Goals, Salience, and the Nature of Advocacy

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Abstract

Our research offers a systematic look at how advocates' goals, the magnitude of the policy changes they seek, and the salience of the policy issues they care about shape the arguments and tactics advocates employ on a random sample of 98 issues. Our data show that the process of advocacy differs considerably for status quo supporters and challengers. Supporters of the status quo engage in far fewer activities than do challengers, and they are much more likely to make negative claims about the policy options proposed by others and ignore the virtues of the policy they support. Although the data did not reveal many linkages between salience and argument use, we did observe a relationship between conflict-expanding tactics and greater issue salience. The magnitude and type of policy change that was sought had minimal impact on the arguments and tactics used by advocates. Overall, our investigation demonstrates that there are compelling patterns to the advocacy process in Washington that may help to explain the movement or lack thereof that we observe.

When we observe the activities that advocates undertake, the typical assumption is that they have emerged from a deliberate plan focused on a specific issue that has been executed in a linear fashion. Armed with a creative and compelling argument, money to donate to political campaigns, and easily mobilized supporters, advocates are presumed to gather support for policy preferences they articulate and single-mindedly pursue. A simplistic description, perhaps, but one that is not too far removed from both popular and academic descriptions of the advocacy process. But advocates face numerous constraints on their abilities both to achieve their goals and to undertake well-planned campaigns. These constraints emerge not only from their own resources and those of their allies but also from the nature of the legislative process, the outcomes of elections, and the finite size of the public agenda. And, of course, these and other constraints function as opportunities for other advocates. How, then, do various constraints and opportunities systematically affect the strategies and tactics that advocates use to achieve their goals? Advocates may find it possible to execute a carefully developed plan of action in some circumstances, whereas in others they will find themselves reacting and responding to the action and events that occur around them with efforts that, at best, reflect a desire to do something rather than nothing at all. As students of public policy and organizational advocacy, it is easy to forget that organizations often are reacting rather than taking proactive steps to advance their goals. Although sometimes the need to react is forecast well in advance, it is equally likely that there will be difficulties in carefully planning a strategy for advocacy.

Two of the policy issues we studied illustrate some of the constraints and opportunities advocates encounter as well as their abilities to execute a plan of action. Consider the first issue. Back in 1999, many clinical pathologists were aware that the Medicare rate of reimbursement for a Pap screening – a tool for diagnosing cervical abnormalities – was lower than they thought it should be given the cost to them of executing the screen. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), then known as the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), was the agency responsible for the Medicare program and for regulating payment rates. In 1999, HCFA –

preoccupied by a series of budget cuts and growing health expenses – was in no hurry to act to increase the reimbursement rate. Yet one impatient pathologist decided he wanted to see some movement on this issue. He enlisted his member of Congress, Representative Neil Abercrombie (D-HI), to introduce legislation that would mandate an increase in the payment rate. With the legislative ball rolling, as it were, organizations representing the interests of clinical pathologists took notice. To be sure, an increase would be a good thing but a legislative increase in the rate? Congress had shown little inclination in the past to take this type of action. Moreover, Representative Abercrombie was a Democrat in a Republican-controlled House who did not sit on any committee that would play a role in establishing such an increase. But while Washington representatives for the interests of pathologists could not sit idly by, they also could not return to square one and design and implement an entirely new effort to try to raise the reimbursement rate. In this situation, the effort to bring about a rate increase would be determined by the actions that had been initiated by a single constituent and his member of Congress.[1]

Around the same time as Neil Abercrombie was being recruited to assist a constituent, members of The Business Roundtable – the CEOs of several Fortune 100 firms – saw an opportunity to secure favorable access to a new market. Although these corporate leaders had worked together on trade policy issues for many years, they had not been very involved in the annual review of China's trade status as a "most favored nation" (MFN). But preferred-trading partner status for China was a priority for the new leadership of The Roundtable's trade investment task force. So, by 1998, they were fully engaged in the debate over China's MFN status, and subsequently the establishment of permanent normal trading relations (PNTR). Objectively, The Roundtable faced a significant challenge on this issue: changing the status quo by securing permanent MFN status for China in the face of public and governmental debate about the implications of its human rights abuses. So how did The Roundtable prepare to enter this

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[1] For more information about this case, see
http://lobby.la.psu.edu/005_Pap_Screenings/frameset_PAP_screen.html.

new, salient, and contentious arena of debate? Actually, some of the preparation had been in the works for a few years, long before this particular issue became a priority for them. This allowed The Roundtable to hit the ground running in 1998. Specifically, the organization made a conscious decision in the mid-1990s to raise their dues so that they would have resources for any legislative effort they sought to affect. As The Roundtable began to focus on China and PNTR, some of the resources were used to establish local networks in a number of congressional districts consisting of companies and individuals who were keenly interested in access to global markets. These networks were augmented by the grassroots operations that member companies of The Roundtable had developed. Moreover, since the 1990s, The Roundtable had made it a practice to hire legislative consultants who acted as liaisons with Congress and served as external whip organizations to keep track of progress and coordinate interactions with the Hill. Many of these preparations were not directed toward China trade per se but rather to any issue given priority by the member CEOs. The question of what to do on this issue appears to have been answered in part before the prospect of permanent normalized trade with China emerged.[2]

These two examples illustrate two different contexts with different constraints and opportunities for advocates to achieve their goals. Advocates have interests in issues that may be of considerable interest to the public, to a targeted group, or to almost no one at all outside of themselves and a few policymakers. Moreover, advocates sometimes seek to change the status quo whereas other times they desire to maintain it. As the examples here illustrate, when status quo changes are sought, sometimes they are substantial while other times they are relatively minor. And, of course, advocates have different resources both in terms of money and other factors like the breadth and depth of their base of support.

These variables – group and extra-group in nature – affect the level of control that advocates have over their actions on a particular issue, and thus, the strategies and tactics they

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[2] For more information on this case, see http://lobby.la.psu.edu/040_PNTR/frameset_china.html.

undertake to achieve their goals. In this chapter, we focus on how advocates' goals (i.e., defense of or change in the status quo), the magnitude of change they seek, and the salience of the policy issues they care about affect the arguments and tactics they employ.

The Climate for Advocacy: Intentions, Policy Change, and Issue Salience

Goals & Intentions. It is of no surprise to political practitioners and political observers that defenders of the status quo have an advantage over those who seek change. The public agenda is finite so that problems compete for the attention of both policymakers and organizational advocates (Baumgartner and Jones 1993; Hilgartner and Bosk 1988; Jones and Baumgartner 2005; McCombs and Zhu 1995). Thus, the likelihood is low that any one particular problem emerges to command sufficient attention. Consequently it is an even rarer event that change will occur on the subset of attention grabbing issues. Jones and Baumgartner (2005) argue that "friction" explains why change is so unusual in the policy process. Friction describes resistance, and in this usage, resistance to change. The more institutionalized this resistance is, the more pressure for change must build before any change is observed. In such circumstances, policies may not change at all even in the face of substantial pressures. Only when these pressures pass some threshold level do shifts or punctuations in policy occur (Baumgartner and Jones 1993; Jones and Baumgartner 2005).

One source of friction is structural. The institutions of the U.S. government are intended to be resistant to swift change.[3] Relatedly, the elected policymakers who inhabit those institutions tend to be averse to taking action that has uncertain consequences for their careers (Fenno 1978; Kingdon 1989; Wolpe and Levine 1996; Wright 1996), and they and other policymakers may resist making changes to policies that they played a role in constructing. Some amount of uncertainty will be associated with any policy alternative to the status quo because no

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[3] As a telling example, consider that roughly 9,000 bills were introduced in the 106th and 107th sessions of Congress while only 465 substantive laws were passed in the 106th session, and only 300 in the 107th.

one can ever know precisely what the consequences and implications of a new policy will be for either the target population or others. Indeed, even the best-researched policy alternative may have unintended consequences after it is implemented, a fact that is not lost on most policymakers. Additionally, the communities of advocates that are engaged by particular issues provide considerable structure to the debates about those issues. The advocates surrounding each of the issues we studied have shared understandings of the justification for the current policy, knowledge of its shortcomings, information about alternatives that have been previously proposed (and the reactions to them), as well as policy options that have been previously tested. Like the elected policymakers, advocates generally are likely to be in no hurry to exchange the status quo that they may have had a hand in shaping for the uncertain consequences of a new approach. Resistance to changing the status quo for an alternative associated with uncertainty comes as a result of individuals' tendencies to weigh the prospect of potential losses more heavily than the possibility of gains (Kahneman and Tversky 1984).

More generally, policy change requires more than the attention of policymakers and others, it requires at least one alternative to the status quo that a large number of advocates and decision makers find appealing and can support (Kingdon 1995). Devising such an alternative often requires a substantial, multi-year investment of resources from those who seek some type of change. Given all this resistance in the policy process, advocates who desire to change current policy readily admit that they are usually embarking on a multi-year effort. To be sure, those protecting the status quo certainly cannot ignore efforts to change current policy. Just as individual incumbents are seldom comforted by the advantage they are said to enjoy, advocates realize that the context may be just right for a change to take place. But relative to those challenging the status quo, the odds are generally in favor of those who defend it. Consider that across our 98 cases, we have no examples in which an advocate who supported the status quo took no action and was then surprised by a change that took place. The status quo tends to remain the status quo, despite organized efforts to change it.

The case of criminal justice reform provides a strikingly clear example of the hurdles facing status quo challengers and the often slow pace of policy change. In this case, dozens of civil rights organizations had formed several coalitions, some of them with the help of funding from the Soros Foundation. Several of the organizations had conducted major research reports that showed racial disparities in criminal prosecutions and punishments. The research included a report sponsored by the American Civil Liberties Union, entitled "Driving While Black," that exposed the problem of racial profiling. While the organizations received a great deal of press coverage for their efforts, they received almost no serious political attention.[4] No major bills were introduced in Congress and participants in the coalition were not sure, when they were interviewed in the summer of 2000, exactly what their strategy should be or what aspect of criminal justice reform they should try first to address in the political arena. Despite media coverage, the issue was so far off the formal political agenda that opponents of changes to the criminal justice system didn't even bother to organize. But the absence of organized opposition didn't mean that advocates of reform were optimistic. As a member of one of the civil rights organizations said, "The opposition is everywhere, so strong that it doesn't need to be organized. It is every politician who argues for tough-on-crime attitudes. It's the entire current criminal justice system."[5]

Magnitude of Change Sought. Those who seek to change current policy are quite a diverse group. Some advocates may be attempting to create new policy or make a change to extant policy, while others like the civil rights organizations mentioned above may be building public support for a long-term goal. Moreover, as the examples of China trade and Pap screenings indicate, the change sought may be relatively small or quite substantial. Large changes in the status quo can seldom be achieved quietly. The only way to produce big change is

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[4] A total of 37 news stories were written about this issue during the 106th session of Congress, a number that far exceeds the median of 16 news stories for our sample of 98 issues.

[5] For more information on this case, see
http://lobby.la.psu.edu/049_Criminal_Justice_Reform/frameset_criminal.html.

to get a lot of people to engage the issue. If this does not happen – as the criminal justice reform example illustrates – nothing may happen, at least in the short term.

But small changes are not necessarily easy to accomplish either. For one, as we mention above, policy makers and other advocates often are invested in the status quo that they developed, making them reluctant to consider even relatively small changes. In addition, the relationship between the level of uncertainty and size of the policy change is probably nonlinear. Although in some cases it may be easier to predict the consequences of small changes, there is always the possibility (as the advocates we interviewed frequently reminded us) that a relatively small change in some area of policy might establish a precedent for change elsewhere.[6] Moreover, policymakers are regularly asked to address a whole host of issues, and they must allocate their time to those they deem most important. Although advocates may certainly play a role in affecting how time is allocated (Hall and Deardorff 2006), it remains true that most policymakers do not have time to attend to every matter they are asked to address. So while an objective observer may see a small problem as easy and quick to address, time and focus are still required. For elected policymakers, the matter may be not sufficiently visible to make it worth their effort to attend to since they would have to work hard to get recognition for their efforts. A case we have described elsewhere involving the way in which Medicare reimburses clinical social workers is perhaps the best example among our 98 cases of how difficult it may be to produce small policy changes (Baumgartner, et al. 2006).[7] Of course, if policy changes – small or not so small – are especially important to key constituents, they may be easier to realize.

