended these analyses by examining several ways in which policy agendas at the national- and state-levels might be linked so as to stimulate the mobilization of organized interests in the states. Our results support several conclusions. First, the impact of Congressional activity on policy issues of concern to different interest guilds is primarily positive. Federal activity stimulates lobby registrations in the states. Second, this impact does not seem to be a simple contemporaneous response at both levels of government to common policy problems. Rather, state lobby registrations respond with a one year lag to Congressional hearings. And third, Congressional hearings seem to have both a direct and indirect impact on state lobby registrations. In terms of the direct impact, Congressional attention to issues acts as another form of policy and political energy that – along with the more conventional ESA model's energy variables of party competition and the size of policy agendas – promotes mobilization. But Congressional attention to issues via hearings also has an indirect impact on lobby registrations through its lagged, positive relationship with the size of state policy agendas as measured by bill introductions. In short, we have found evidence of strong cross-government links between policy agendas and the demand for organized interests, a general conclusion that highlights the dynamic character of federalism.

Let us return to some of the hypotheses that we considered earlier in our paper. First was the null hypothesis that would lead us to suspect the lack of any linkage between federal policy activities and mobilization of groups in the states; this is clearly discounted by our evidence. The results are strong, robust, and consistent. With appropriate controls for the ESA model and state and guild dummies, for each 10 hearings conducted by Congress in a given issue-area, our results suggest that more than five additional groups will register to lobby *in each of the fifty states* in the following year. Second, we considered whether perhaps there was a *simultaneous* effect rather than a *stimulation* effect that we

hypothesized. The simultaneous reaction of Congressional policymakers and interest groups to commonly perceived opportunities and threats in the environment (e.g., Truman's disturbances) could easily lead to a spurious contemporaneous correlation between hearings and group mobilization, with no causal connection. We do see some evidence that there may be some simultaneous effects in the data. However, our detailed review of lag structures suggests that the simultaneous effect is considerably weaker than the stimulation effect. Congressional activities stimulate interest group mobilization in the following year. We found no support for the *substitution* hypothesis, which would imply that state policy activities (and group mobilization) would come because of the absence of, and therefore be inversely related to, Congressional activities. Finally, we found support both for a *direct* and an *indirect stimulation* effect, as Congressional activities are positively related to subsequent policy activities in the states. These in turn provide an additional boost to the expected interest-group mobilization.

In all, these findings provide strong and robust support for the view that groups are strongly affected not only by the "bottom-up" factors that have long been studied in the literature and which are reflected in the supply and area variables in the ESA model, but also by the "energy" factors as well. The uncertainty of the state legislative environment, the degree of policy activity in the state, the level of policy activity apparent at the federal level, and especially the connections among these factors are important factors in stimulating groups to mobilize either to protect themselves from initiatives they oppose or to take advantage of opportunities to shape new policies they support. Groups react to their environments. As the government is a large part of the environment, properly specified models of group mobilization must include measures of government activity.

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Table 1. Federal Impact on State Organizational Lobby Registrations, 1999.

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable: Lobby Registrations Model 1 (baseline)		Model 2 (w/ Federal Hearings)	
Sector GSP	0.72	***	0.65	***
	-6.62		6.20	
Sector GSP Squared	-0.38	***	-0.33	***
	-3.02		-2.67	
Party Competition	-0.08	***	-0.09	***
	-2.74		-3.19	
Size of Agenda	0.30	***	0.29	***
	4.75		4.88	
No. of Hearings in Congress, 1998	--		0.16	***
			4.38	
Constant	41.21		36.41	
R-Square	0.47		0.49	
N	600.00		600.00	

Note: The dependent variable is the number of organizational lobby registrations in 1999 in each of 50 states and 12 interest guilds. *** = p < .01, one-tailed test.

Table 2. Federal Impact on State Organizational Lobby Registrations, with guild dummies,1999.

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable: Lobby Registrations Model 1 (baseline)		Model 2 (w/ Federal Hearings)	
Sector GSP	0.85	***	0.85	***
	8.06		8.06	
Sector GSP Squared	-0.41	***	-0.41	***
	-2.97		-2.97	
Party Competition	-0.09	***	-0.09	***
	-3.59		-3.59	
Size of Agenda	0.12	**	0.12	**
	1.70		1.70	
No. of Hearings in Congress, 1998	--		0.55	***
			7.21	
Constant	35.42		5.91	
R-Square	0.47		0.60	
N	600.00		600.00	

Note: The dependent variable is the number of organizational lobby registrations in 1999 in each of 50 states and 12 interest guilds. *** = p < .01, one-tailed test. The model includes dummies for 11 of 12 interest guilds.

