

The Structure of Policy Conflict

Frank R. Baumgartner
Penn State University
frankb@psu.edu

Jeffrey M. Berry
Tufts University
jeffrey.berry@tufts.edu

Marie Hojnacki
Penn State University
marieh@psu.edu

David C. Kimball
University of Missouri, St. Louis
dkimball@umsl.edu

Beth L. Leech
Rutgers University
leech@polisci.rutgers.edu

Abstract

This is the first in a series of papers reporting the final results of the Advocacy and Public Policymaking Project (<http://lobby.la.psu.edu>). We interviewed 315 policy advocates and government officials centrally involved in a random sample of 98 issues reflecting the full range of policy activities of the federal government during the last two years of the Clinton Administration and the first two years of the Bush Administration. In this paper we focus on the structure of policy conflict. Each of our 98 issues was conceptually multidimensional and understood in such a way by everyone involved. Policy debate surrounding the issues, however, was far more limited.. We map out the structure of policy disagreement across our issues, describing the surprisingly small numbers of distinct perspectives active on each case. Our findings help understand the causes of low-dimensionality in Washington debates. These structural features are broader than institutional design alone, and stem from the nature of the professional and knowledge-based communities surrounding the policies; the continuing nature of debates, which creates a strong status-quo bias; cost issues; and political and gate-keeping efforts. The paper is the first to lay out these dimensional structures and to describe the nature of policy disagreement and political conflict in a random sample of issues.

The Structure of Policy Conflict

The structure of conflict in Washington is rarely determined by straightforward debates about whether a certain goal is desirable or not.¹ The typical object of policy debate in Washington involves uncertainty about how serious the underlying problem really is, who will be affected by any policy designed to address it, how much such a policy may cost (and for whom), whether the policy will work as proponents claim, whether it might have unintended negative consequences, and even sometimes about whether the problem it is designed to address is really a problem at all. The objects of lobbying activity in Washington on any given day tend to be complex issues with multiple impacts on many diverse constituencies. They usually involve multiple dimensions of evaluation, leading to incommensurate comparisons of their effects on various constituencies. All this is in addition to more fundamental political and ideological disagreements about the desirability of various social goals, or whether government action is the appropriate means of achieving them. The typical case is ambiguous and complex, with a combination of considerations ranging from the philosophical to the technical.

In spite of the complexity of the underlying issues with which lobbyists and policy advocates deal, the structure of policy conflict in Washington is typically clear. One side proposes change; another attempts to protect the status quo. We present evidence from the first large-scale study designed to assess the overall structure of political debate in a random sample of cases of Washington policymaking. Our findings show a remarkable simplicity in the vast majority of cases, despite the inherent and overwhelming complexity of the underlying policies. What creates this structure? We focus on four elements of explanation here: 1) the continuing nature of public policy debate, which leads to a strong tendency for conflict to simplify along the lines of changing the status quo or not; 2) the presence of large knowledge-based communities of

The Structure of Policy Conflict

experts surrounding virtually all policy programs, which means that new policies are rarely adopted without a full discussion of various diverse effects they may have; 3) cost, which is an almost ubiquitous consideration; and 4) gate-keeping and procedural issues relating to control within governmental institutions. The result of these structuring processes is to take a complex and multidimensional issue and create out of it a highly partisan one. Partisanship and ideology clearly play an important role in the process, and our research here attempts to explain how this occurs.

We deal with a fundamental conundrum between the literature emphasizing the inherently complex nature of the substance of most public policy debates and research noting (quite accurately, in our view) the extreme predictability and low dimensional structure of debates and votes in Congress. (In referring to the policy literature emphasizing complexity, consider Schattschneider 1960; Cobb and Elder 1983; Kingdon 1984; Baumgartner and Jones 1993; Stone 1988; Schneider and Ingram 1993; or virtually any study of the substance of a policy issue over time. In referring to the literature emphasizing structure and stability consider Poole and Rosenthal 1991 and 1997; Shepsle 1978 and 1979; Shepsle and Weingast 1981 and 1987; Krehbiel 1981; or other studies of congressional procedures and voting.)

The relative complexity or simplicity of policy conflict matters in several ways. First, the substantive content of debates in Washington indicate clearly whose interests are being considered as new policies are debated. As complex issues are simplified for public debate, some interests are inevitably marginalized while others remain central to the discussion; knowing what elements of debate are present and which are absent is therefore central to understanding the representative nature of policymaking. The second important element relating to complexity has to do with the causes of the structure we observe. The contrast between the

The Structure of Policy Conflict

two literatures we refer to above, one reflecting the inherent diversity in the substance of most policy issues, and the other emphasizing the clarity of how diverse issues are debated in Congress, poses an important question, but one which has not been fully explored to date in the literature. We hope to move substantially in this paper and in the larger project of which it is a part toward closing this gap. Partisanship and ideological structures are clear, but how do they enter this process? What happens when complex policy debates enter the simplified world of partisan politics?

Our paper is structured as follows. First, we explain the complexity of our issues, in substantive terms. Second, we use our interviews to illustrate the substantive richness of the lobbying world; the deep and shared knowledge about policy issues and government programs that characterizes the communities of professionals which surround the policies we studied. Having established the complexity of the issues and the fullness of the information available to those involved, we move to the issue of structure. We document the extremely simple patterns of conflict that are present in our cases. Then we move to our qualitative explanation of the most important features that appear to be driving this structure: the continuing nature of policy discussions and the status-quo that stems from this; the shared information among experts which keeps most issues stable most of the time; the impact of money in structuring argumentation and participation in the debates; and gate-keeping and institutional procedures. As this is the first paper on this topic, here we explore these questions in some detail and describe our evidence in a univariate and qualitative manner. In later work, we expect to elaborate on this research with a more complex and systematic multivariate treatment.

Simple Issues, and Complex Uncertain Ones

Some political conflicts such as those surrounding abortion or gun control seem to involve disputes about the desired ends of a policy. Some favor abortion rights; others disagree. Some support wide gun-owning rights; others favor restrictions on guns. There is no subtlety to these debates, little ambiguity, and little room for compromise. Even relatively stark debates may be more complex than they appear on the surface—individuals may have diverse reasons for holding a given opinion, for one. That is, some may support gun rights because they believe they make them safer; others because they don't trust the government; others because they believe the Constitution guarantees it and they don't like seeing that guarantee whittled away. No matter what the diverse motivations may be, all of these people are in fundamental disagreement with gun-control advocates. A second reason why debates may be more complicated than they appear is that even in those cases where disagreements appear fundamental, people may actually agree on some higher-level principles. When gun owners propose privacy and individual freedom justifications for their views, they are evoking fundamental values with which virtually all Americans agree. Similarly, when their opponents refer to child shootings and the high level of violence in America, they also evoke concerns shared by the vast majority of Americans. These are stark debates, however, and relatively clear in their structures because the focus of the debate is on the substance of issue: One side wants Policy A, the other wants something close to the opposite.