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[6] For example, when Congress (with support from the National Association of Broadcasters) attempted to intervene to stop the FCC from granting licenses for low-power FM radio (LPFM) stations, proponents of the LPFM program asserted that it was worrisome to see Congress getting so involved in technical matters such as whether there was interference between radio stations' signals. According to one advocate we interviewed, "if Congress intervenes here they're opening themselves up to constantly second guess the FCC and they'll have to make technical decisions in the future." See http://lobby.la.psu.edu/025_Low_Power_FM_Radio/frameset_lpfm.html.

[7] See http://lobby.la.psu.edu/007_Clinic_Soc/frameset_clinic_soc.html.

Issue Salience. Salience is essential for understanding the uncertainty advocates face on issues they care about as well as the efforts they undertake to advance their preferences (Bacheller 1977; Goldstein 1999; Kollman 1998; Schattschneider 1960; Smith 2000). When issues are especially salient to the public, an advocate's actions are more likely to be observed, and the issue is more likely to be attended to by other advocates. In contrast, when issues are less salient, conventional wisdom suggests that advocates benefit from operating under the radar screen and out of the public eye (Bacheller 1977; Browne 1990; Schattschneider 1960). Indeed, the subgovernment model of policymaking characterizes how organizational, congressional, and bureaucratic advocates work outside of the public eye to achieve shared goals. Status quo supporters, in particular, benefit from a lack of attention to policy that they have no desire to alter. But a lack of visibility is not always helpful to advocates, particularly those who desire to change the status quo. If the change they seek is broad in scope, visibility is essential; an issue may go nowhere if no one takes it seriously enough to engage it. In this way, salience may be essential in order to create enough momentum to ease the friction in the policy process. However, a relatively more salient issue creates a less predictable context for an advocate because the audience is both bigger and more diverse than on less visible issues.

That uncertainty is associated with salience also derives from the fact that salience is not exogenous to the policy process. Advocates who are disadvantaged by the dimensions of conflict associated with the status quo may benefit from broadening the scope of attention to an issue (Schattschneider 1960), and advocates may use outside or grassroots lobbying in an effort to increase salience, particularly as they attempt to move an issue onto the public agenda (Kollman 1998). Thus, although the salience surrounding a policy issue may affect the choices advocates make, it also may be affected by their advocacy. The issue of whether and how to apply and collect taxes on Internet sales provides an example of how salience evolves in response to the actions of advocates. When Congress first took up this issue during the late 1990s, they came close to passing a permanent ban on taxing sales made on the Internet. At the time, the issue of

an Internet sales tax was not especially salient. But as so-called "bricks and mortar" retailers, and county and state governments began to mobilize on this issue, the momentum in Congress for a permanent ban came to a halt. Eventually, Congress did pass a temporary moratorium on Internet sales taxes but they saw this short extension as an opportunity for states to make changes to their sales tax codes to facilitate application and collection of taxes from Internet sales. Here, the conflict expansion strategies of the e-Fairness Coalition were successful, thus upsetting what was almost a huge policy victory for the anti-tax advocates and online retailers of the e-Freedom Coalition.[8]

Engaging in Action and Making Arguments

Advocacy efforts are primarily intended to accomplish two objectives: (1) to communicate policy preferences to government decision makers, organized interests, members of the public, and others (e.g., the media); and (2) to build support for those preferences among that same audience.[9] To be sure, the priority given to each type of audience member will vary, as will the array of activities and arguments an advocate employs. These primary objectives, however, remain the same. The question we consider here is how advocates' efforts, namely the tactics and arguments they use, vary depending on whether they support or seek to change the status quo, the amount of change they seek, and the salience of the issues they care about.[10]

Articulating Arguments & Adopting Tactics. How policy arguments are used by advocates to articulate preferences and build support may appear straightforward. An advocate – the representative of an organization, a member of Congress, a member of the president's cabinet – offers a rationale or justification for a particular goal, seeks to explain the positive implications of some action, and/or undermines the goals of a rival perspective by explaining its negative

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[8] See http://lobby.la.psu.edu/080_Internet_Sales_Tax/frameset_sales_tax.html.

[9] These objectives encompass efforts by organizational advocates to communicate their preferences to and build support among their membership.

[10] We consider elsewhere how the resources advocates possess, and the opposition and impediments they encounter affect their efforts.

implications. The advocate is defining or framing the issue in a way that is consistent with his or her goals. Although there is a voluminous literature on the concept of framing and its importance to policy debates (Best 1995; Druckman 2001, 2004; Entman 1993, 2004; Kahneman and Tversky 1984; Quattrone and Tversky 1988; Riker 1986, 1996; Schneider and Ingram 1993; Stone 1989; Tversky and Kahneman 1986) we know surprisingly little about both the content of advocates' appeals, and how easily arguments can be used to alter or redefine an issue in a way that is better suited to an advocate's goals.

In terms of content, a wide range of recent studies, indeed a growing research consensus, focuses on the importance of costly information, technical expertise, and scientific consensus in affecting the terms of a policy debate and the reactions of decision-makers to the appeals of advocates. Several studies focus on lobbying in terms of the provision of "costly information." Portrayals of lobbying as diverse as Austen-Smith and Wright (1994) and Hall (2006) are rooted in the notion that the provision of costly information by lobbyists to decision makers is the currency of the lobbying exchange. If lobbyists act to mobilize allies to serve as legislative agents on their behalf (Hall and Wayman 1990; Hall and Deardorff 2006), they surely will attempt to illustrate how taking action for the group will help legislators achieve their electoral, policy, or procedural goals using costly information such as how a proposal is likely to impact different districts, who will pay the costs, and what those costs will be. In addition, there is evidence that organizational advocates often are successful in getting Congress to make policy decisions that are informed by research and technical expertise (Esterling 2004). Similarly, both Ainsworth (1993) and Austen-Smith and Wright (1994) argue that legislators are more likely to listen to and perceive as credible lobbyists' messages when they present information that is costly or difficult for a lobbyist to collect.

But there is also research to suggest that policymakers are responsive to symbolic or valence appeals that are unlikely to convey information that is difficult for policymakers to acquire for themselves. Several studies highlight the importance of symbols in politics, and their

use and misuse by decision makers and advocates to achieve public policy goals (Cobb and Elder 1983; Cobb and Ross 1997; Edelman 1971, 1988; Elder and Cobb 1983; Hirschman 1991). Although there is no single definition of what constitutes symbolic rhetoric or symbolic arguments, such arguments are commonly portrayed as relatively simple, affect-eliciting narratives that involve accessible images or appeals to widely accepted social values (Carmines and Stimson 1980; Cobb and Kuklinski 1997; Edelman 1971).

Like arguments, tactics are viewed as another means of transmitting information. Direct contact between advocates and between advocates and policymakers conveys information regarding the policy implications of the issue being considered, as well how debate surrounding the issue might be affected by the policy process itself (e.g., partisanship in a chamber of Congress; reluctance of an agency official to move on a matter of policy). Grassroots activities communicate to policymakers the salience of an issue (Kollman 1998) as well as whether there are likely to be electoral implications associated with activity on the issue (Wright 1996). On many issues, wide arrays of tactics are observed, presumably because a variety of information is needed and is useful (Caldeira, et al. 2000).

Given our understanding of how advocates' goals and the salience of policy issues affect advocacy, how might these forces be expected to shape arguments and tactics? Generally speaking, relative to status quo challengers, status quo supporters have a number of advantages that should be manifest in their choice of tactics and arguments. As described above, defenders of current policy enjoy tremendous advantages regarding the uncertainty associated with anything that is not the status quo. The status quo policy is what it is. It may not be perfect, it may not be popular, but it is in place and advocates and policymakers understand, at least to some degree, its operation, its implications, and its consequences. Thus, advocates who support the status quo can be expected to highlight not the virtues of the status quo but the tremendous uncertainty and potentially negative implications of any alternative to it. This is not to suggest that questions will not be raised about the operation of the status quo and/or its consequences. Rather, the point is

that an experiential understanding of the status quo provides its supporters with an advantage that the status quo challengers will not reap.

Relatedly, status quo challengers may well attempt to redefine issues in ways that bring them greater advantage but these attempts may not be successful in many circumstances. As described earlier, most issues are considered within the confines of professional communities of specialists already familiar with current arguments so that an advocate will likely find it difficult to successfully convince his or her audience that an interpretation of the issue that differs from the status quo definition should be adopted. Moreover, compelling arguments that offer a different understanding of an issue have to take hold among advocates at least as strongly as the claims made by status quo defenders. If supporters of the status quo use arguments in the manner we expect and highlight the uncertainty of alternative claims, their arguments will indeed be difficult to overcome. Here again, the weight given to potential losses is extremely relevant.

In contrast to the uncertainty advantage held by supporters of the status quo, it is likely to be the case that they will have fewer opportunities to plan the course of their advocacy efforts since, by definition, they are responding to actions taken by someone who is challenging what is current policy. But as the examples offered above make clear, status quo supporters do not always act at the first sign of movement from the challengers to current policy so they do have the opportunity to observe and think about the proper response. Given that defenders of current policy can benefit from keeping an issue out of the public eye and salient to as small a group as is possible, we should see relatively few instances of status quo defenders engaging the public or the media in their efforts. In contrast, those challenging the status quo should be expected to engage in activities that raise the visibility of their concerns. In some instances – especially when the change that is sought is small -- operating under the radar screen may be more beneficial, even for opponents of the status quo. But relative to defenders of the status quo, challengers will benefit more from tactics that increase visibility.

In fact, some researchers draw a very clear connection between salience and type of activity advocates undertake. According to Bacheller (1977), issues that are more salient to the general public (what he calls "campaign-defined issues") will affect the breadth of the advocates' efforts in terms of both who advocates contact to advance their preferences, and the activities they use to communicate useful information. For instance, advocates who are dealing with campaign-defined, controversial issues are found to engage in more "non-specialized" activities such as contacting other advocates to "argue in support of a legislative position" (259). In addition, West and Loomis (1999) are quite direct about the relationship between the arguments of advocates and issue visibility, predicting that the scope of conflict and the number of interests affected by an issue shape the type of narratives that will be used to define that issue. "As the scope of the conflict broadens, narratives become less complex and their meaning more frequently conveyed by metaphor and symbol" (West and Loomis 1999, 40-41).

Finally, if policymakers respond to costly information, it is possible that some types of information are better conveyed through verbal argument while other types of information are better demonstrated through action. For instance, advocates may be effective in using carefully crafted arguments about the likely implications of a particular policy alternative. However, electoral ramifications are probably better demonstrated through action. Indeed, Wright (1990) describes how grassroots efforts can be viewed by policymakers as indications of an advocate's ability to mobilize constituents on Election Day. In this way, advocates who seek to affect the traceability of issues and a policymaker's actions on those issues may be far more effective turning out the grassroots than in describing to a policymaker that their actions on an issue may have electoral implications.

Our Data

The data that we use to investigate the arguments and tactics that advocates employ have been collected as part of a broad, collaborative research project on advocacy and public

policymaking.[11] The primary data being collected for the project comes from more than 300

interviews with Washington, DC-based policy advocates (e.g., representatives of organized

interests, congressional staff, agency personnel) active on 98 randomly selected policy issues.

The issues included in the study were identified by a set of organizational advocates who

we call *issue identifiers*. These issue identifiers were selected at random from the list of

organized interests that registered to lobby Congress in 1996, the last year for which these

registration data were compiled in a usable format at the time we began the data collection (see

Baumgartner and Leech 1999). During the interviews, the issue identifier was asked to select the

most recent issue he or she had spent time on, and to describe what he or she had done and what

the organization was trying to accomplish on the issue. Specifically:

> *Could you take the most recent issue you've been spending time on and*
> *describe what you're trying to accomplish on this issue and what type of*
> *action are you taking to make that happen? The issue we talk about*
> *doesn't have to be associated with a particular bill, rule, or regulation,*
> *and it doesn't have to be an issue that's been receiving coverage by the*
> *media—whatever issue you've most recently spent a significant amount*
> *of time on is fine so long as it involves the federal government.*

The use of this question means that the issues included in the study need not be part of or

prominent on the public agenda. This makes possible an observation of issues that may differ

from those typically described in the literature since existing studies most often select issues

based on prominent debates in Congress or in the media. Interviewees also were asked to narrate

the appeals and arguments they make when they speak with others about the issue, to specify with

whom they are talking about the issue, to describe the type of opposition they face, and to provide

a variety of other information about their organizations.

Subsequent interviews were conducted with the main actors representing each of the

distinct perspectives on the identified issues. Although some issues (e.g., policies about funding

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[11] The project website is http://lobby.la.psu.edu.

for graduate medical education) involve as many as six additional interviews, most issues involve about three (the information in subsequent interviews quickly became repetitive).