Table 3. Federal Impact on State Organizational Lobby Registrations, with guild and state dummies,1999.

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable: Lobby Registrations Model 1 (baseline)		Model 2 (w/ Federal Hearings)	
Sector GSP	0.67	***	0.67	***
	9.47		9.47	
Sector GSP Squared	-0.27	***	-0.27	***
	-5.18		-5.18	
Party Competition	-0.16	***	-0.16	***
	-3.10		-3.10	
Size of Agenda	0.15	**	0.15	**
	3.89		3.89	
No. of Hearings in Congress, 1998	--		0.56	***
			11.09	
Constant	49.37		18.82	
R-Square	0.74		0.60	
N	600.00		600.00	

Note: The dependent variable is the number of organizational lobby registrations in 1999 in each of 50 states and 12 interest guilds. *** = p < .01, one-tailed test. The model includes dummies for 11 of 12 interest guilds and 49 of 50 states.

Table 4: Pooled Guild Agenda Size Models with Federal Hearings Variables and State Dummies (n=600)

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable: Size of State/Guild Policy Agenda, 1999 Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
1999 Fed. Hearings	0.04 1.06	--	--	--	--
1998 Fed. Hearings	--	0.14 ### 4.25	0.33 ### 4.20	--	0.34 ### 4.21
1997 Fed. Hearings	--	--	-0.21 ### -2.66	0.09 ### 2.70	-0.07 -0.79
1996 Fed. Hearings	--	--	--	--	-0.17 ### -2.76
Constant	11.16	-15.85	-12.73	-1.61	-13.27
R-Square	0.35	0.37	0.38	0.36	0.39

Notes: #=p<0.10, ##=p<0.05, ###=p<0.01, two-tailed tests. Standardized coefficients are presented with t-values reported below. Coefficients of state dummies are not shown.

Appendix 1: State Interest Guilds and Policy Agendas Project Matches

State Interest Guild	Policy Agendas Project Subtopic Codes
Part A. Complete Match Available	
Agriculture	400–499, 529
Banking and Finance	1501, 1502, 1504
Civil Rights	200, 201, 203–299
Communications	1706, 1707, 1709
Education	600–699
Environment	700–799
Good Government	2010, 2012
Government	2000–2004, 2007–2009, 2011, 2030
Health	300–399
Insurance	1505
Law	1200–1206, 1210–1299
Military and Veterans	1609, 1612
Police and Fire	1209
Natural Resources	803, 805
Tax and Government Regulation	107
Transportation	1000–1099
Utilities and Energy	802
Welfare	1300–1399, 1525
Women's Issues	202, 508, 1208
Part B. Complete Match Not Available	
Construction and Housing	
Hotel, Restaurant, Liquor	
Manufacturing	
Religion and Churches	
Small Business and Retail	
Service: Other Firms	
Sport, Amusement	

Note. See www.policyagendas.org for complete descriptions of the policy subtopic codes. Matches were determined by assessing the substantive coverage of the state interest guilds and comparing with the corresponding policy agendas codes. In order to match, we required that the two sets of substantive codes cover the vast bulk of the substantive issues in the same area. Cases where there was some overlap, but not complete coverage, were declared not to match.

Boldface indicates 12 state interest guilds included in data set of this study.

Appendix 2: Exploring the Lag Structure in our Models.

The number of hearings in a given year is a strong predictor of the number of hearings in the following year. However, our theoretical expectations require that we distinguish between *simultaneous* effects, where both federal hearings and state lobby registrations could be due to the same policy stimulus, and lagged effects, where federal policy activity leads to the *subsequent* mobilization of groups in the states. Our analysis suggests that a one-year lag is most appropriate, so in the body of the paper we present models using the 1998 hearings to predict the 1999 lobby registrations. In this appendix we lay out some more detail about this lag structure and include more complete tables showing full results.

Looking first at Table A-2, we see that a contemporaneous 1999 measure of Congressional hearings activity generates a positive and significant estimate. But inclusion of a one-year lagged version of the hearings variable in the third model generates nearly identical results. As seen in model 4, inclusion of both generates a very weak negative estimate (t=-0.12) for 1999 hearings and a positive estimate for the lagged 1998 variable, albeit with a marginal t-value of 1.61. There is clearly something of a collinearity problem with the inclusion of both estimates given that the 1999 and 1998 hearings measures are correlated at the 0.95 level, which may well suppress the probability values associated with the estimates.[1] But given the much stronger t-value for the 1998 variable, explanatory priority should be accorded the lagged impact of hearings on the density of state lobby registrations.[2] Thus, the results of models 2, 3, and 4 suggest that Congressional hearings have a predominantly positive but lagged impact on the demand for state lobbying. These initial results thereby lead us to reject the countervailing expectations that the main effect of Congressional hearings is in the form of either a contemporaneous response to policy problems common for both levels of government or a substitution effect whereby state