In spite of the clarity of many debates, the vast majority of public policy conflicts do not involve such clear disputes. More common are much more complicated fights, typically not about goals at all, but about the diverse effects of the policy, its feasibility, alternative mechanisms of achieving the same goal, cost, and unintended consequences. In fact, every one of our 98 issues involved multiple dimensions of evaluation. Whether or not the overriding goal

The Structure of Policy Conflict

of the policy was in dispute, none of our issues could be understood along only a single dimension. Typically, these dimensions involve disagreements about the various effects of the policy, some of which may be universally recognized as valuable. In fact, for a given policy outcome, often there is no disagreement whatsoever about whether it involves a worthwhile social goal (in contrast to the abortion or gun control examples above). Rather, conflict erupts around questions surrounding the likely effects of the policy overall. Take computer export controls, which was one of our issues. Some of the largest and most influential information-technology companies in America were aligned in the Computer Alliance for Responsible Exports, and these massive companies worked hard to convince the government to change the way they identified “high performance” computers, the only ones subject to export limitations. Among other things, these groups noted that computers actually used to design and test nuclear weapons are largely custom-made in any case, and not subject to export. Nonetheless, even such an impressive and well-heeled set of corporate heavy-hitters as Dell, Intel, Microsoft, IBM, AOL-Time Warner and others were not able to shake members of the Senate Armed Services Committee from a desire never to look “soft on defense.” The corporate lobbying effort went nowhere (see http://lobby.la.psu.edu/090_Export_Controls/frameset_export.html).

No one disputes the goals of enhancing American exports abroad, building a stronger high-tech industrial base in America, protecting American jobs, enhancing profits, or beating foreign economic rivals. But, then again, no one wants to give the tools to design nuclear weapons to Iran, North Korea, or Libya. Obviously both sets of goals matter to U.S. policymakers; there is no disagreement about any of them taken singly. The problem, and the policy conflict, stems from the combination of incommensurate effects of the same policy; every one of our cases has this feature. The multidimensional nature of each of our issues means that

The Structure of Policy Conflict

they all involve trade-offs of apples to oranges. An important element of such debates is that the resource-rich do not always win, as in the Computer Export Control example.

Not only were the issues we studied invariably multidimensional, but they were characterized by uncertainty as well. Uncertainty refers to whether a given policy will produce a given outcome. How much market share would American companies gain if export restrictions were lifted? How much more likely would it be that a given rogue state would develop nuclear weapons if they had more advanced computers? Typically we have only uncertain answers to such questions. Of course, the uncertainty associated with various outcomes makes the incommensurate trade-offs in many policies even more confusing: How much unknown lost market share is it worth for an unknown reduction in the probability that North Korea will develop or enhance its weapons, a reduction that may be equal to zero if they can simply buy the same computer from a foreign producer? As Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is fond of noting, quite often we don't even know what information we don't know. In thinking about the intersection of multidimensionality and uncertainty, one starts to understand the complexity of most lobbying in Washington.

The multidimensional nature of our issues has implications greater than mere uncertainty, since even if people reduced uncertainty to zero they would still disagree about whether positive results along one dimension outweighed possible negative consequences along some other dimension. For example, let's assume for the moment that we knew exactly how much freer trade would affect domestic consumer prices. That still would not tell us whether these potential benefits in terms of lower consumer prices would outweigh potential domestic job losses or the environmental dangers of moving factories overseas where standards are weaker. Most of our

The Structure of Policy Conflict

issues involve not just one but many trade-offs of this sort. Of course, they have uncertainty as well.

Sometimes the political system may respond to the mobilization of interest groups who attempt to focus attention on the dimension of debate that concerns them the most (such as labor unions being concerned with domestic job loss, or businesses which are large consumers of certain goods, such as sugar, explaining how much lower their prices would be if they could purchase at the world market rather than pay a higher domestic price). In this sense the mobilization of affected interests is an integral part of determining the way a given issue is debated in the public sphere. Constituencies mobilize to ensure that their view on the debate is given substantial weight. As the debates themselves often involve incommensurate comparisons, there is considerable room for various political actors to give more weight to one dimension than to another, even while recognizing that the other factors are relevant. In sum, it is not easy to determine how a given issue will be discussed in the public sphere; many factors determine how much weight various actors will assign to the various possible relevant dimensions of evaluation, and how they will make trade-offs among them.

All this implies that one would expect the structure of policy conflict to be quite complex, reflecting the multidimensional nature of the issues themselves. In fact, as we will see, the conflict itself tends to be surprisingly clear-cut. Interest groups and professionals surrounding the policy make it so by mobilizing to maintain or enhance attention to “their” dimension of the debate. This counteractive behavior reduces the ability of any other actors unilaterally to re-frame or re-define the debate, pushing attention to an element of the debate that favors them. Lobbying becomes a struggle for attention to one set of dimensions rather than another, and for the most part rival lobbyists and rival policymakers hold each other in check.

The Structure of Policy Conflict

Not only do our cases involve incommensurate goals with uncertainty about their likely occurrence, but they also typically include debates about how much the policy may cost, who will pay, how various constituencies will be affected, whether the policy can in fact be implemented, and other questions. There is no such thing as a simple issue; at least in our random sample of 98 cases we did not encounter any. If uncertainty refers to the likely results of a given policy proposal, and complexity refers to the multiple trade-offs that must be made on incommensurate dimensions of evaluation, then each of our cases is both complex and uncertain. But the conflict surrounding them typically is neither complex nor uncertain. An impressive structure keeps Senator Kennedy typically on the other side of the vast bulk of issues from Senator Frist. In spite of the complex nature of every one of our cases, at the end of the day when a vote is taken in Congress there is tremendous regularity in who lines up with whom. Republicans often line up on one side; Democrats on the other. Most roll-call votes in Congress, after all, can be explained by simple partisanship. While unremarkable to anyone familiar with Washington politics, perhaps this should be remarkable.

How do policymakers move from the complex underlying multidimensionality that is inherent in all of our cases to an up-or-down decision on the final outcome? What causes a simple ideological structure to make a common “fit” in issues as diverse as the Bear Protection Act, the proposed USAirways – United Airlines merger, extending patent protection on certain pharmaceuticals, the patient’s bill of rights, and ergonomics standards in the workplace? Each of these issues alone is tremendously complex, raising economic, geographic, social, and environmental dimensions of debate familiar to those who are experts on the issue. Each is uncertain as well, since few could say for sure exactly what would be the impact of a given policy change. But in the end when Congress votes, to a large extent these diverse issues are

The Structure of Policy Conflict

whittled down to a single structure. Even more remarkable, it is largely the same structure across all the cases. We explore the structure of political conflict here. Our first argument is simply that this structure does not stem from the clarity of the underlying issues.

The Informational Richness of Lobbying

As discussed above, each of the issues that we studied was complex. By that we mean that the issue was recognized by all concerned as having multiple and typically incommensurate dimensions. Even the simplest issue may have the consequence of increasing the purview of the federal government over the states, for example. Trade questions relating to China are inevitably linked to views about that country's human rights record, or abortion, or national security. Agriculture issues have environmental impacts. No matter what the substance of the issue, one way to look at any issue is who wins and who loses economically; this dimension of evaluation may or may not lead to the conclusion that proponents like. Many issues have differential geographic impacts, for example they may favor rural areas more than urban areas, or they may affect the Northeast adversely, or they may affect a single state, or a particular social, racial, or economic sector of the population. The differential impacts of various policy choices may be completely unrelated to theoretical arguments about "good public policy." The best thought-out policy proposal which leads to job loss in a particular state will be a tough sell for at least two senators. If the policy will affect rural areas for the worse, then the entire Senate may be reticent. Woe to the Washington lobbyist who would overlook arguments about geographic impact.