Six variables are important to our examination of argument and tactic use in different contexts: policy perspectives; arguments; tactics; intent or goal; degree of change sought; and issue salience.

Perspectives: We define a policy perspective as a group of actors attempting to achieve the same policy outcome. Note that these advocates may or may not be working together as part of a coalition. Typically, however, most of the members of a given perspective do indeed coordinate their efforts informally or through a formal coalition. Perspectives include anyone attempting to promote the same goal, whether those advocates are within or outside of government. So a perspective may include private corporate actors, lobbyists, trade groups, executive branch officials, members of Congress, or even the president himself. While members of a given perspective typically work together, there may be important advocates working to achieve the same goal, but with no coordination or even communication with the others. For us, then, a perspective is broader than a coalition. It includes anyone playing a significant role in the policy process who is actively attempting to achieve a given goal. The distinct goals that various policy advocates are attempting to reach on an issue define the perspectives associated with that issue. With this definition of a perspective in place, we can summarize the structure of conflict across our cases easily by noting the number of distinct perspectives in each case. Across our 98 issues, we identified a total of 214 distinct perspectives, or just over two per case, on average. Table A.1 in Appendix A lists these perspectives by issue.

A surprisingly large number of issues (17 cases) consist of a single perspective attempting to achieve a goal to which no one objects or around which no one bothers to mobilize. A majority of cases had two perspectives—58 of our cases had this number. Just 23 out of our 98 cases involve what could be considered a complex structure of conflict (with multiple competing goals), and the bulk of these cases had just three or four perspectives. Typically this consists of a

status-quo perspective and two or three sets of actors attempting to change the status quo in slightly different ways. These groups may not be directly opposed to each other, but they are not working toward the same outcome either. Only one case included more than four distinct perspectives.

Arguments: During our interviews, advocates were asked:

So you're talking to these various people about why it's necessary to move forward on this issue [or, if relevant, why it's necessary to prevent something from happening, etc.]. What's the fundamental argument you use to try to convince people to do this?

Our objective in coding the policy arguments advocates use is to distinguish them by their type (e.g., cost, implementation). To achieve this objective, we needed to define what constitutes an argument so that only arguments and not descriptive statements or other comments about an issue that are made during the course of the interview are coded. For our purposes, an argument is a statement that links a policy goal with either a justification for the policy or a discussion of its implications. In some cases, the linkage between the justification/implication is not explicit but can be gleaned from the context of the overall interview discussion. The primary point is that for a statement to be considered an argument, the policy consequences or rationale must at least be implicit in the discussion.

With this definition in hand, two coders independently read all of the interview summaries available for an issue. These coders highlighted any arguments they encountered in the summaries, distinguishing arguments offered by the advocate being interviewed from those arguments that are presented as being made by others who are interested in the issue.[12] Once all the arguments were identified, the coders (again acting independently) assigned each one to a "type" category. We have defined fourteen types of arguments, each with between two and six

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[12] Although we obtain information from the interviewed advocates about the arguments being made by others, we code only the arguments made by the interviewed advocate.

subtypes. These argument types are presented in Table A.2 in Appendix A. The types are intended to describe, generally, the content of the appeal.

Tactics: As noted above, interviewees were asked to describe the type of action they were taking to accomplish their objectives on an issue. Reponses to this question, and a series of follow-up probes, provide us with information about the tactics advocates employed. Our objective in coding tactics was to document as completely as possible the range of activities that were used by advocates on a particular issue. Forty-one categories of activities (plus one category for "other activities mentioned") were identified through prior research and a preliminary review of the interview summaries. One coder read through each interview summary in order to identify whether a tactic was undertaken by each advocate individually, or by the coalition in which the advocate participated.

Goal or Intent: For every issue perspective that we identified, we determined whether the perspective was supportive of or opposed to the status quo policy. The status quo was defined in one of two ways, depending on whether the policy issue in question was legislative or regulatory. The status quo for legislative matters was defined as the policy in existence prior to the start of the start of the session of Congress in which the issue was identified. For regulatory issues, the status quo was represented by the policy in place at the start of the calendar year in which the issue was identified. Perspectives that sought to change the status quo policy – regardless of whether or not they proposed a clear alternative to it – were classified as status quo challengers. Overall, 82 (38.3%) of our 214 perspectives are status quo supporters and 132 (61.7%) are challengers.

Magnitude and type of policy change: Based on the information gathered through the interviews, we determined the impact each perspective's policy preferences would have (if adopted or implemented) on the budget of the federal government, the costs borne by non-government actors and institutions, and existing federal programs. Each perspective was coded for whether it would increase spending, decrease spending, maintain current spending, or have no

implications for both the federal budget and the costs to non-government actors. In addition, we coded the impact that each perspective's policy proposal or objective would have on an established program as follows: abolish; large-scale reduction; marginal reduction; marginal expansion; large-scale expansion; status quo; or no established program.

Issue salience: In addition to the interviews we conducted, we searched for a wide array of publicly available information about each issue. Using a set of keywords developed for each issue, we gathered relevant print and television news stories (where print stories included major newspapers as well as *The National Journal*); information about congressional activity (bills, hearings, testimony, committee reports, member speeches and website postings); information about executive branch activities (regulations or proposed regulations), and materials posted by organizational advocates on their websites (e.g., press releases, reports).[13] We then created two standardized scales with Cronbach's alpha. The scale indicating "general salience" is based on counts of issue-related congressional bills; congressional hearings; witness testimony at congressional hearings; documents/statements found on House members' websites; documents/statements found on the Senate website; floor statements; *National Journal* stories; newspaper stories; and television news stories (the index reliability score is .843). A scale designed to tap "inside the Beltway salience" does not include the counts for newspaper and television news stories (the index reliability score is .830).

Findings

Arguments. Because so little is known about the types of arguments that advocates typically make, we begin with a very simple look at the nature of argumentation observed in our study. To that end, Table 1 shows the distribution of argument types made by advocates associated with each of 170 perspectives on our 98 study issues.[14] Columns two and three of

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[13] All of these data are available on our project website.
[14] Specifically, we examine the arguments made by actors associated with each perspective. If one or more of the actors associated with a perspective makes a particular type of argument, we consider the perspective

Table 1 show the proportions of perspectives supportive of the status quo and the proportions of perspectives challenging the status quo, respectively, that make use of each type of argument whereas column four reports the overall proportion of perspectives that make use of each type of argument. What is perhaps most notable in Table 1 is the diversity of argument types that are employed on our random sample of issues. Eleven types of arguments, touching on topics as diverse as feasibility, the appropriateness of government action, cost, and equality of treatment, are used by more than 10 percent of the perspectives active on our study issues; seven of these types are used by over a fifth of the active perspectives. That said, three types of arguments are especially common. More than half of all perspectives offer arguments that raise concerns or offer reassurance about the feasibility of policy options (72.9 percent); that suggest that certain policy options promote or inhibit non-contestable goals (e.g., public safety, improving the economy, improving rural health care) (63.5 percent); and/or that emphasize the costs or cost savings that particular policy alternatives offer to non-government actors (53.5 percent). Especially notable across these three types of arguments is the similarity in relative usage between status quo supporters and those who challenge the status quo. Although challengers to the policy status quo are somewhat more likely to discuss policy feasibility and how policy options affect the costs borne by non-government actors, the differences between these two groups are statistically indistinguishable.

[Table 1 here]

The next most commonly used arguments are those that link policy options to equality of treatment or discrimination (41.2 percent); to various non-cost consequences (37.7 percent); and to costs imposed upon or saved by government (30.6 percent).[15] Among this grouping of

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as having made that type of argument. We do not have arguments for all 214 perspectives because we did not seek or could not obtain interviews with representatives of 44 perspectives.

[15] The category of non-cost consequences includes arguments that refer to any consequence – intended or unintended -- of the status quo or the proposed policy that does not refer to directly to costs borne by government and/or the private sector. For instance, on the issue from the 106th Congress about whether to

arguments, clear differences are seen in the tendencies of status quo challengers and perspectives defending the status quo. Advocates associated with perspectives that challenge the status quo tend to emphasize the costs borne by government significantly more often than do those defending the status quo (p=.024).[16] In contrast, status quo defenders show a relatively greater inclination than do status quo challengers to emphasize the non-cost consequences of policy options. In this case, however, the 12.3 percentage point difference falls just outside the bounds of statistical significance (p=.109). As we explain in more detail below, the emphasis on cost and non-cost consequences by status quo challengers and defenders, respectively, provides insight into how advocates with different intentions tend to try to build support for their policy goals.

Arguments that refer to the magnitude of change proposed, the procedural or jurisdictional issues at stake, the appropriateness of government involvement, the size of the underlying problem, or the link between a policy alternative and some target group or set of constituents are used less frequently than are claims of feasibility, cost, and other consequences. As shown in Table 1, no more than about a fifth of the perspectives in our study sought to justify or explain their preferences in these terms. Here again, relatively minimal differences emerge between status quo defenders and challengers. It is only the use of arguments about the appropriateness or inappropriateness of government activity that comes close to being significantly greater for defenders of the status quo (p=.108).

Much rarer are references to a looming crisis, to partisan or electoral benefits and costs associated with a policy alterative, and/or to appeals that link policy options to national security

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raise CAFE standards for light trucks and vans, the perspective that supported the status quo moratorium on raising standards offered arguments based both on cost and non-cost consequences: "If fuel efficiency standards are raised, then manufacturers will go with something lighter [to construct vehicles]. If lighter materials are used, safety and cost become an issue. Lighter cars tend to be less safe and steel is less expensive than alternative materials."

[16] We use a two sample test of proportions to determine the likelihood that the observed differences in relative frequencies are due to random sampling error. In the present case, if the true difference in the use of government cost-related arguments between status quo challengers and status quo defenders were zero, the probability is .024 of observing a 16.5 percentage point difference due to random sampling error.

concerns. That advocates would not seek to discuss the electoral implications of a policy choice is not too surprising; as noted above we would expect that electoral considerations would be communicated more effectively through actions – mobilizing grassroots or grass-tops supporters – rather than words. But, in light of the popular view of lobbyists as mere conduits of money between well-heeled interests and policymakers, it is notable that few appeals reference campaign contributions as a rationale for supporting or rejecting the preferences of a perspective (see Table A.2 – references to campaign contributions are included as an electoral benefit/cost type of argument).[17] It is also somewhat surprising to see so few efforts by the advocates in our perspectives to link their policy goals with national security. The initial and subsequent interviews for our project continued for more than a year following September 11, 2001, a period marked both by heightened security concerns, and widespread acknowledgement that the political landscape and debate was dominated by national security. Perhaps the effort to link issues, generally, with national security concerns was relatively short-lived. We were not in the field between September, 2001 and May, 2002. When our interviewing resumed in May, some of the advocates we interviewed were working on issues related to the Bush administration's "war on terror" and its corollary efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq – terrorism reinsurance for airlines; maritime security; restrictions on foreign students' work in university laboratories; and efforts to increase and fund airline security. But advocates had begun to work on many other issues and, based on our interviews, it appears that they sought to justify and explain their policy preferences in terms that were not explicitly related to the national security issues that were dominating the public agenda.[18]

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[17] Of course, contributions need not be mentioned explicitly to effectively determine policy choices. That is, the receipt of a contribution may be sufficient to explain the recipient's policy preference.

[18] One might expect to see a relatively greater attention to cost in the arguments made after September, 2001. In other words, advocates might have found it beneficial to emphasize the cost savings associated with their policy priorities – or the cost increases associated with the preferences of opponents – given the rising costs associated with homeland security and the "war on terror" in the post-9/11 period. Our data show that, generally speaking, this is not the case. Overall, the relative frequency of arguments related to

Finally, although advocates, overall, do not point to a looming crisis as a rationale for supporting a particular policy choice, the 2nd and 3rd columns of Table 1 illustrate that when a crisis is mentioned, it is more often raised by challengers to the status quo. This type of argument is a reasonable (and not unexpected) one for status quo challengers to make given the hurdles they face in generating motion for change.

Additional detail about the content of these arguments is provided in Table 2 (only those types of arguments that are used by 10 percent or more of the perspectives are presented here). Like Table 1, Table 2 shows that a diverse array of arguments is used by the advocates associated with the perspectives that were active on our issues. For a few argument types, however, there is a particular subtype that is relatively more common. For example, within the category of goal arguments (used by 63.5 percent of all perspectives), claims that emphasize how a policy alternative promotes a shared goal (42.4 percent of perspectives use this form of argument) are made much more often than are claims that emphasize how an opposing perspective inhibits a goal (27.1 percent). Moreover, the tendency to emphasize how a policy alternative promotes a shared goal is much more common among status quo challengers (50 percent of all perspectives challenging the status quo versus 37.5 percent of perspectives defending it). But among the arguments that emphasize the equal or unequal impact of a policy, claims of how policy options provide an unfair advantage for some far outweigh the defensive (or counter) argument that they do not (38.8 percent versus 5.9 percent, respectively).