[1] The other hearings correlations are: 99-98 (0.88), 99-97 (0.67), 98-97 (0.90), 98-96 (0.76), and 97-96 (0.84).
[2] Another possible explanation is that we are really seeing a contemporaneous response to common policy problems, but the state legislators – in comparison to their august national counterparts – are just a bit slower on the uptake. The national politics scholar who is part of this research team likes this idea a lot. While not exactly ready to defend either the policy nimbleness or mental acuity of state legislators as a class, the state politics scholars who are part of the research team are much less enamored with this rival interpretation.

interests respond positively to a lack of national attention to issues.

The results presented in the last three columns probe this initial conclusion by looking at longer and more complex lag functions. Model 5 includes Congressional hearings as a two-year lag, while model 6 includes both the one- and two-year lag of hearings. Model 7 includes a more complete distributive lag model with hearings from 1996, 1997, and 1998 included as separate variables. The strong positive coefficient for hearings in model 5 reinforces our conclusion that the main effect of hearings on state lobby registrations is positive. But the results of models 6 and 7 raise something of a conundrum.[3] While the estimate for the one-year lag for hearings generates the now expected positive and significant estimates, the 1997 hearings variable in model 6 and the 1996 hearings variable in model 7 generate statistically discernible *negative* estimates. It is difficult to interpret these estimates in light of the strong results suggesting that the major impact of more proximate Congressional attention to issues on state lobby registrations is positive. But perhaps the best interpretation lies in the vagaries of cycles in Congressional attention to issues arising from the scarcity of space on policy agendas (Jones and Baumgartner 2005). That is, when Congress has not been addressing an issue *for some time*, this lack of action may stimulate state lobbying in the form of a substitution effect. But this is then swamped by a positive impact when Congressional attention again returns to the issue. State interests, accordingly, would benefit the most in terms of incentives to mobilize when an issue has received little national attention in prior years but has more recently become the focus of Congressional attention. But if valid, this is clearly a secondary effect in contrast to the positive influence of more recent hearings activity on state lobby registrations, a secondary effect that we do not want to push too far. Similar results were evident for the more complex models including dummies for guilds and states.

[3] This pattern was evident even when the hearings variables were combined counts to cover the two year duration of each Congress. Thus, the more proximate 97-98 estimate would be strongly positive and the lagged 95-96 estimate would be negative. When either lag was used, though, the estimate was always positive.

Table A-2: Pooled Guild-State Interest System Density Models with Federal Hearings Variables (n=600)

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable: No. of Organizational Lobby Registrations 1999						
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Sector GSP	0.72 ***	0.67 ***	0.65 ***	0.65 ***	0.66 ***	0.67 ***	0.76 ***
	6.62	6.36	6.20	6.17	6.16	6.29	7.11
Sector GSP Sq.	-0.38 ***	-0.35 ***	-0.33 ***	-0.33 ***	-0.34 ***	-0.34 ***	-0.39 ***
	-3.02	-2.85	-2.67	-2.65	-2.80	-2.63	-2.91
Party Competititon	-0.08 ***	-0.09 ***	-0.09 ***	-0.09 ***	-0.09 ***	-0.09 ***	-0.08 ***
	-2.74	-2.96	-3.15	-3.19	-2.98	-3.13	-3.13
Size of Agenda	0.30 ***	0.30 ***	0.29 ***	0.29 ***	0.30 ***	0.27 ***	0.23 ***
	4.75	5.10	4.88	4.59	4.97	4.47	3.83
1999 Fed. Hearings	--	0.15 ###	--	-0.01	--	--	--
		4.40		-0.12			
1998 Fed. Hearings	--		0.16 ###	0.17	--	0.33 ###	0.36 ###
			4.38	1.61		3.43	3.87
1997 Fed. Hearings	--	--	--	--	0.11 ###	-0.19 ##	0.08
					3.31	-2.11	0.73
1996 Fed. Hearings	--	--	--	--	--	--	-0.36 ###
							-5.64
Constant	41.21	33.84	36.41	36.65	38.03	36.79	34.95
R-Square	0.47	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.48	0.50	0.54

Notes: *=p<0.10, **=p<0.05, ***=p<0.01, one-tailed tests; #=p<0.10, ##=p<0.05, ###=p<0.01, two-tailed tests.
Standardized coefficients are presented with t-values reported below.