It is clear that different dimensions of evaluation lead different groups to support and oppose a given policy. For example, on computer export controls, if the issue is evaluated on the dimension of promoting U.S. exports and the high-tech industry then Republicans would

The Structure of Policy Conflict

naturally be in favor of this. But if national security trumps then the same group may be in opposition. William Riker (1984, 1986) saw the importance of these questions and made it seem that strategically sophisticated policymakers should be able to manipulate arguments in order to promote the dimension of evaluation that leads to the right outcome. But how easy is it to accomplish this? Can lobbyists determine the dimensions of debate that become salient? They would certainly like to.

If the richness, complexity, and depth of understanding of the issues being debated among the various communities of professionals whom we interviewed was truly remarkable, so was the clarity and the simplicity of the debate among political leaders. If there were ten dimensions of evaluation clear enough to any expert on the policy, its history, and its various effects on different economic, social, or geographic groups, typically only one or two of them emerged as the subjects of most political debate. Perhaps the experts all agree that the other effects are acceptable, so the debate centers around those few areas of remaining disagreement, making it seem as if there is always significant disagreement when in fact there may be more agreement than not. But there is more to it than that.

Surrounding each issue that we studied is a community of professionals who spend their careers dealing with the details of a given issue, day-in and day-out. These people tend to have their opinions, of course, about what policies should be adopted and how serious the underlying problem is. But what is most striking about these communities of experts to a group of outsiders (such as those of us who did the interviews reported here) is the tremendous knowledge about the issues that all members share. These people know their issues. They know their side, and they know the arguments of their opponents. They know the histories of the policies; the personalities of the original champions who created the policies in the first place; the justifications for and the

The Structure of Policy Conflict

problems with how the programs were originally structured; how these have evolved over time; how similar policies have been tried (or not) in the states and in other countries; they know whatever there is to know about their issues. Judging from our interviews, given the opportunity many of these people could sit down and write a book about the history and development of their little corner of the U.S. federal government.

Many of the advocates we interviewed had been working in the area where they are active for decades. And even if they had not, in each policy area there are people if not entire institutions that have been involved in the ins-and-outs of the policy for a long time. We conducted an average of three interviews on each case, using a snowball sampling procedure described elsewhere (see Table A-1 for a list of interviews per case and <http://lobby.la.psu.edu> for more information about our procedures). These interviews became very repetitive after a while as people explained the background of the issue to us and the current disputes. While every respondent had their own particular arguments, of course, they also knew the arguments of the others, and they all were able to give a similar description of the general background of the issue, what it was about, the rationale for the existing policy, various arguments for and against possible revisions to the policy, who is affected, who supports and opposes it, etc. Among people who spend their careers dealing with a given social problem or government policy, they all know pretty much the same things, and they all know a lot.

The shared knowledge of all these people provides structure, as we will show. Single individuals typically do not have the ability to change the way an entire community of professionals looks at an issue. In response to arguments by one side that an issue is “really” about jobs and exports, others involved speak up: “No, it’s not about that; it’s an issue of national security,” they might argue. Of course the outcome of the debate depends on who wins

The Structure of Policy Conflict

this war of rhetoric, but the battle is never one-sided, and all sides are armed with pretty much the same, and very complete, understanding of the underlying complexity of the issue. Which few of the many possible dimensions of debate will emerge most prominently is of course fundamental to the political response. However, it is difficult to control and manipulate because it is kept in check by rivals and no single group determines the way an entire community of professionals views an issue.

The nature of political response to a policy issue changes only rarely, but when it does it can lead to a shift in policy direction. It is the object of virtually constant efforts by lobbyists on all sides to get political leaders to see their issue “in the proper light”—that is, emphasizing the most favorable dimension. But these arguments are usually countered by opponents who benefit from the status quo understanding of the issue. Each side may argue that the other side has oversimplified the case, but none will want to do without their own sound-bites and favorite examples if these can make headway among those who are less expert on the history and complexities of the issue. Through this process of informational richness, and mutual checks and balances, we can understand the extreme status-quo bias associated with most issues in Washington, but also how things occasionally shift dramatically. What new information would be sufficient to re-define the complex debates that surround most Washington policies? Do elections do it? New scientific studies? Cultural shifts? Venue-shopping? Slick PR campaigns? Campaign contributions? Institutional rules? Leadership? Each of these has been proposed as the cause of important policy shifts, but as we will see this is very unusual and typically no single factor determines a dramatic policy change, and even in combination most of these are insufficient to overcome the extreme bias toward the status quo that we observe in our cases.

The Structure of Policy Conflict

Complexity and uncertainty provide the opportunity for instability and radical change in policy, but information provides the structure that prevents it from happening in any but the rarest of cases. The informational richness of the policy process, the shared knowledge about so many diverse consequences of the policy, the lack of private information, and the ongoing nature of the policy process ensure that for most issues most of the time, stability will rule the day. We will return to the question of status-quo bias below. Let us turn to some empirical descriptions of the structure of conflict across our sample of cases.

From Complexity to Simplicity

In the previous sections we have made clear our assessment based on hundreds of interviews in a random sample of issues in all areas of American public policy that the issues are uniformly complex. One of the most complex and well-publicized debates in our sample related to the debate to grant Permanent Normal Trade Relations to China. This involved many interrelated and some disconnected debates about free trade, consumer prices, jobs, environmental impact, abortion, human rights, free speech, agricultural exports, military relations, and maintaining diplomatic relations with a rising world power. But at the end of the day when the issue was debated in Congress, there were only two perspectives: some wanted to grant PNTR; others wanted to maintain annual congressional review. Here we move to explaining the degree of simplicity present in the vast bulk of our cases, looking not at the substance of the underlying arguments, but at the structure of policy conflict. We look very simply at what goals the various participants in the policy process were attempting to reach.

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. Typically, the members of a given perspective do indeed coordinate their efforts informally or through a formal

The Structure of Policy Conflict

coalition. Perspectives include anyone attempting to promote the same goal, whether these 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, a perspective is broader than a coalition, therefore. It includes anyone playing a significant role in the policy process who is actively attempting to achieve a given goal. Our definition of a perspective, then, is equivalent simply to counting the number of distinct goals that various policy advocates are attempting to reach.

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 216 distinct perspectives, or just over two per case, on average. Table 1 shows how many were active in each case.

(Insert Table 1 about here)

The table shows that a surprisingly large number of issues (17 cases) consist of a single perspective attempting to achieve a goal to which no one objects or bothers to mobilize. Ironically, the lack of counter-mobilization may be one of the strongest predictors of failure. Many of these reflect efforts to put an issue on the agenda which are either too early in the process for anyone yet to have reacted, or which are clearly not moving so others have not gotten involved in the issue. In any case, in our random sample, 17 cases had just one perspective. 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

The Structure of Policy Conflict

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 together, either. Only two cases included five or more distinct perspectives.