[Table 2 here]

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the costs borne by government, and the costs borne by private actors, actually declined a bit in the post-2001 period. But the patterns are a bit different for government and private cost arguments, and for status quo challengers and supporters. Status quo challengers were far more likely than defenders of the status quo to use arguments about government costs in the pre-September 11 period (41.7 percent versus 17.1 percent, respectively). However, in the post-9/11 period, status quo defenders show a small increase in the use of government cost arguments (26.1 percent) and perspectives challenging the status quo show a large decrease in the use of government cost claims (26.5 percent). Arguments emphasizing private costs are used by just over 50 percent of perspectives both supporting and opposing the status quo prior to 9/11. After 2001, status quo challengers' use of these claims remains largely unchanged whereas status quo defenders appear less likely to make claims about private costs (43.5 percent).

Turning next to the arguments about cost, Table 2 shows that there is a tendency overall to focus more on the costs that policy options impose on private actors and institutions (42.4 percent) than on how the costs they bear will be reduced (21.8 percent). And relative to goal-related arguments, the differences between status quo defenders and challengers are more apparent. Challengers to the status quo are significantly more likely (p=.023) than status quo defenders to talk about how the policy options they prefer will reduce the costs borne by private actors. But defenders of the status quo show a much greater inclination to talk about how the policy options supported by challengers impose costs on those outside of government. In the case of costs to government, arguments tend to focus both on how policies will add to and also reduce those costs. But here again we see the much greater tendency on the part of those perspectives challenging the status quo to make claims about the cost savings of their policy preferences. While only about five percent of the perspectives supporting the status quo talk about its cost efficiency for government, nearly 22 percent of the status quo challengers emphasize the cost savings that their policy options offer to government, a difference that is statistically significant at the .01 level.

Within the category of non-cost consequences, the pattern of argument usage is similar to what is observed for the arguments about the policy costs borne by non-government actors. Specifically, there is a far greater tendency among the perspectives to emphasize the negative consequences of opponents' policy preferences as opposed to the positive consequences of their own preferences (30.6 percent versus 12.9 percent, respectively), and relative to status quo challengers, defenders of the status quo are significantly more likely to make these claims (24.5 percent versus 40.6 percent, p=.027). It is to the advantage of status quo defenders to "go negative" to torpedo any proposals for change, whereas advocates of change must not only show that the status quo is flawed but that their proposal for change would improve the situation.

Table 2 reveals a number of other differences in the more detailed arguments used by challengers and defenders of the status quo, although the frequency with which these arguments

are used is generally lower than that of the arguments mentioned above. Still, these differences provide evidence consistent with the differences already noted – status quo defenders need not explain the benefits of the status quo, they need only cast doubt on the policy alternatives that challenge it. Of course, this is consistent with (and underlies) the relative advantage enjoyed by status quo defenders. For example, Table 2 shows that status quo defenders are more than three times more likely than status quo challengers to emphasize the need for more study about the feasibility of alternatives (17.2 versus 4.7 percent, p=.007), and they are more than twice as likely to suggest that a large precedent will be set by any changes that are made to the status quo (17.2 versus 6.6 percent, p=.030). It is also interesting that when the status quo involves the government not addressing a problem, status quo defenders appear to emphasize the insignificance of the underlying problem as well as the inefficiency that would result if the government addressed it.

Additional purchase on the use of arguments by status quo challengers and defenders of the status quo are revealed in the information presented in Tables 3 through 5. In Table 3, the argument data are aggregated into categories that reflect more clearly some of the major themes in the patterns of usage noted above: doubt and uncertainty; optimism; increased costs; decreased costs; and prudence. As Table 3 illustrates, the relative use of arguments that underscore the costs that will result if their opponents' policy preferences are adopted is similar for both supporters of and challengers to the status quo. In addition, both sets of perspectives are almost equally likely to use arguments that raise doubts or uncertainty about the preferred policy of the opposing side. In the case of status quo challengers, these arguments are almost exclusively focused on the unworkability of the status quo. But there are far more substantial differences between status quo challengers and defenders in the use of the remaining categories of arguments. Claims about the cost reductions that would result from the preferred policy options are almost three times more likely to be made by status quo challengers, a difference that is statistically significant at the .001 level. Another significant difference between status quo challengers and

defenders is in terms of the level of optimism that pervades their claims. As Table 3 indicates, status quo challengers are much more likely than status quo defenders to emphasize what is positive about their policy preferences. Finally, and not surprisingly given their intent, the challengers to current policy speak of the small, prudent changes they seek to make.

[Table 3 here]

In Table 4 we aggregate the arguments made by the study perspectives according to whether they are positive or negative in tone. Positive arguments include: policy promotes a shared goal, policy is equitable, policy reduces costs to government or to private actors, and policy has some secondary beneficial consequences. Negative arguments include: policy inhibits shared goals, policy is not equitable, policy imposes costs on government or private actors, policy has some secondary negative consequences, and policy does not work. Perhaps most striking in Table 4 is the tendency of both status quo defenders and challengers to "go negative." At least four-fifths of the perspectives associated with our study issues make use of one or more negative claims. But equally striking is the disparity between status quo challengers and defenders in terms of their use of positive arguments. Fewer than half of the perspectives that defend the status quo make at least one positive claim, whereas over 70 percent of status quo challengers use that type of argument (statistically significant at the .01 level). The bottom rows of Table 4 bring these differences into sharper relief. For status quo defenders, there is a tendency not only to use arguments that are negative in tone but also to use negative arguments exclusively (42.2 percent of all perspectives). And while few perspectives of any type rely solely on arguments that are positive in tone, a majority of the status quo challengers mix it up, as it were. As shown in Table 4, 62.3 percent of those perspectives that seek to change the status quo make use of a combination of positive and negative appeals. These results add to our understanding of the underpinnings of the status quo advantage. Because losses loom larger than gains, defenders of the status quo benefit greatly from raising the prospect of a negative consequence, or otherwise linking any alternative to the status quo as a risky choice (Kahneman and Tversky 1984). Students of

framing know that a given option or alternative can be portrayed in different ways (Tversky and Kahneman 1981), so the savvy status quo defender need not explicitly engage in outlining the virtues of the status quo policy. Rather, it is sufficient (and not too terribly difficult) to suggest that certain costs and negative consequences *might* result from a policy option being proposed. Indeed, "…the status quo defines the reference level for all attributes. The advantages of alternative options will then be evaluated as gains and their disadvantages as losses… [and] the decision maker will be biased in terms of retaining the status quo" (Kahneman and Tversky 1984, 348).

[Table 4 here]

In Table 5, we consider how frequently the same type of argument is used by opposing perspectives – status quo challengers and status quo defenders. Although the data presented here do not speak to whether the element of contention is exactly the same within a given argument type, it does provide an initial picture of the tendency of perspectives to raise the same types of issues when they seek to justify their policy preferences. Overall, Table 5 illustrates that there are some types of arguments on which the perspectives appear to engage one another. For example, engagement occurs fairly often on matters of feasibility and cost. They also contest the goals associated with the policy alternatives under consideration, including whether the alternatives promote or inhibit equal treatment. That opposing perspectives engage one another about the goals that are promoted or inhibited by a policy proposal is particularly interesting given the claims that appeals tied to widely accepted social values are difficult to contest (Cobb and Ross 1997; McKissick 1997). Even if the perspectives are not engaging one another on the same shared goal, the data in Table 5 suggest that they may be offering competing ideas about the values that are at stake.

[Table 5 here]

In order to examine whether and how the use of different types of arguments are affected by both salience and the magnitude of change at stake on the issue, we estimated the probability that

a perspective would use each of a series of argument types as a function of the following five variables:

- *general issue salience*: the standardized scale created with Cronbach's alpha that is described above;

- *perspective intent*: an indicator of whether a perspective supports (coded zero) or opposes (coded one) the status quo;

- *impact on the federal budget*: an indicator of whether a perspective's policy objective would increase or decrease the budget of the federal government (coded one), or whether it would maintain spending or have no budgetary impact (coded zero);

- *impact on private costs*: an indicator of whether a perspective's policy objective would increase or decrease the cost to private businesses/individuals (coded one), or whether it would maintain costs or have no cost impact (coded zero); and

- *impact on established programs*: an indicator of whether a perspective's policy objective would substantially reduce or expand an established program (coded one), or whether it would maintain the status quo or did not deal with an established program (coded zero).

Because argument use is a dichotomous variable, we use probit analysis to estimate our equations; our unit of analysis is the perspective. Given the evidence presented in Table 5 that there is engagement on the same types of arguments by opposing perspectives, we cannot credibly assume that the perspectives associated with a given issue are independent. We also cannot know with our cross-sectional data whether the salience of an issue, which we measure across the entire two-year term of a session of Congress, reflects the level of salience that characterized that issue at the time the decision was made by each perspective to use a particular type of argument. In addition, although it may be unlikely, it is possible that the use of a particular type of argument by a perspective affects the level of salience we observe on an issue. Consequently, we base our inferences on robust standard errors that are calculated with observations clustered by issue, and we present only the signs of coefficients that are statistically significant ($p < .10$). Table 6 presents these results for argument types used by at least 10 percent of all perspectives. The signs that appear in each of the five columns indicate

which of the perspective/issue characteristics are statistically significantly associated with the use of each type of argument.

[Table 6 here]

Overall, the salience of an issue is not a major predictor of the type of argument used, although it is significantly associated with the likelihood that a perspective will use each of three types of arguments. Specifically, the three negative signs in the second column of Table 6 indicate that perspectives are less likely to use arguments about the magnitude of policy change (prudent, small change, sets a precedent, etc.), the size of the underlying problem, and jurisdictional issues when issues are more rather than less salient. When an issue receives greater governmental and media attention and is visible to the public, it is quite reasonable to expect that advocates would not bother to argue that the underlying problem was big enough to merit attention since that hurdle had presumably been surpassed. Similarly, it would not seem effective on such issues to make the counterargument that they issue did not, in fact, merit all the attention it was receiving. One could do so but probably not with much success (or attention). Claims about the magnitude of the policy itself also are likely to be a bit out of place in the context of a salient issue. That jurisdictional or procedural arguments are unlikely to be used on more salient issues is a bit surprising because this category of argument includes constitutional claims, and issues of federalism (see Table A.2 in the Appendix). But this is a relatively uncommon type of argument in our random sample of issues generally. What is perhaps most surprising in these results is that perspectives do not appear to be more likely to make appeals about how a policy promotes or inhibits some goal or make appeals that highlight the discriminatory or equal impact of the policy when the issue of interest to them is relatively more salient. Although these two types of arguments are not equivalent to what others have called symbolic or valence arguments, they are the most likely of our argument types to contain relatively non-technical and easily understood appeals.

The results for perspective intent largely confirm the results presented above.[19] Specifically, status quo challengers are significantly more likely to use positive arguments, arguments about cost reductions, and arguments that characterize their policy goals as moderate, prudent, or trivial. On the other hand, challengers to the status quo are significantly less likely to make arguments about the appropriateness of government action on the issue or about electoral concerns.

The three remaining variables shown in Table 6 provide information about whether and how the type of change that is associated with a perspective's policy preference affects the type of argument used. As shown in Table 6, when the policy alternative supported by a perspective will impact the federal budget, arguments related to that impact, and to budget savings in particular, are much more likely to be used. In contrast, when the federal budget is impacted by the perspective's policy preference, arguments regarding the size of the underlying problem, and the magnitude of the change resulting from imposition of the policy are significantly less likely to be employed. In contrast, and rather surprisingly, when the policy alternative supported by a perspective has an impact on the costs borne by private actors and institutions, arguments related to those costs are no more or less likely to be used. In fact, none of the variables we consider here are useful predictors of the use of arguments about the costs borne by private entities. Instead, Table 6 shows that when private costs will increase or decrease, perspectives are significantly more likely to make arguments about the policy alternative's equality of treatment or discrimination, the appropriateness of government activity, as well as jurisdictional or procedural claims. More generally, when private costs are set to increase or decrease, there is a greater tendency for a perspective to use negative arguments, generally. Taken together, these results suggest that compared to those perspectives with preferred policy options that do not

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[19] Intent is fairly highly, positively correlated with the three impact variables. Although it is not unexpected that those challenging the status quo would tend to support policy options that were relatively more likely than those supported by status quo defenders to have sizable impacts on the federal budget, private costs, and/or established programs, the linkages between these variables makes it more difficult to determine each variable's individual effect on argument use.

have an impact on private costs, those perspectives whose preferred alternatives do have an impact on private costs, tend to emphasize the non-cost benefits and limitations of those policies.