Some might believe that issues the multi-dimensional nature of the issues facing government would lead directly to an incoherent, overlapping, and confusing set of policy positions being held by various interested parties, and that this, in turn, explains the policy stalemate and the extreme status-quo bias that we observe in American politics. With advocates seeking multiple and conflicting goals, it might prove impossible to achieve consensus on anything. While there is some intuitive appeal to this argument, the data in Table 1 suggest that this is far from the case in reality. We found only two cases with five or more perspectives active; fully two-thirds of the cases had just one or two perspectives. The causes of stalemate must be different than that.

We did have one case in our sample with seven distinct perspectives; this related to the possible regulation of internet prescriptions (see Table A-1, case 44). Three different perspectives sought different types of regulations; two distinct perspectives argued either that the issues should be handled by the states or that existing federal law with voluntary measures could handle the problems; and two other significant perspectives weighed in on the issue with no proposed solution, but simply to protect their own separate and substantial interests on the matter. Our web site describes the predictable results of this complex situation:

Despite the seriousness of this problem, Congress was initially hesitant to act. Republicans in particular were hesitant to regulate the Internet as they believe strongly in free market principles that should result in consumers having broader choices and lower prices. Republicans also for the most part advocated allowing state governments to deal with the problem, since regulation of pharmacies is covered under state laws. Democrats were more outspoken in favor of additional federal regulations to ensure consumer protection. Work began in the 106th with hearings, and a bipartisan compromise bill that contained some elements favored by both Democrats and Republicans was introduced

The Structure of Policy Conflict

just before Congress adjourned for the 2000 elections. Unfortunately for backers of the bill, there was little time left in the session and few strong believers in the feasibility of the bill's goals. The bill was introduced, but never acted upon.

A similar bill was introduced in the 107th Congress, and again in the 108th Congress, but in each of these sessions members of Congress focused more attention on the issue of prescription affordability, and regulation of internet prescriptions was never acted upon.

(http://lobby.la.psu.edu/044_Internet_Prescriptions/frameset_prescriptions.html)

The inability to forge a new policy consensus in the complex environment associated with seven distinct policy perspectives each with powerful actors fighting over various elements of a complex mixture of policies is completely understandable. But our data show this is extremely rare; the typical case included just one or two perspectives. The structure of conflict is typically crystal-clear, and has a lot to do with the ongoing nature of public policy disputes.

(Indeed, the relative newness of the internet as a policy area may have helped make the multiple competing perspectives possible, since the policy subsystems at work are less set in their ways.)

Across all our issues, 130 perspectives (60 percent of the total) sought to change policy, and 86 (40 percent) worked to protect the status quo. Table 2 shows the number of “pro-active” and “reactive” perspectives on each issue.

(Insert Table 2 about here)

Looking first at the distribution of cases in terms of the groups attempting to protect the status quo, numbers here are typically quite low. First, a surprisingly high number (22 cases) have no such perspective at all. This could be because all agree the status quo policy must be changed, and the only question is how to change it. However, the lack of organized protection for the status quo arises much more commonly because momentum for policy change is weak and fails to threaten anyone enough that they to mobilize actively to oppose it. Many proactive groups work in vain even to bring attention to their issue, and status-quo protectors do not automatically mobilize in response to each rumor, threat, or hopeful press conference by the

The Structure of Policy Conflict

other side. Second, two-thirds of the cases have exactly one status quo perspective. We saw only eight cases with multiple status-quo coalitions. (These would be where distinct groups mobilize to protect different parts of the status quo, as in a large piece of legislation affecting multiple constituencies, and where different groups mobilize to protect their own parts of it, not to kill the entire bill.) One key structure apparent in our data is that there is typically just one “Coalition of the Status Quo.” This may be because wherever there is an active perspective attempting to change things, those who oppose it simply coalesce into a single “kill-it” perspective. That is, when they bother to mobilize at all. Fully 90 of our 98 cases had one or fewer status quo perspectives. A lot of structure stems from ongoing nature of most policy debates; there is always a status quo, and some people like it.

Looking at the distribution of proactive perspectives, three-quarters of the cases show just a single such perspective. There are strong incentives, apparently, to work towards a single goal rather than multiple ones. Of course this is not always possible and Table 2 shows 11 cases with three or more distinct goals being sought. Overall, these are not large numbers. Table 3 shows the overwhelming simplicity of the vast majority of issues.

(Insert Table 3 about here)

Table 3 shows that 56 cases, an absolute majority, had the simplest structure of all: one active set of participants attempting to change the status quo, and one set opposing them. Twenty-two cases involved one or more perspectives attempting to change things, with no one mobilized on the other side. Nine cases involved more than one pro-active perspective working against a single status-quo perspective. Just two of our 98 issues involved multiple perspectives on both sides of the issue. The continuing nature of public policy structures much of the debate around it, and that structure is typically very simple.

It's all about the Money

We can get some further idea about the structure of policy conflict by looking at some particular characteristics of our issues and those active on them. Table 4 provides more information about each of our cases, noting the number and percentage of the 216 perspectives with various types of goals and whether they were involved in policy debates about changes to existing federal government programs or budgetary matters.

(Insert Table 4 about here)

We previously noted the slight tendency for greater numbers to be active in seeking change rather than in protecting the status quo. Status-quo protection is not necessary when the threat against it is not strong, and it appears easier to maintain unity in reacting against proposals for change rather than in pushing for policy changes. In any case, about 60 percent of the perspectives active in our cases promote policy changes of some sort, with about 40 percent working to protect the status quo. Sixty-six percent of the perspectives deal with established federal government programs. This means that their lobbying activities center on such things as Medicare reimbursement rates, the Forest Service's policies on building roads in the national forests, or some element of ongoing policy implementation. Only one-third of the cases are unrelated to such ongoing considerations. Such policies would be those where someone proposes a new policy where none exists, where the issue relates to non-federal government policies, or where the policy debate is so diffuse that no particular government program can be said to be directly affected. Such cases reflect a distinct minority.

What drives much of the structure here is money. Just over half of the perspectives active on our issues were involved in cases directly affecting the U.S. federal budget. A smaller number were involved in policy debates that would have some impact on state or local government budgets. Almost two-thirds of the perspectives were active on issues where claims

The Structure of Policy Conflict

were made about the imposition of costs to private sector actors. This might be increased costs to consumers, regulatory burdens on corporations, or something else. Combined, fully 86 percent of the perspectives were active on issues where costs of some sort were part of the argument. It is clearly no exaggeration to say that money matters in politics.

Money matters in several ways, including some that have rarely been considered in the literature. Of course we know that money matters in that it can lead to contributions and lobbying resources, as many authors have noted. We will discuss elsewhere the results of our own large-scale effort to gather information on the political contributions and lobbying expenditures of each of over 2,000 individual interest groups, corporations, trade associations, and others involved in our sample of issues. Money certainly matters in that it can buy access and stimulate lobbying activities of all kinds both within and outside the Beltway. But this is not the only way it matters. We can point to two other important ways.

First, it mobilizes people. Some mobilize to get the money (particularly if there is a large federal program in the area), and some mobilize to avoid paying (particularly where regulatory actions may cut into corporate profits, for example). Second, it structures much of the political debate in Washington since estimates of cost structures and economic impact projections are an important part of so many debates. With 86 percent of all lobbying perspectives active dealing with some kind of budgetary impact, we can see why this is the case.

Cost arguments, once they enter the debate, have a powerful impact on structuring the partisan response to the issue. As we saw, cost arguments almost always enter the debate; 86 percent of our cases had some financial angle. Money structures not only the nature of lobbying in Washington, as many who have studied campaign finance have noted and the recent lobbying and corruption scandals have shown, but it also structures more fundamentally the very

The Structure of Policy Conflict

mobilization of citizens, the arguments they use, and the relations they maintain with political leaders. We expect to explore these issues in greater detail elsewhere.

Continuing Issues, the Status Quo Coalition, and Friction

The policy process never stops. The ongoing nature of policy debate in Washington creates tremendous resistance to change, or friction, for reasons we lay out here. Friction simply means that policies may change only a little even in the face of substantial pressures until these pressures pass some threshold, at which point policies may change suddenly and substantially. Policies do not change smoothly in proportion to the strength of shifting information; rather, the new information must be quite important to cause anything but the most minor change in policy. If it passes that threshold of importance, it could lead to dramatic change, but most issues most of the time do not pass the threshold. Bryan Jones and Frank Baumgartner (2005) have put a friction model at the center of their theory of attention-shifting in politics, explaining the punctuated-equilibrium nature of policy outputs—tremendous stability for most issues most of the time, interspersed with occasional but dramatic shifts.

Where does friction come from? There are at least three sources. Jones and Baumgartner noted the scarcity of attention. This certainly relates to our study because the typical two-year Congress, for example, sees close to 8,000 bills introduced but only about 400 passed into law. The vast majority of proposals for policy change fall on deaf ears. Since there are many more policy problems than there is time or money to solve them all, some priorities have to be set, and those issues with lower priority, for whatever reason, are simply pushed down in the queue, perhaps to be considered at some time in the future.

A second well-known reason for resistance to change comes from institutional gatekeepers who may oppose efforts to overturn existing policies; after all, they may have

The Structure of Policy Conflict

written those policies, and they may not be willing to admit that they are not working well. We return to this question below.

The sources of friction in the policy process go beyond the vested interests of institutional gatekeepers, however. As we noted above, we found substantial communities of professionals surrounding each of the policies we studied. They have shared understandings of the justification for the current policy, knowledge of the shortcomings it may have, and information about how different policies have been tried in the past or in other jurisdictions. They update their knowledge of the issue on a day-in and day-out basis. There are few surprises to these experts; they are familiar with the details and various arguments about their policy, just as they should be given that they spend their professional lives dealing with them.

Typically, substantial numbers of those involved in the current policy debate were also involved, if not responsible, for the creation of the status-quo policy. Why should they change their views? To do so essentially requires that they admit that the status-quo policy was a mistake, or that the context has changed so much in the ensuing period that the policy is no longer appropriate for the changed circumstances. This means that advocates for change must often convince others that things have changed so dramatically that the context has fundamentally shifted. The threshold is high.

With hundreds of policies simultaneously being considered, policymakers may not want to tinker with complex programs, risking some unintended consequence, just because there is a small part of the policy that is slightly imperfect, especially if the imperfection affects just a small constituency. There are only so many hours in the day and the most important policy problems have to be addressed before dealing with relatively small issues that were addressed in any case just a year or two earlier. The status quo policy is typically the result of the

The Structure of Policy Conflict

accumulated wisdom of decades of work and experience in the area. Proponents of change must convince others that the policy is so far off the mark that a new policy is warranted. This is a tough sell in most cases. People resist change not only because they prefer the substance of the status quo, but also because they understand it and may fear unintended consequences of tinkering with the system. This resistance to change includes the “pride of authorship” that some in gate-keeping positions may have, but it goes far beyond only this question. An example can illustrate this prejudice against change. Consider the difficulties that Clinical Social Workers had in correcting what they saw as an error in the 1997 Balanced Budget Act. Our web site provides this description:

With the passage of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, Congress required that all reimbursable Medicare services provided through skilled nursing facilities be billed in a bundled invoice. This way the Health Care Financing Agency (HCFA) could cut administrative costs and complexity by writing a single check for services to nursing facilities. When this change was being formulated during the development of the broader budget legislation, the American Medical Association worked vigorously to get Congress to exempt physicians from the bundling provision. Doctors wanted to be able to bill Medicare separately. Physicians were worried that their reimbursements might end up being less than the maximum allowed if their services were bundled along with everything else the nursing home was charging to Medicare. Staff on the House Ways and Means Committee and Senate Finance Committee looked for a precise list of specialties that would fall under such an exclusion from bundling. They quickly settled on the hospital DRG list—essentially a government price list for various medical procedures. Clinical social workers were not on this list because they are not service providers in hospitals, and they were not recognized as legitimate providers of service under Medicare until 1989, after the DRG list was developed. As this provision of the new law was finally written, practitioners on the DRG list bill Medicare individually. All other practitioners in a skilled nursing facility are paid through the bundled payment from Medicare to their employer.

The organized interests that represent clinical social workers were slow to react to the bundling exemption. The Balanced Budget Act was a vast and complex piece of legislation and by the time these organizations found out what was in the bill, it had been finalized and clinical social workers had been left out of the bundling exemption. The clinical social workers’ groups protested the change because by being bundled with other services, clinical social workers believed they would receive less money for their services than they would if they could bill Medicare individually (they would be paid the per diem rate authorized by the Medicare Prospective Payment System).

After the Balanced Budget Act was passed the social workers' lobbies approached HCFA and asked to be added to the list of professionals exempted from bundling. HCFA determined that the law does not allow the agency to make an administrative decision to add providers to the list of those allowed bill Medicare individually. Given HCFA's decision, the social work groups had no choice but to go to Congress to try to get legislation passed to broaden the exempt list.

As efforts for a "legislative fix" were underway, HCFA took action that complicated the clinical social workers' efforts. In April of 1998, HCFA published a proposed rule indicating that Medicare would not make any additional payments for social work services performed in skilled nursing facilities because these nursing homes are required to have social workers on staff and, thus, the general reimbursement by the government covers such costs. Importantly, this rule does not differentiate traditional social workers from clinical social workers. Clinical social workers provide mental health and psychological services while traditional social workers generally provide assistance with financial and family support issues. Clinical social work counseling is thus an extra service not covered in the general reimbursement agreement between skilled nursing facilities and Medicare. This rule caught the attention of clinical social work organizations because if it went through, the legislation they sought to exempt them from bundling would no longer accomplish their objective of direct reimbursement. Organizations representing clinical social workers mobilized their members to contact HCFA about the rule and eventually HCFA agreed to delay its implementation until July 2000.