Finally, Table 6 shows that goal-related arguments are much more likely to be used by perspectives whose policy preferences entail substantial changes to current programs. That those seeking major change would link their policy preferences with the promotion of shared values makes sense given the difficulty of such change and the easy appeal of value-laden claims. On the other hand, perspectives that promote policies involving big change to established programs are much less likely to link those policies to the support or opposition they engender from particular groups. Particularized support or opposition would not seem to be an effective claim when the change at stake is considerable.

Tactics. In Tables 7 through 10 we examine how policy goals and issue salience affect the use of various tactics of advocacy. In Table 7 we begin by presenting the relative frequency with which different tactics are used by the perspectives associated with our study issues. The number of perspectives whose tactics are displayed in this table (N=155) is slightly lower than the number presented in Tables 1 through 4 and 6 (N=170) because Table 7 reports only those tactics used by organizational advocates. Thus, only those perspectives consisting of at least one organizational advocate are included in the table.

[Table 7 here]

The tactics presented in the table are grouped into one of three categories – inside advocacy, outside advocacy, and grassroots advocacy. Across all three categories, it appears that defenders of the status quo are relatively less likely than status quo challengers to engage in most tactics of advocacy. The only activities that defenders of the status quo engage in more often than challengers are disseminating research, testifying before congressional committees or agencies, and working with agency officials. This pattern of activity helps to illustrate one of the implications for organizational advocates of the status quo advantage, and it also provides an

indication of how those who are defending the status quo probably spend their time. More often than not, defenders of the status quo need not respond to the activities undertaken by status quo challengers. To be sure, they certainly need to be – or probably want to be – attentive to efforts to change policies they prefer. But this means only that they must monitor the activity of other advocates, and also gauge whether the climate appears ripe for activity. But unless there is a sense that some idea or proposal is gaining momentum, the defenders of the status quo need not act. Thus, they can spend a "typical" day observing the political and policy arenas. That one of their primary activities involves sharing research with policymakers is not surprising since it is probably the case that this research can be distributed in a way that is not necessarily tied to a particular advocacy campaign. Rather, advocates can share with policymakers research that is related to issues of common interest. It need not appear that this work – even if it does underscore the positive benefits and implications of the status quo policy – is offered in conjunction with a specific issue debate. Rather, it provides a way of maintaining contact, and casually sharing information with policymakers who have similar interests. In sharp contrast, status quo challengers must act in order to advance their preferences, even if it is only in the hope of drawing some attention to their concerns. The three sets of activities shown in Table 7 underscore these distinctions in activity levels.

Among the tactics we have listed under inside advocacy, activities that involve direct or indirect contact between advocates and policymakers, it is not surprising that the most commonly used tactic overall, and the most commonly used tactic by both status quo defenders and challengers, is personal contact with rank and file members of Congress and/or their staff. The quintessential lobbying tactic emerges as the most common means of advocacy. However, Table 7 also shows that the relative use of this tactic is quite different for status quo defenders and status quo challengers (a difference that is statistically significant at the .05 level). Indeed, the data show that it is quite unusual for a perspective challenging the status quo *not* to contact members of Congress and/or their staff. For status quo defenders, personal contact of rank and file

members/staff is common but fully a third of perspectives with this goal do not engage in this form of contact.[20] A similar story can be told about work with legislative allies. Although two-thirds of the perspectives overall work in concert with their legislative allies, almost three-fourths of the perspectives challenging the status quo engage in this form of activity whereas just under 60 percent of the perspectives defending the status quo do so (a statistically significant difference with p=.030). As described above, defenders of the status quo need not engage in explicit campaigns to build support for their preferences. Their preferences are current policy and they are aware of the hurdles that must be surpassed by others to bring a shift to that center of policy gravity. These distinctions between status quo challengers and defenders of the status quo are apparent through other patterns of tactic usage that are presented in Table 7. For example, status quo challengers are almost twice as likely as defenders of the status quo to draft legislative language (44.7 versus 23.0 percent, respectively) and challengers are also more likely to make contact with White House officials (20.2 versus 13.1 percent, respectively).

Other interesting differences between status quo challengers and supporters emerge when we consider their tendencies to contact members of the majority and minority parties in Congress. Table 8 shows the relative frequency with which the perspectives supporting the status quo, the perspectives challenging the status quo, and the perspectives overall (columns two through four, respectively) contact committee members and leaders (or their staff) from one or both parties. Among the patterns apparent in these data is the tendency, noted above, for defenders of the status quo to engage less often with policymakers. As shown in Table 8, status quo supporters are much more likely than status quo challengers to have no contact with members of relevant committees, and/or members of the committee leadership or their staffs. Just under half of the status quo supporters make no contact, whereas just about a third of status quo challengers have no contact with committee leadership or membership. Indeed, the most frequent strategy for

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[20] Importantly, these figures do not account for the "unmeasured" inactivity of status quo defenders who were not taking any action on our issues.

defenders of the status quo is no contact at the committee level. For status quo challengers, the most common strategy is to contact members or leaders of both the majority and minority parties (54.3 percent and 40.4 percent, respectively). This is a reasonable strategy given that challengers to the status quo are likely to make every effort they can to construct coalitions of support that could help to move the legislation they seek to pass. More surprising is the relatively low proportion of perspectives defending the status quo who contact committee members or committee leaders from the majority party exclusively. Because status quo defenders need only suppress legislative activity to achieve their goals, it would likely be efficient to look to members of the majority party to make that happen. It may be the case that majority party members were not supportive of the preferences of the status quo challengers. Finally, the data in Table 8 show that very few perspectives rely exclusively on members and leaders of the minority party. Of course, the Pap screening example cited earlier makes clear that a minority-only strategy may emerge by chance rather than from a plan.

[Table 8 here]

Returning to Table 7, the relative use by status quo defenders and challengers of tactics associated with outside advocacy and grassroots mobilization reveal patterns that are consistent with the narrative presented above. Both sets of activities are used less often by status quo defenders as would be expected given their goal of keeping current policy in place. However, the patterns of use also reflect a key element of challengers' strategies. As illustrated in Table 7, status quo challengers are much more likely than defenders of the status quo to follow Schattschneider's (1960) advice and expand the scope of conflict. Specifically, perspectives challenging the status quo are much more likely to organize a public relations campaign, mobilize the non-elite members of their organization, and mobilize the general public. Although conflict-expanding strategies are fraught with uncertainty, status quo challengers are already in a more uncertain position than status quo defenders and they are likely to be more willing to accept the additional uncertainty in exchange for the possibility of getting some momentum behind their

concerns. In sharp contrast, the defenders of the status quo have little reason to engage in conflict expansion except in response to a viable status quo challenge.

Of course, conflict expansion strategies also tend to be associated with more salient issues. In Table 9, we examine whether the use of outside advocacy, grassroots mobilization, and committee member or leader contact (as tactics representative of inside advocacy) are greater for perspectives active on more salient issues. In this table, we use an ordinal measure of salience ranging from low to very high, where the categories correspond to quartiles of the distribution of the general salience measure described above. As Table 9 demonstrates, the use of outside advocacy is related to salience but there appears to be no statistical link between salience and either mobilization or committee level contacts. Thus, decisions to engage in mobilization efforts and the nature of committee level contacts may have more to do with one's policy goals (as we see above) than with the visibility of the issue. It may also be the case that mobilization has more to do with where an issue is on the governmental agenda than with its general salience. In other words, perspectives – particularly those challenging the status quo – may make use of mobilization campaigns when they sense that an issue is beginning or has some prospect of movement. At this point in the process, the involvement of the grassroots supporters might provide a means of sustaining movement that could otherwise not be maintained. Indeed, the advocates we interviewed frequently spoke about their hesitance in stirring up the grassroots and grasstops unless there was a relatively good chance that an issue would move.

[Table 9 here]

Finally, we examine whether outside advocacy, grassroots mobilization, and committee member or leader contact are affected by the magnitude and type of change at stake on the issue. Overall, our analysis reveals virtually no linkages between these sets of variables. The only statistically significant relationship we observe is presented in Table 10. As shown, there is a relationship between the use of committee level contacts and policy preferences that impact the federal budget. The joint distribution of these variables that we observe indicates a relatively

greater tendency among those perspectives whose preferred policy options impact the budget to make contact with the membership and/or leadership of relevant congressional committees. Although this is not unexpected, it is somewhat surprising that tactic use is largely independent of the nature and amount of change that are associated with perspectives' policy preferences. If big policy changes are dependent – at least to some extent – on visibility, it would be reasonable to see linkages between programmatic and cost changes and the use of conflict expansion strategies.

[Table 10 here]

Concluding Observations

Policy advocates face many hurdles and encounter different opportunities as they work to advance their preferences. Uncertainty prevails as advocates try to anticipate reactions to their actions, predict and process responses from different audiences to their policy preferences, and make plans for how to operate in a dynamic policy environment that is not under their control. In this paper, we focus on how advocates' goals, the magnitude of the policy changes they seek, and the salience of the policy issues they care about affect the level of control they have over their actions on a particular issue. Specifically, the research we present provides a systematic look at how these variables shape the arguments and tactics advocates employ on a random sample of 98 issues. What our investigation demonstrates is that there are compelling patterns to the advocacy process in Washington that may help to explain the movement or lack thereof that we observe.

Perhaps most important, the means of navigating the process of advocacy differ considerably for status quo supporters and challengers. Supporters of the status quo need to do much less than do status quo challengers. They are much less likely to engage in contact with policymakers, they are much less likely to engage the public or their supporters, and they are much less likely to use the media to promote their preferences. Instead, they observe the political and policy arenas, and they share information with policymakers through formal and informal

means. Status quo challengers, in contrast, simply cannot do this if they hope to advance – if not achieve – their policy goals. Status quo challengers make direct contact with policymakers, and they engage in conflict expanding strategies designed to draw attention to the issues they care about. These differences in activity levels are particularly interesting to consider in light of Salisbury's (1990) arguments about interest groups' tendencies to monitor the policy environment. Salisbury (1990) argued that organizational advocates had responded to the increasing number of "externality" groups, and the fragmentation of the organizational community in Washington, DC, by expending less effort persuading policymakers, and more time keeping track of or monitoring the activities of other advocates and government. According to Salisbury, monitoring provides organizations with a way of minimizing uncertainty about "developments relevant to their interests" and "appropriate strategies of response and adaptation" (Salisbury, 1990: 224). But our data suggest an alternative view of this lack of activity. Those advocates who operate from a context about which there is less uncertainty – the status quo – can afford to engage in watchful waiting. For those who seek change, it is often necessary to undertake activities that have a chance of drawing attention to their concerns even if those activities create a less predictable environment.

Differences between status quo supporters and challengers also are apparent in the appeals they use to advance their concerns. For defenders of the status quo, the dominant strategy is to "go negative," and to do so with very little attention to the virtues of the policy they support. In sharp contrast, challengers face the uphill battle of trying to make more salient the potential gains and benefits that would be realized if their preferred policy was adopted. Although challengers do indeed seek to raise concerns about extant policy, they realize that they need more than this to actually replace it. We also provide evidence to suggest that challengers are hampered in their efforts to change to their benefit the way an issue is defined. As shown in Table 5, there is considerable engagement between opposing perspectives on several types of arguments, including those that are most often employed.

In contrast to goals, the arguments and tactics used by perspectives were not as transparently linked to the magnitude and type of policy change that was sought. We saw in Table 6 that appeals linked to costs borne by government do co-occur when the policy preferred by a perspective has an impact on the federal budget, but that policies that affect private costs are promoted with appeals that emphasize non-cost benefits and limitations. This may suggest a realization by advocates that government budgets loom large in policy debates, and are best addressed head-on rather than avoided.

What was perhaps most notable about our analysis of the impact of salience on argument and tactic use is what we did not observe in our data. Specifically, the data did not reveal many linkages between salience and argument use, and we observed no pattern between the salience of an issue and the use of arguments rooted in shared values. To be sure, it is tricky with cross-sectional data to determine the level of salience associated with an issue at the time decisions about arguments and tactics are made. However, if easy arguments are more commonly associated with salient issues as the extant literature suggests, some evidence of this relationship should have been apparent. The expected link between conflict-expanding tactics and greater salience was quite clear.

So what do these patterns tell us about the advocacy process and the policy outcomes that emerge from it? They suggest, we think, that if change is to be effected, challengers must both create a sense of momentum and build pressure to overcome the friction that exists in the policy process. The advantages for status quo supporters lie, as we have seen, in maintaining control over the rhetoric and the activity on an issue. To the extent that it is sufficient for defenders merely to cast doubt on alternatives to the status quo, the challengers remain at a disadvantage. But to the extent that challengers can say or do enough so that some critical mass of interested parties begins to pay attention, they alter the context for defenders and force them to behave more like challengers – to become more active, to justify the policy alternative they prefer, and perhaps to reclaim the interpretation of what is at stake.

Appendix A

Table A.1: Issues, Perspectives, Participants and Interviews

1. Managed Care Reform
  1   Proponents of a Patient's Bill of Rights
  2   Opponents of a Patient's Bill of Rights that contains employer mandates

2. Patent Extension
  1   Proponents of granting patent extension to pipeline drugs
  2   Opponents of granting patent extension to pipeline drugs

3. Infant Hearing Screening
  1   Proponents for funding hearing screenings

4. Risk Adjuster
  1   Decision maker who supports the imposition of a risk adjuster to limit overpayments (opposed to 3, 4)
  3   Oppose the imposition of a risk adjuster as currently envisioned by HCFA (opposed to 1, 5)
  4   Oppose the imposition of a risk adjuster but believe there are bigger Medicare & Choice problems to address (opposed to 1, 5)
  5   Support the idea of a risk adjuster but believe there are bigger Medicare & Choice problems to address (opposed to 3, 4)

5. PAP Screening
  1   Proponents for increased Medicare payments for PAP screenings
  2   Opposed to changing status quo

6. Parity for Coverage of Mental Illness
  1   Proponents of coverage parity for the treatment of mental illness under Medicare (and generally)

7. Clinical Social Workers
  1   Proponents of excluding CSW's from the bundled payment rules

8. Appropriations for AIDS Drug Assistance Program
  1   Proponents of funding ADAP at the level of ADAP Working Group estimate
  2   Proponents of funding ADAP but not necessarily at the level of ADAP Working Group estimate

10. Providing Health Insurance for the Uninsured
  1   Proponents of a refundable tax credit for individuals (between 100 and 150 percent of poverty) that is large enough to purchase health insurance coverage (no direct opponents)
  2   Proponents of refundable tax credits for individuals (who work but lack insurance) that would not cover the full cost of health coverage (no direct opponents)
  3   Proponents of income-related refundable tax credits for everyone to purchase health insurance (no direct opponents)
  4   Proponents of single-payer, universal health insurance coverage (no direct opponents)

11. Grad-med
  1   Proponents of maintaining or increasing funding for specific segments of the allied health professions either through the status quo or other funding plan (no direct opponents)
  2   Proponents of changing the rationale/conceptualization of GME from training to enhanced patient care but still funding GME through the status quo funding mechanism (opposed to 3, 4)

    3   Proponents of an all-payer (or Medicare and all-payer) trust fund to support GME (opposed to 2, 4)

    4   Proponents of funding GME through an annual appropriation from general revenues (opposed to 2, 3)

12. Chiropractic Coverage

    1   Proponents of coverage of Chiropractic services

    2   Opponents of changing regulations to include Chiropractic services

13. Contraceptive Coverage

    1   Proponents of mandating contraceptive coverage by insurance companies

    2   Opposed of mandating contraceptive coverage by insurance companies

14. Medical Devices

    1   Proponents of revising Medicare coverage policies (for procedures, devices, etc.) to increase physician input (no direct opponents)

    2   Proponents of revising the Medicare review process for assessing coverage of medical devices, imposing non-cost review criteria, and instituting an appeals process (opposed to 3)

    3   Proponents of imposing a cost-related criteria for the Medicare coverage reviews of medical devices (opposed to 2)

15. Disinfectant Byproducts

    1   Proponents of decreasing disinfectant byproducts in drinking water (opposed to 2, 3)

    2   Opposed to (significantly) decreasing disinfectant byproduct levels in drinking water/opposed to switching to alternative (non-chlorine) disinfectants (opposed to 1, 3)

    3   Proponents of minimizing disinfectant byproduct levels/opposed to major changes in treatment or disinfectant technology (opposed to 1, 2)

16. Funding for CH-47

    1   Proponents of increased funding for the CH-47 Chinook Helicopter

17. Mine Waste Disposal

    1   Proponents of limiting the number of mill sites at mine sites

    2   Opponents of limiting the number of mill sites at mine sites

19. Broadband Deployment

    1   Proponents of revising the 1996 Telecommunications Act to give regional/local phone companies access to other service markets without their opening access to the local service market (opposed to 2)

    2   Opponents of revising the 1996 Telecommunications Act (opposed to 1)

    3   Position on 1996 Telecommunications Act unclear; proponents of policies designed to encourage deployment of broadband (no direct opponents)

20. Compulsory Licensing

    1   Proponents of vaccine R&D tax credit, opposed to compulsory licensing provision/executive order (opposed to 2, 4)

    2   Proponents of vaccine R&D tax credit, proponents of compulsory licensing provision/executive order (opposed to 1)

    3   Proponents of vaccine R&D credit, no formal or known position on compulsory licensing provision/executive order (no direct opponents)

    4   Proponents of compulsory licensing provision/executive order, no formal or known position on the vaccine R&D tax credit (opposed to 1)

21. Postal Service Reform

    1   Proponents of modernizing the postal service (opposed to 2, 3)

    2   Opponents of modernizing the postal service (opposed to 1)

    3   Proponents of modernizing the postal service in theory but refuses to allow the proposal of perspective one to move forward (opposed to 1)

22. Modifying the Food Quality Protection Act

    1   Proponents of modifying the FQPA of 1996 in a way that further regulates how & when the EPA releases and presents safety information about chemicals used in food preparation & production

    2   Opponents of modifying the FQPA of 1996.

23. CAFE Standards

    1   Proponents of increasing the Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards for light trucks and vans

    2   Opponents of increasing the standards

24. Low Sulfur Gasoline

    1   Proponents of Low Sulfur Regulations

    2   Opponents of Low Sulfur Regulations

25. Low Power FM Licenses

    1   Proponents of granting Low Power FM Radio Licenses

    2   Opposed to granting Low Power FM Radio Licenses

27. Estate Tax

    1   Proponents of repealing the estate tax (opposed to 2)

    2   Opponents of repealing the estate tax (opposed to 1)

    3   Advocates of various alterations to the tax, not repeal (not opposed to 1 or 2)

28. WEP and GPO

    1   Proponents of repealing or reducing the government pension offset & windfall elimination provision.

29. Conservation and Reinvestment Act

    1   Proponents of permanent and mandatory funding of conservation programs via CARA/Lands Legacy Initiative with restrictions on how coastal impact funds are used (opposed to 2, 4)

    2   Proponents of permanent and mandatory funding of conservation programs via CARA/Lands Legacy Initiative but with no restrictions on how coastal impact funds are used (opposed to 1, 4)

    3   Proponents of permanent and mandatory funding of conservation programs via CARA/Lands Legacy Initiative, generally (opposed to 4)

    4   Opponents of permanent and mandatory funding of conservations programs via CARA/Lands Legacy Initiative (opposed to 1, 2, 3)

40. China Trade (PNTR)

    1   Proponents of normalized trade with China

    2   Opponents of normalized trade with China

41. Defense Line Item

    1   For

    2   Against

42. Predator Control

    1   Proponents of ending funding for federal control of predators on private lands

    2   Opponents of ending funding for federal control of predators on private lands

43. 3% Excise Tax

    1   Proponents for cutting the 3% excise tax

44. Regulation of Internet Prescriptions

    1   Proponents of developing increased regulations for internet prescriptions (opposed to 4, 5)

    2   Proponents of increased federal regulations for internet Prescriptions—disclosure only of pharmacy licensing sought (opposed to 4, 5)

    3   Proponents of increased federal regulations for internet Prescriptions—FDA licensing of internet pharmacies sought (opposed to 4, 5)

    4   Opponents of increased federal regulations for internet prescriptions—it is a state issue and additional state laws are needed (opposed to 1, 2, 3)

    5   Opponents of increased federal regulations for internet prescriptions—existing

laws need to be better enforced and voluntary efforts encouraged (opposed to 1, 2, 3)

6 Agrees that illegal prescriptions are a problem, but wants to make sure Congress knows that this actor is not to blame. Wants to make sure that any new regulations don't hurt its business. Wants better enforcement of existing laws but is vague on what other solutions are needed (no direct opponents)

7 Wants better patient education about internet prescriptions, but is neutral regarding how this is done (no direct opponents)

45. Credit Union Membership
1 Proponents of making it easier to have broad credit union membership
2 Opponents of making it easier to have broad credit union membership

46. Bankruptcy Reform
1 Proponents of bankruptcy reform legislation
2 Opponents of bankruptcy reform legislation

47. Needlestick Injuries
1 Proponents of a federal law requiring OSHA to draft a regulation requiring hospitals to use "safe" needles so that needlesticks are avoided.
2 Opponents of a federal law requiring OSHA to draft a regulation requiring hospitals to use "safe" needles so that needlesticks are avoided.

48. Commuter Rail Subsidies
1 Proponents of giving favored treatment to all commuter rail authorities throughout the country.
2 Opponents of giving favored treatment to commuter rail other than Amtrak.

49. Criminal Justice Reform
1 Proponents of changes to the criminal justice system

50. Electric Utility Deregulation
1 Private utilities, which want to minimize the capital gains taxes for selling off part of their businesses as part of deregulation/restructuring. They want to minimize the benefits public power receives, since they are in competition now.
2 Public power, which wants greater control over how bond money can be used. They only support tax breaks for private utilities if the spun-off electrical generation is sold to a public entity.

51. Nuclear Waste
1 Proponents of releasing funds that Congress has already collected from nuclear power plants to pay for developing a permanent disposal site.
2 Opponents of releasing the funds.

60. Aviation Trust Fund
1 Proponents to mandate aviation trust fund be spent completely on aviation
2 Opposed to changing status quo

61. Reauthorization of ESEA, Title I
1 Proponents for reauthorization of ESEA (no direct opponents)
2 Proponents for funding through a block grant (opposed to 3)
3 Proponents for funding through categorical grants (opposed to 2)

62. Ergonomics Standards
1 Proponents of Ergonomic Regulations
2 Opponents of Ergonomic Regulations

63. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
1 Support IDEA w/ full mainstreaming, access (no direct opponents)
2 Support IDEA, general (no direct opponents)
3 Support strengthening of rights to discipline kids (no direct opponents)
4 Want greater funding of special ed to help schools (no direct opponents)

64. Legal Services

    1   Support Legal Services

    2   Against Legal Services

65. Religious Licenses

    1   Proponents of providing educational broadcast licenses to religious organization rather than more expensive standard licenses

    2   Opponents of providing educational broadcast licenses to religious organization rather than more expensive standard licenses

66. Nuclear Repository

    1   For Yucca Mountain Nuclear Repository

    2   Against Yucca Mountain Nuclear Repository

67. Rise in Gasoline Prices

    1   Against government intervention to lower gas prices (opposed to 2)

    2   Support increase in CAFÉ standards (opposed to 1, 3)

    3   Against Increase in CAFE standards (opposed to 2)

68. Roads in National Forests

    1   Proponents of a moratorium on new road building in national forests (opposed to 2)

    2   Supports status quo, allowing new road building in national forests (opposed to 1)

    3   Want Access to forest roads maintained (no direct opponents)

69. WTO Membership

    1   Support renewed membership in the WTO

    2   Oppose renewed membership in the WTO

70. Airline Merger

    1   Proponents of US Air - United Airlines merger

    2   Opponents to US Air - United Airlines merger

80. Internet Sales Tax

    1   Allow states to collect sales taxes on purchases over the Internet

    2   Oppose any taxation of Internet commerce

81. Physician Anti-trust Waivers

    1   Proponents of physician antitrust waivers

    2   Opponents of physician antitrust waivers

82. Internet Expense Rules

    1   Proponents of changing the tax treatment of interest expenses for foreign subsidiaries of U.S. companies

83. Class Action Reform

    1   Proponents of class action reform

    2   Opponents of class action reform

84. Prevailing Wage Rules

    1   Wants to maintain prevailing wage laws like Davis-Bacon

    2   Wants to move toward repeal of Davis-Bacon law

85. Computer Depreciation

    1   Wants to reduce depreciation period for computer equipment (opposed to 2)

    2   Opposes changes in depreciation because of loss of federal revenue (opposed to 1, 3)

    3   Wants to overhaul depreciation schedules for all industries (opposed to 2)

86. Right to Carry

    1   Favors right-to-carry bills as well as broader gun rights laws (opposed to 2, 3, 4)

    2   Wants to allow off-duty and retired police officers to carry a concealed gun (opposed to 1, 3)

    3   Opposes right-to-carry law for officers (opposed to 1, 2)

4   Favors gun control but neutral on right-to-carry for police officers (opposed to 1)

87. Late-term Abortions
1   Opposes a ban on late-term abortions
2   Supports a ban on late-term abortions

90. Export Controls
1   Computer industry against export controls
2   National security types for export controls

91. Airline Age 60 Rule
1   Opponents of raising mandatory retirement at 60 for commercial airline pilots—airlines, pilots union, younger pilots
2   Proponents of raising mandatory retirement at 60 for commercial airline pilots—older pilots