At the end of 1998, Representative Pete Stark (D-CA), the ranking member of the House Ways and Means Committee's Subcommittee on Health, subsequently introduced legislation that would amend Title XVIII of the Social Security Act to exempt clinical social workers from the bundled payment rules and to establish separate payment rules for clinical and traditional social workers. Republican Rep. Jim Leach of Iowa co-sponsored the bill. Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) has introduced companion legislation in the Senate. At this time (July 2000), both bills are still in committee and no further action has been taken.

http://lobby.la.psu.edu/007_Clinic_Soc/frameset_clinic_soc.html

This issue is no barn-burner. It affects only a single profession. It requires Congress and HCFA to admit that their original and very complicated legislation included a mistake, and that even though those affected did not notice it at the time, it is important enough that Congress should revise the law to fix it. Nothing happened. It is complicated, it costs money, and it is not likely to mobilize large numbers of constituents or gain anyone reelection. Advocates proposing change lost not so much because they faced active opposition or hostility in Congress, but more because their issue was tedious, somewhat expensive, and there was simply not enough pressure

The Structure of Policy Conflict

to overcome the friction associated with gaining attention to a small issue when there are so many seemingly more important matters being debated in Washington. This is not uncommon. Advocates often continue to fight for years before they find the opportunity to fix their problem, if they ever do.

Policymakers proposing changes to existing ways of doing things face substantial hurdles. Perhaps the first is the implicit question that they may face the first time they broach the idea with the relevant government officials: “Are you saying the original policy, which I wrote, was a mistake?” Even if policymakers recognize that the policy is imperfect or the result of an error, as with the clinical social workers above, it may still be a hard sell to convince others, especially those in leadership positions, that the current policy is working so badly that it must be overhauled. This threshold effect means that the vast majority of policies change either not at all or just a little. A few pass the threshold and may change substantially. (Ironically, it means that it is often easier to change big mistakes than to fix small ones, as by definition these affect fewer people.)

There is another side to any friction model: Sometimes friction is overcome. There can be many reasons for this, including turnover in government positions (either through elections or through normal executive branch turnover between elections). Not only may such turnover bring into positions of authority individuals who have no personal connection to the status quo, but these individuals may also have a desire to “make their mark” by becoming the champion of at least some policy proposal. The second reason is associated with the complexity and uncertainty of the issues themselves. With so many disparate dimensions of evaluation, new information may well come to light, or new factors may arise that cause all those involved in the policy community to give greater weight to an aspect of the issue that they had previously not

The Structure of Policy Conflict

considered as much. This could be a new technical or scientific study, as we saw for example in our low-sulfur gasoline case, when a joint oil-auto industry study made clear that a substantial reduction in the sulfur content of gasoline could have huge benefits for air quality, and a dramatic policy change did indeed follow. Increased attention to a new dimension of debate can follow from many sources, but no matter where it comes from it has the potential to push an issue past some threshold of friction, making possible dramatic policy changes. Such events are rare, but they are a constant possibility.

Students of agenda-setting have long noted that dramatic policy changes do occur. William Riker focused our attention on the brilliant tacticians who were able to re-focus collective attention on a new element of debate, causing policies to change, shifting debates through the power of their rhetoric. For most issues most of the time, individual policymakers fight an uphill battle to reframe their issues. One of the most important reasons for this is that the issues are not new and the status-quo policy was probably the result of substantial thought, deliberation, and compromise when it was adopted. Those adversely affected by the proposed change in policy fight back, exposing whatever flaws in the arguments they can find. Attention is so scarce in Washington that the threshold for policy change is substantial. The friction model we have described here is not due only to a particular set of institutional rules (though it may be reinforced by them). Rather, it stems from more fundamental sources rooted in the complexity of the issues themselves, the scarcity of attention, and the structure of professional communities surrounding most policy issues.

When Policy Hits Politics

Experts and professionals may follow the details of Medicare reimbursement rates for clinical social workers or the intricacies of Forest Service policies concerning building roads in

The Structure of Policy Conflict

wilderness areas, but political leaders do not. No matter how much they are interested in the details of public policy, by virtue of their positions, political leaders cannot be experts since they cannot spend their time on just a few issues. At some point, if important policies are to be enacted, the details of public policy must come into contact with the political world. This is an additional source of structure.

Political leaders follow a logic that incorporates their idea of “good public policy” but they must rely on communities of specialists for technical information concerning the likely effects of any given change in policy. To some extent, the distribution of opinion within the community of professionals surrounding a given policy may structure the political response to it—if all respected professionals share a consensus that a given issue is a serious problem, that inaction will be costly, and that a valid solution exists, then policy change is naturally more likely. If, on the other hand, substantial disputes characterize the community of experts, or if the proposed policy offers only uncertain benefits or helps only a small constituency, then change is less likely. This is simply to say that political leaders do not, and cannot, ignore the substance of the policy and the opinions of those professionals who know about it.

Politicians need no help from technical experts in deciding if they want to be on the side of the President, if they want to support or oppose a policy being promoted by their committee chair or if they want to trust a colleague’s recommendation, however. Policy specialists who are not able to construct the right kind of bi-partisan coalition for their idea of “good public policy” may find that once the issue is perceived as a partisan one it is hard to move it any further. Similarly, those without good relations with important gatekeepers such as committee chairs may need to recruit allies who do. As we will discuss elsewhere, the impediments to policy change are great and many of them have virtually nothing to do with the substance of a given policy;

The Structure of Policy Conflict

rather, they relate to scarcity of attention, the priorities of those in leadership positions, and the desire of other political actors to make those leaders succeed or fail.

The political coalitions that result around certain policy disputes are entirely predictable as they fit into the core structures of American politics. When the Clinton Administration was considering new Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) rules concerning the reduction of repetitive stress injuries in the workplace, labor unions predictably supported the proposal and Republicans, business interests, and small business owners lined up against (see http://lobby.la.psu.edu/062_Ergonomics_Standards/frameset_ergonomics.html for details). It is not always so easy to predict who will be on each side, however, because the multidimensional nature of the underlying debates means that most issues could be presented in a way congenial to either Democrats or Republicans. Even if we can't say ahead of time which party will line up on which side of each issue, we can predict that they will. In the political world, leaders take cues from who is promoting the proposal as much as what the proposal is. When unions representing hospital workers pushed in the 106th Congress for legislation requiring hospitals to take greater care in handling needles in the workplace, the issue could be seen as part of the fight against HIV/AIDS, since in a hospital setting an inadvertent scratch from the wrong needle could be fatal, or it could be seen as intrusive and expensive regulation of the workplace. In fact, the issue was initially seen as a simple labor issue, so the Republican chair of the relevant committee was loathe to act on it until unions hired a prominent and well-connected Republican lobbyist to convince them that the issue was really part of the fight against HIV/AIDS. The issue shifted from partisan to bipartisan. Legislation was passed and President Clinton signed it into law (see http://lobby.la.psu.edu/047_Needlestick_Injuries/frameset_needle.html).

The Structure of Policy Conflict

Partisanship matters tremendously in Washington, but it does not dictate all outcomes. This is because policies are complex, attention is scarce, and most proposals fail. Political leaders (committee chairs, agency heads, the President, House and Senate leaders) want to be known for policy accomplishments. A new leader cannot simply reverse the policies adopted by a predecessor. (Our study covers the last two years of the Clinton Administration and the first two years of the Bush Administration; the number of policies we followed through the transition period that were overturned or changed dramatically can be counted on the fingers of one hand.) In the complex world of most public policy issues, Democrats and Republicans agree on many more elements than they disagree on. But in the simplified world of partisan politics, they prefer to debate about those areas where they disagree. Further, neither side wants to raise issues they know will go nowhere or make their own side look bad. The result of this is that most policies remain stable even after political transitions such as the arrival of a new president, but that partisanship remains salient nonetheless. Without determining all the outcomes, it permeates much of the structure of political conflict.

Politicians are elected from geographic constituencies, so there should be no surprise that they are sensitive to the geographic impact of policy proposals. In reviewing all the arguments used in our study, we found that large percentages of our cases featured arguments about the differential impact of the policy on various geographical units—be they individual congressional districts, states, regions, or urban v. rural areas. Differential-impact arguments were not limited to geography, either, but were common in many ways—consumers, small business owners, American corporations compared to foreign competitors, the poor, minorities, members of certain professions, kids, all kinds of social groups were mentioned. When policies hit politics,

The Structure of Policy Conflict

the politicians often have a simple question: Who wins and who loses? This produces a great deal of structure.

Conclusion

We have presented evidence about the clarity in the structure of conflict across a random sample of the objects of lobbying activity in the U.S. federal government, in the first systematic study of the kind. We have given qualitative and preliminary explanations for what we believe are the reasons for the structure we have documented. First, it is definitely not related to the substance of the issues, which are uniformly complex. Second, money matters; the vast bulk of the policy issues, 86 percent in fact, had some kind of financial impact either on the U.S. federal budget, states, or private actors. Third, we identified what might be called a “knowledge-based equilibrium” by which we mean that communities of professionals keep each other in check, countering proposals and claims about the value of some new policy with reminders about the flaws in the argument. With large communities of professionals and experts surrounding most public policies, it is rare that a new consensus suddenly emerges across the board. Fourth, the continuing nature of the policy debate, and the scarcity of attention at the highest levels, mean that powerful forces of friction favoring the status quo obtain in virtually every case. These forces of friction are occasionally overcome, but the typical case does not pass the threshold. Finally, we noted that policy changes cannot come without some political involvement, and the political process imposes great deal of structure into policymaking. The partisan structure of Congress, the need to vote up or down on a series of proposals, the institutional imperatives of supporting or opposing those in leadership positions and the differential geographic, social, and professional constituencies of the two parties all lead to a powerful impact of partisanship when debates finally do make it into the political world.

The Structure of Policy Conflict

The result of all this closely resembles a friction model of the policy process, where only a few major changes occur and where the typical outcome even of intense lobbying campaigns are “three yards and a cloud of dust”—either no gain whatsoever, or only a marginal adjustment to a continuing policy. The stability we observe in politics is due not to the inherent clarity of the underlying issues being debated, but to the great difficulty for any advocate in pushing the collective attention of all those involved in the policy process to dimensions of the debate that have been overlooked in the past. One might wonder why they even try, since the odds appear so strongly stacked against policy change. Let us end with a reminder of one of our cases, one that went absolutely nowhere during the time of our study, but which reflects nonetheless the possibilities of change that are always present.

The case relates to “criminal justice reform,” a broad (if not diffuse) effort by civil rights and other progressive advocates to bring attention to systematic racial biases and other flaws in the justice system. According to proponents of this new way of thinking about the “war on crime,” the war is flawed by differential sentences for crack and powder cocaine, more aggressive police behavior in minority communities, racial profiling, mandatory sentencing guidelines and “three strikes” laws that have taken discretion away from judges and sometimes led to tremendous penalties for relatively small offences. Toward the end of the Clinton Administration, advocates were just beginning to bring attention to this series of issues, including some success in noting the alleged crime of “driving while black” in which patrol officers were much more likely to monitor the behaviors of minority drivers than whites. When the Bush Administration came to office, Attorney General John Ashcroft showed little interest in these arguments. The war on terror after 9/11 made racial profiling seem like recommended

The Structure of Policy Conflict

police practice, in fact. So the effort seems like a complete failure (for more details on this case, see http://lobby.la.psu.edu/049_Criminal_Justice_Reform/frameset_criminal.html).

One might wonder, given the lack of success, why do advocates for new policy paradigms even bother to try? In our example, advocates understand the long-term nature of their goals. While they got no immediate policy response, they have indeed managed to get some of these background ideas into the policy community. Many states have adopted moratoria on the death penalty after so many flaws and wrongful convictions have been pointed out. High-level attention to the “driving while black” phenomenon led to some investigations and revised procedures. While no one would say that the issue has been fully engaged or that advocates have overcome the friction that all policy communities impose on new ideas, who knows what impact these ideas may have at some point in the future? It could be quite substantial. The political system deals with issues as they are presented from the communities of professionals and experts. Changing these cultures and the shared knowledge within these large communities may take time, but it can have substantial policy impacts in the long term.

The Structure of Policy Conflict

Table 1. The Simplicity of Policy Conflict.

No. of Perspectives	1	2	3	4	5	7	Total
No. of Cases	17	58	14	7	1	1	98

Note: The table shows the number of cases across our sample with the indicated number of distinct perspectives. A perspective is a group of policy advocates sharing a policy goal.

Table 2. Changing or Protecting the Status Quo.

No. of Perspectives	0	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Protect the Status Quo	22	68	7	0	1	0	98
Change the Status Quo	4	74	9	7	3	1	98

Note: The table shows the number of cases with the indicated number of distinct perspectives attempting to change or to protect the status quo. There were 22 cases with no perspective actively attempting to protect the status quo, but just 4 cases with no groups actively seeking change. Overall, 86 perspectives were active attempting to protect the status quo with 130 attempting to change it. There can be more than one status quo perspective because each may be concerned with protecting a different part of the status quo.

Table 3. The Structure of Conflict.

Number of Perspectives Seeking Policy Change	Number of Perspectives Protecting the Status Quo			Total
	0	1	2 or More	
0	0	3	1	4
1	13	56	5	74
2 or More	9	9	2	20
Total	22	68	8	98

The table shows that 56 of 98 cases had the straightforward situation of one perspective for change; one for the status quo. Only two cases had multiple perspectives on both sides.

Table 4. The Goals of Policy Advocates.

Policy Goal	Number of Perspectives	Percent
Seeks to protect the status quo	86	40
Seeks to change the status quo	130	60
Is concerned with an established federal program	142	66
Deals with a policy that would affect federal government spending	114	53
Deals with a policy that would affect state government spending	39	18
Deals with a policy that would affect private sector spending	139	64
Deals with a policy that would affect spending by any source above	186	86

Note: There are 216 perspectives active on 98 issues.