92. C-130 Procurement
1   Opponents of procuring new C-130 aircraft vessels
2   Proponents of procuring new C-130 aircraft vessels

93. OBD Service
1   Proponents of new regulations governing on-board diagnostic service information, tools, and training
2   Opponents of new regulations

94. Right to Know
1   Opponents of parental consent for non-emergency health service in school setting
2   Proponents of parental consent—pro-life advocates

95. Cuba Sanctions
1   Proponents of complete repeal of trade sanctions with Cuba (opposed to 3)
2   Proponents of partial repeal trade sanctions with Cuba for food and medicine (opposed to 3)
3   Opponents of repeal of trade sanctions with Cuba—support status quo (opposed to 1, 2)

96. Newspaper Crossownership
1   Proponents of new rule to allow newspapers and TV stations to be owned by the same company, in the same market—repeal status quo rule banning crossownership
2   Opponents of new rule to allow newspapers and TV stations to be owned by the same company, in the same market—maintatin status quo rule banning crossownership

97. Steel Safeguard
1   Proponents of steel safeguard investigation and increased tariffs—Domestic steel manufacturers/suppliers
2   Opponents of steel safeguard investigation and tariffs—Domestic consuming industries that purchase raw steel for manufacturing

100. NAFTA Foreign Investment Reform
1   Proponents of re-negotiating Chapter 11 of NAFTA
2   Opponents of re-negotiating Chapter 11 of NAFTA

101. Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage
1   Proponents of new Medicare prescription drug coverage, to be administered by private insurance companies (that would not institute price controls) (opposed to 2)
2   Proponents of new Medicare prescription drug coverage, to be administered by HCFA/state Medicare agencies (that would have authority to institute price controls) (opposed to 1)
3   Proponents of new Medicare prescription drug coverage, with concerns about

solvency of overall Medicare program—service providers do not want to lose income source to new program (no direct opponents)

102. Terrorism Re-insurance
1 Opponents of creating terrorism reinsurance program
2 Proponents of creating terrorism reinsurance program

103. Outsourcing Reform
1 Proponents of status quo government contract practices
2 Opponents of status quo government contract practices

104. Military Property Movement
1 Proponents of status quo competition for military personnel movement and storage services
2 Opponents of status quo competition for military personnel movement and storage services

105. Predatory Lending
1 Proponents of reforming RESPA, requiring more disclosure of fees/costs; opposed to "bundling" realty/mortgage services
2 Proponents of reforming RESPA by "bundling" realty/mortgage services

106. Open Access 2
1 Proponents of requiring owners of broadband infrastructure to give access to Internet service providers/other media—ISPs, phone companies, consumer groups
2 Opponents of requiring owners of broadband infrastructure to give access to Internet service providers/other media—cable companies

107. Maritime Security Act
1 Proponents of increased funding for Maritime Security Fleet

108. Food Allergen Labeling
1 Proponents of status quo voluntary food allergen labeling
2 Opponents of status quo voluntary food allergen labeling

109. Bear Protection
1 Proponents of prohibiting trade of black bear viscera
2 Opponents of prohibiting trade of black bear viscera

110. TANF Employment Training Services
1 Proponents of raising years of vocational education training allowed during TANF eligibility to from 12 to 24 months, reducing "priority activities" from 24 hours/week to 20 hours/week
2 Opponents of raising years of vocational education training allowed during TANF eligibility to from 12 to 24 months, reducing "priority activities" from 24 hours/week to 20 hours/week

115. Derivatives
1 Proponents of SEC regulation of Over-the-Counter derivatives
2 Opponents of SEC regulations of Over-the-Counter derivatives

116. WI and RSF
1 Proponents of increasing funding for water infrastructure through state revolving funds
2 Opposed to funding water infrastructure through federal funds

117. Effluent Limitation
1 Opponents to strict EPA effluent limitation guidelines for transportation equiptment cleaning

118. Optometric Funding
1 Proponents of graduate medical clinical education training for optometry

119. Student Visas / Lab Security
1 Proponents of stricter regulations concerning national security and terrorism

    2   Opposed to strict regulation, support moderate regulations concerning foreign students or laboratory security

120. Disabled TANF
    1   Proponents of special measures to aid disabled recipients of Temporary Aid to Needy Families, (including more moderate time requirements, lower maximum number of work hours, and including treatment time and care of disabled individuals as working hours)

121. Human Cloning
    1   Proponents of a ban on all forms of human cloning
    2   Opponents of a ban on all forms of human cloning (but may support ban on reproductive cloning specifically)

122. EA-6B Prowler
    1   Proponents of increased funding of development and research for an alternative the the Electronic Attack aircraft - the EA-6B Prowler

123. Farm Bill
    1   Proponents of Price supports (opposed to 2, 3)
    2   Opponents of Price supports (opposed to 1, 3)
    3   Proponents of provisions protecting smaller (alternative) farmers (opposed to 1, 2)
    4   Proponents of environmental and animal welfare provisions within Farm Bill (no direct opponents)

124. Wind Energy
    1   Proponents of renewing the tax credit for producers of wind energy
    2   Opponents of renewing the tax credit for producers of wind energy

125. Smart Growth & Transportation
    1   Proponents of funding "SMART" transportation programs in the Transportation reauthorization
    2   Proponents of funding all, and especially large, transportation programs

126. CAFE Standards 2
    1   Proponents of increased CAFÉ standards
    2   Opponents of increased CAFÉ standards

127. Basic Education
    1   Proponents of increasing funding for international basic education programs

128. PURPA
    1   Proponents of maintaining PURPA protections for co-generation facilities
    2   Opponents of maintaining PURPA protections for co-generation facilities

129. Recreation Marine
    1   Proponents of excluding recreational marine facilities from longshoreman insurance requirements

130. Public Safety Officers
    1   Proponents of extending federal housing programs to federal public safety officers

131. Affiliate Relationships
    1   Proponents of proposed FERC regulation of affiliate relationships between members of corporate families, in both the natural gas and electricity industries (opposed to 2)
    2   Opponents of increasing regulation of affiliate relationships between members of corporate families, in both the natural gas and electricity industries (opposed to 1)
    3   Not opposed to all aspects of the FERC regulations but seeking a special exemption (no direct opponents)

132. Math / Science Funding
    1   Proponents of increasing funding for Math and Science partnerships program,

regardless of government body overseeing the program (no direct opponents)

2   Proponents of increasing funding for Department of Education's Math and Science partnerships program (opposed to 3)

3   Proponents of increasing funding for NES Math and Science program (opposed to 2)

133. Cystic Fibrosis Research

1   Proponents of increasing funding for Cystic Fibrosis Clinical Trials Network

134. Stock Option Expensing

1   Proponents of requiring companies to report stock options on their end of the year financial statements; to expense them not just to foot note them

2   Opponents of requiring companies to report stock options as an expense on end of the year financial statements

135. Title IX

1   Proponents of efforts revise the application of Title IX regulations to athletics

2   Opponents of efforts revise the application of Title IX regulations to athletics

136. Aviation Security

1   Proponents of giving the airlines compensation for enhanced security efforts, access to carrying the mail, access to war risk insurance at capped prices, and more time to implement security deadlines who are opposed to allowing pilots to carry guns on planes and to required self-defense training for flight attendants (opposed to 2, 3)

2   Proponents of giving the airlines compensation for enhanced security efforts, access to carrying the mail, access to war risk insurance at capped prices, and more time to implement security deadlines who support allowing pilots to carry guns on planes and to requiring self-defense training for flight attendants (opposed to 1)

3   No position on giving the airlines compensation for enhanced security efforts, access to carrying the mail, access to war risk insurance at capped prices, and more time to implement security deadlines but supportive of allowing pilots to carry guns on planes and to requiring self-defense training for flight attendants (opposed to 1)

Notes: The table lists the perspectives identified for the 98 study issues. In addition to the perspectives shown here, an additional 34 perspectives identified "neutral" actors who were typically government decisions makers who played important roles in the issue but who did not actively advocate a given proposal to others.

Table A.2: Types of Arguments

1. Policy will promote / inhibit the achievement of some goal.

101.	Claims linking the policy to shared goals
102.	Proposal is equitable; treats all fairly
103.	Proposal will inhibit shared goals
104.	Proposal is not equitable; does not treat all fairly

2. Costs to government

201.	Policy imposes costs to government; is inefficient
202.	Policy reduces costs to government; increases efficiency
203.	Not enough evidence to determine cost to government
204.	Policy will not impose costs to government or decrease efficiency
205.	Policy will not reduce costs to government or increase efficiency

3. Costs to non-government actors

301.	Policy imposes costs to non-government actors; is inefficient
302.	Policy reduces costs to non-government actors; increases efficiency
303.	Not enough evidence to determine cost to non-government actors
304.	Policy will not impose costs to non-government actors or decrease efficiency
305.	Policy will not reduce costs to non-government actors or increase efficiency

4. Secondary consequences of the policy, other than cost

401.	Whatever the value of the proposed policy goal, the policy will have some unintended negative consequence, other than cost
402.	In addition to the primary goal, the policy will also have some secondary benefit, other than cost
403.	Not enough evidence to determine what secondary consequences will result

5. Policy implementation/feasibility issues

501.	Whatever the value of the proposed policy goal, severe implementation problems
502.	Policy will work as expected; no problems with implementation
503.	Need more study; not enough evidence to determine the feasibility of the policy

6. Equality of Treatment/Discriminatory Impact

601.	Policy will affect some groups unfairly
602.	Rebuttal to this argument; this policy will not have unequal impact

7. Magnitude of the policy

701.	Policy will set a large precedent
702.	Proposed change is moderate, prudent, or otherwise not radical

8. Problem is bigger/smaller than estimated; is misunderstood

801. Problem is big or bigger than other side/perspective claims
802. Problem is small or smaller than other side/perspective claims
803. Problem is misunderstood

9. Appropriateness of government action

901. Claims about market failure; government needed to solve the problem
902. Claims about government inefficiency; problem is not one for government to solve

10. Window of opportunity

1001. A crisis looms; we must act now
1002. There is no crisis or threat; better to wait

11. Proposed policy will enhance security; references to terrorism, national defense, public safety

12. Policy supported/opposed by constituency or other group

1201. Positively viewed group or member of Congress supports
1202. Positively viewed group or member of Congress opposes
1203. Negatively viewed group or member of Congress supports
1204. Negatively viewed group or member of Congress opposes
1205. Supporting coalition is large or growing; momentum favors supporters
1206. Opposing coalition is large or growing; momentum favors opponents

13. Partisan or electoral considerations

1301. Electoral benefits; votes to be gained
1302. Electoral costs; votes to be lost
1303. Partisan actions within government preventing/spurring action; no explicit reference to elections
1304. References to campaign contributions or grassroots/lobbying/mobilization campaigns

14. Government procedures/jurisdiction

1401. Jurisdictional disputes between agencies and Congress; between other levels or branches of government; separation of powers; committee conflicts; turf fights
1402. Constitutional claims
1403. Congressional or other governmental procedures are not being followed or are not appropriate; policy has been set by previous court cases or clear precedent; misrepresentation of congressional intent
1404. Federalism issues; states v. local communities v. federal level responsibilities.

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Argument Type	Status Quo Defenders	Status Quo Challengers	Total
Table 1 **Types of Arguments Used** **(by perspective)**			
Problems/no problems with implementation or feasibility	68.8%	75.5%	72.9%
Policy promotes/inhibits some goal	60.9	65.1	63.5
Imposes/reduces costs on non-government actors	48.4	56.6	53.5
Equality of treatment/discriminatory impact	40.6	41.5	41.2
Positive/negative non-cost consequences	45.3	33.0	37.7
Imposes/reduces costs to government	20.3	36.8	30.6
Big precedent/modest change	23.4	21.7	22.4
Government procedural or jurisdictional issues at stake/relevant	20.3	16.0	17.7
Appropriate/inappropriate for government to solve problem	20.3	11.3	14.7
Problem bigger/smaller than estimated or is misunderstood	18.8	10.4	13.5
Policy supported/opposed by constituency or other group	10.9	12.3	11.8
Crisis/no crisis is looming	3.1	8.5	6.3
Policy has partisan or electoral benefits/costs	3.1	1.9	2.4
Necessary for national security or public safety	0.0	1.0	1.0
Number of perspectives:	64	106	170

Note: Entries show the percentage of perspectives making use of each type of argument.

Argument Type	Status Quo Defenders	Status Quo Challengers	Total
Table 2			
Subtypes of Arguments Used			
(by perspective)			
Problems/no problems with implementation or feasibility	**68.8%**	**75.5%**	**72.9%**
Severe problems/policy won't work	42.2	51.9	48.2
No problems/policy will work	40.6	43.4	42.4
Need more study/feasibility unknown	17.2	4.7	9.4
Policy promotes/inhibits some goal	**60.9**	**65.1**	**63.5**
Promotes a shared goal	37.5	50.0	45.3
Treats all fairly/is equitable	9.4	20.8	16.5
Inhibits a shared goal	26.6	27.4	27.1
Inequitable/doesn't treat all fairly	10.9	12.3	11.8
Imposes/reduces costs on non-government actors	**48.4**	**56.6**	**53.5**
Imposes cost/is inefficient	46.9	39.6	42.4
Reduces costs/increases efficiency	12.5	27.4	21.8
More study needed to determine cost	0.0	2.8	1.8
Equality of treatment/discriminatory impact	**40.6**	**41.5**	**41.2**
Unfair advantage for a certain group	37.5	39.6	38.8
No discriminatory impact	4.7	6.6	5.9
Positive/negative non-cost consequences	**45.3**	**33.0**	**37.6**
Regardless of goal, policy has unintended negative consequences	40.6	24.5	30.6
In addition to goal, policy has a secondary benefit	9.4	15.1	12.9
Need more study about secondary Consequences	4.7	0.0	1.8
Imposes/reduces costs to government	**20.3**	**36.8**	**30.6**
Imposes cost/is inefficient	14.1	17.9	16.5
Reduces costs/increases efficiency	4.7	21.7	15.3
More study needed to determine cost	0.0	3.8	2.3
Big precedent/modest change	**23.4**	**21.7**	**22.4**
Sets a large precedent/big implications	17.2	6.6	10.6
Prudent policy/trivial implications	6.3	16.0	12.4
Government procedural or jurisdictional issues at stake/relevant	**20.3**	**16.0**	**17.7**
Jurisdictional disputes/separation of Powers	0.0	3.8	2.4
Constitutional claims	4.7	2.8	3.5
Governmental procedures not being followed/legislative intent misrepresented	9.4	4.7	6.5
Federalism	6.3	6.6	6.5

Table 2 (cont.) Subtypes of Arguments Used (by perspective)			
Argument Type	**Status Quo Defenders**	**Status Quo Challengers**	**Total**
Appropriate/inappropriate for government to solve problem	**20.3**	**11.3**	**14.7**
Government needed/market failure	7.8	6.6	7.1
Government inefficiency/better handled by private sector	15.6	4.7	8.8
Problem bigger/smaller than estimated or is misunderstood	**18.8**	**10.4**	**13.5**
Problem is bigger than others claim	6.3	7.6	7.1
Problem is smaller than others claim	9.4	1.9	4.7
Problem is misunderstood	4.7	2.8	3.5
Number of perspectives:	64	106	170

Note: Entries show the percentage of perspectives making use of each type of argument.

Table 3 Categories of Arguments Used (by perspective)			
Argument Category/Tone	**Status Quo Defenders**	**Status Quo Challengers**	**Total**
Raising doubts/uncertainty	68.8%	64.2%	65.8%
Optimism about alternatives	43.8	61.3	54.7
Costs will increase	54.7	47.2	50.0
Costs will decrease	15.6	42.5	32.4
Preferred policy is prudent	6.3	16.0	12.4
Number of perspectives:	64	106	170

Note: Entries show the percentage of perspectives making use of each type of argument.

	Table 4 **Tone and Strategy of Argumentation** **(by perspective)**		
Argument Tone	**Status Quo Defenders**	**Status Quo Challengers**	**Total**
Positive	48.4%	70.8%	62.4%
Negative	79.7	85.9	83.5
Strategy			
Positive only	10.9%	11.3%	11.2%
Mix of positive and negative	37.5	59.4	51.2
Negative only	42.2	26.4	32.4
Neither	9.4	2.8	5.3
Number of perspectives:	64	106	170

Notes: Entries show the percentage of perspectives making use of each type of argument or strategy. The strategy "neither" means that the perspective used arguments that could not be unambiguously classified as positive or negative in tone. Positive arguments are defined as: policy promotes a shared goal, policy is equitable, policy reduces costs to government or to private actors, and policy has some secondary beneficial consequences. Negative arguments are defined as: policy inhibits shared goals, policy is not equitable, policy imposes costs on government or private actors, policy has some secondary negative consequences, and policy does not work.

	Number of Issues With:	
	Both SQ Defenders & SQ Challengers Using the Argument	**At Least One Perspective Using the Argument**
Argument Type		
Problems/no problems with implementation or feasibility	31 (66.0%)	47
Policy promotes/inhibits some goal	21 (45.7)	46
Imposes/reduces costs on non-government actors	20 (50.0)	40
Equality of treatment/discriminatory impact	14 (41.2)	34
Positive/negative non-cost consequences	8 (25.0)	32
Imposes/reduces costs to government	8 (44.4)	18
Big precedent/modest change	4 (20.0)	20
Government procedural or jurisdictional issues at stake/relevant	6 (35.3)	17
Appropriate/inappropriate for government to solve problem	5 (35.7)	14
Problem bigger/smaller than estimated or is misunderstood	1 (7.0)	15
Policy supported/opposed by constituency or other group	0 (0.0)	8
Crisis/no crisis is looming	0 (0.0)	5
Policy has partisan or electoral benefits/costs	0 (0.0)	1
Necessary for national security or public safety	0 (0.0)	0

Table 5
Argument Engagement
(by issue)

Notes: Figures in parentheses indicate the percentage of issues that feature both status quo supporter perspectives and status quo challenger perspectives using the same type of argument out of all issues with at least one perspective using the argument. Figures in the third column do not include issues for which arguments are available only for status quo supporters *or* status quo challengers. There are 98 study issues. Of these 98 issues, there are 51 for which argument data are coded for both status quo supporters and status quo challengers.

	Table 6				
	Probit Analysis of Perspectives' Use of Arguments				
	Independent Variables				
Dependent Variable	**Issue Salience**	**Perspective Intent**	**Federal Budget**	**Private Cost**	**Established Program**
Problems/no problems with implementation or feasibility					
Policy promotes/inhibits some goal					+
Imposes/reduces costs on non-government actors					
Equality of treatment/discriminatory impact				+	
Positive/negative non-cost consequences					
Imposes/reduces costs to government			+		
Big precedent/modest change	-		-		
Government procedural or jurisdictional issues at stake	-			+	
Appropriate/inappropriate for government to solve problem		-		+	
Problem bigger/smaller than estimated or is misunderstood	-		-		
Policy supported/opposed by constituency or other group					-
Raising doubts/uncertainty					
Optimism about alternatives					
Costs will increase					
Costs will decrease		+	+		
Preferred policy is prudent		+	-		
Positive		+			
Negative				+	

Notes: Cell entries are the signs of statistically significant ($p < .10$) unstandardized probit coefficients based on robust standard errors that are calculated by applying Huber's (1967) formula to each cluster of observations that are identified with a single issue. If the coefficient is not statistically significant, the relevant cell is blank. Each type of argument is coded 1 if at least one advocate associated with a perspective used the argument, 0 if the perspective did not use the argument. Sample size is 170 for all estimations.

Table 7: Tactics of Advocacy (by perspective)			
Tactic	**Status Quo Defenders**	**Status Quo Challengers**	**Total**
Inside Advocacy			
Personal contact of rank & file MC/staff	68.9%	83.0%	77.4%
Work with legislative allies	59.0	73.4	67.7
Personal contact of majority committee/subcommittee member/staff	54.1	62.8	59.4
Disseminate in-house research to government policymakers	60.7	52.1	55.5
Personal contact of majority committee or subcommittee leadership/staff	47.5	56.4	52.9
Personal contact of minority committee/subcommittee member/staff	41.0	59.6	52.3
Sent letter/fax to MC/staff	42.6	47.9	45.8
Personal contact of minority committee or subcommittee leadership/staff	44.3	45.7	45.2
Disseminate external research to government policymakers	52.5	39.4	44.5
Personal contact of agency official	44.3	37.2	40.0
Outreach/coalition building	36.1	39.4	38.1
Draft legislative language	23.0	44.7	36.1
Testify at congressional hearing	34.4	29.8	31.6
Hired consultants to help with lobbying	23.0	28.7	26.4
Submit written comments to agency	27.9	22.3	24.5
Personal contact of White House official	13.1	20.2	17.4
Work with agency allies	14.8	18.1	16.8
Personal contact of majority leadership/staff	14.8	13.8	14.2
Testify at agency hearing	13.1	12.8	12.9
Draft regulatory language	9.8	11.7	11.0
Outside Advocacy			
Gave press conferences/issued press releases	29.5	33.0	31.6
Organized a public education/relations campaign	8.2	20.2	15.5
Write op ed/opinion pieces	11.5	12.8	12.3
Disseminate in-house research to the public	9.8	11.7	11.0
Grassroots Advocacy			
Mobilize mass membership	36.1	46.8	42.6
Organized a lobby day	13.1	19.2	16.8
Mobilize elite membership	13.1	19.2	16.8
Mobilize general public	11.5	20.2	16.8
Number of perspectives	61	94	155

Notes: Entries show the percentage of perspectives using each type of tactic. Tactics were coded solely for the organizational advocates who were interviewed.

Table 8			
Cross-Party Contacts in Congressional Committees			
(by perspective)			
Committee Leadership/Staff Contacts	**Status Quo Defenders**	**Status Quo Challengers**	**Total**
Both majority & minority	37.7%	40.4%	39.4%
Majority only	9.8	18.4	14.8
Minority only	6.6	6.4	6.5
No contacts	45.9	35.1	39.4
Committee Membership/Staff Contacts			
Both majority & minority	41.0%	54.3%	49.0%
Majority only	14.8	9.6	11.6
Minority only	1.6	6.4	4.5
No contacts	42.6	29.8	34.8
Number of perspectives:	61	94	155

Note: Entries show the percentage of perspectives engaging in each type of contact.

Table 9					
Salience and Advocacy Tactics					
(by perspective)					
	Salience				
	Low	**Moderate**	**High**	**Very High**	**Total**
Committee Level Contacts					
No	36.6%	17.1%	29.4%	33.3%	29.0%
Yes	63.4	82.9	70.6	66.7	71.0
Outside Advocacy					
No	68.3%	48.8%	64.7%	41.0%	55.5%
Yes	31.7	51.2	35.3	59.0	44.5
Grassroots Mobilization					
No	41.5%	46.3%	50.0%	35.9%	43.2%
Yes	58.5	53.7	50.0	64.1	56.8
Number of perspectives:	41	41	34	39	155

Notes: Cells contain column percents except for the "total" column which contains row marginal percents. For committee level contacts and salience the Pearson Chi-Square = 4.334, p=.228. For outside advocacy and salience the Pearson Chi-Square = 7.941, p=.047. For grassroots mobilization the Pearson Chi-Square = 1.703, p=.636.

	Table 10 **Budgetary Impact and Committee Contacts** (by perspective)		
	Impact on Federal Budget		
	None	**Increase or Decrease**	**Total**
Committee Level Contacts			
No	38.5%	15.6%	29.0%
Yes	61.5	81.4	71.0
Number of perspectives:	91	64	155

Notes: Cells contain column percents except for the "total" column which contains row marginal percents. For committee level contacts and budget impact the Pearson Chi-Square = 9.511, p=.002.