Notes

¹ This is the first of a series of papers presenting the results of a large NSF-supported research project on lobbying and policy advocacy. We interviewed 315 lobbyists and public officials who played major roles in a random sample of 98 issues that were the object of lobbying activity in the last two years of the Clinton administration and the first two years of the Bush administration (1999 to 2002). We identified 2,220 participants in these issues, constituting the full set of all those identified by others as playing a major role in advocacy. We enumerated every major perspective on the issue and systematically gathered information concerning the resources and activities of every participant in each perspective. Our web site, <http://lobby.la.psu.edu> contains a full archive of all publicly available information about each of our issues, including newspaper stories, congressional hearings transcripts, bills and amendments, executive branch documents, and press releases taken from interest-group web sites. The documentation section of the web site contains technical information about our sample, describes the nature of our interviews, and gives other details of our research. Table A-1 identifies the 216 perspectives we have identified on these issues. Table A-2 shows the distribution of types of advocates within and outside of government that we identified as playing leading roles across our sample of issues.

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The Structure of Policy Conflict

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Appendix

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

	Partici- pants	Inter- views
1. Managed Care Reform		
1 Proponents of a Patient's Bill of Rights	54	11
2 Opponents of a Patient's Bill of Rights that contains employer mandates	19	4
2. Patent Extension		
1 Proponents of granting patent extension to pipeline drugs	8	1
2 Opponents of granting patent extension to pipeline drugs	15	2
3. Infant Hearing Screening		
1 Proponents for funding hearing screenings	29	3
4. Risk Adjuster		
1 Decision maker who supports the imposition of a risk adjuster to limit overpayments (opposed to 3, 4)	1	0
2 Support the idea of a risk adjuster (opposed to 3, 4)	2	0
3 Oppose the imposition of a risk adjuster as currently envisioned by HCFA (opposed to 1, 2, 5)	13	1
4 Oppose the imposition of a risk adjuster but believe there are bigger Medicare & Choice problems to address (opposed to 1, 2, 5)	5	1
5 Support the idea of a risk adjuster but believe there are bigger Medicare & Choice problems to address (opposed to 3, 4)	4	1
9 Neutral parties providing technical assistance	4	2
99 Unknown / missing data	3	0
5. PAP Screening		
1 Proponents for increased Medicare payments for PAP screenings	13	3
2 Opposed to changing status quo	1	0
9 Neutral / No position	1	0
6. Coverage Parity		
1 Proponents of coverage parity for the treatment of mental illness under Medicare (and generally)	29	4
9 Neutral	1	0
7. Clinical Social Workers		
1 Proponents of excluding CSW's from the bundled payment rules	5	4
9 Neutral / No position	1	0
8. Appropriations ADAP		
1 Proponents of funding ADAP at the level of ADAP Working Group estimate	38	4
2 Proponents of funding ADAP but not necessarily at the level of ADAP Working Group estimate	1	0
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)	12	1
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	0
3 Proponents of income-related refundable tax credits for everyone to purchase	4	1

The Structure of Policy Conflict

	health insurance (no direct opponents)		
4	Proponents of single-payer, universal health insurance coverage (no direct opponents)	2	1
9	Neutral / No position	3	0
99	Unknown / missing data	2	0
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)	7	3
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)	1	1
3	Proponents of an all-payer (or Medicare and all-payer) trust fund to support GME (opposed to 2, 4)	9	3
4	Proponents of funding GME through an annual appropriation from general revenues (opposed to 2, 3)	4	0
12. Chiropractic Coverage			
1	Proponents of coverage of Chiropractic services	8	2
2	Opponents of changing regulations to include Chiropractic services	1	0
13. Contraceptive Coverage			
1	Proponents of mandating contraceptive coverage by insurance companies	18	4
2	Opposed of mandating contraceptive coverage by insurance companies	9	0
14. Medical Devices			
1	Proponents of revising Medicare coverage policies (for procedures, devices, etc.) to increase physician input (no direct opponents)	5	1
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)	9	2
3	Proponents of imposing a cost-related criteria for the Medicare coverage reviews of medical devices (opposed to 2)	2	0
9	Neutral / No position	2	0
15. Disinfectant Byproducts			
1	Proponents of decreasing disinfectant byproducts in drinking water (opposed to 2, 3)	8	1
2	Opposed to (significantly) decreasing disinfectant byproduct levels in drinking water/opposed to switching to alternative (non-chlorine) disinfectants (opposed to 1, 3)	1	1
3	Proponents of minimizing disinfectant byproduct levels/opposed to major changes in treatment or disinfectant technology (opposed to 1, 2)	7	1
9	Neutral / No position	1	1
99	Unknown / missing data	3	0
16. Funding for CH-47			
1	Proponents of increased funding for the CH-47 Chinook Helicopter	11	1
17. Mine Waste Disposal			
1	Proponents of limiting the number of mill sites at mine sites	15	1
2	Opponents of limiting the number of mill sites at mine sites	12	2
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)	14	0

The Structure of Policy Conflict

2	Opponents of revising the 1996 Telecommunications Act (opposed to 1)	23	2
3	Position on 1996 Telecommunications Act unclear; proponents of policies designed to encourage deployment of broadband (no direct opponents)	3	0
9	Neutral / No opinion	2	0
99	Unknown / missing data	1	0
20. Compulsory Licensing			
1	Proponents of vaccine R&D tax credit, opposed to compulsory licensing provision/executive order (opposed to 2, 4)	8	3
2	Proponents of vaccine R&D tax credit, proponents of compulsory licensing provision/executive order (opposed to 1)	1	0
3	Proponents of vaccine R&D credit, no formal or known position on compulsory licensing provision/executive order (no direct opponents)	20	2
4	Proponents of compulsory licensing provision/executive order, no formal or known position on the vaccine R&D tax credit (opposed to 1)	13	1
99	Unknown / missing data	1	0
21. Postal Service Reform			
1	Proponents of modernizing the postal service (opposed to 2, 3)	25	2
2	Opponents of modernizing the postal service (opposed to 1)	7	0
3	Proponents of modernizing the postal service in theory but refuses to allow the proposal of perspective one to move forward (opposed to 1)	1	0
22. Modifying FQPA			
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	18	2
2	Opponents of modifying the FQPA of 1996.	6	1
23. CAFE Standards			
1	Proponents of increasing the Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards for light trucks and vans	12	0
2	Opponents of increasing the standards	15	2
9	Neutral / No Position	1	0
24. Low Sulfur Gasoline			
1	Proponents of Low Sulfur Regulations	14	2
2	Opponents of Low Sulfur Regulations	4	1
25. Low Power FM Licenses			
1	Proponents of granting Low Power FM Radio Licenses	16	3
2	Opposed to granting Low Power FM Radio Licenses	12	2
27. Estate Tax			
1	Proponents of repealing the estate tax (opposed to 2)	19	3
2	Opponents of repealing the estate tax (opposed to 1)	3	1
3	Advocates of various alterations to the tax, not repeal (not opposed to 1 or 2)	2	0
28. WEP and GPO			
1	Proponents of repealing or reducing the government pension offset & windfall elimination provision.	21	2
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)	5	1
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)	4	0

The Structure of Policy Conflict

3	Proponents of permanent and mandatory funding of conservation programs via CARA/Lands Legacy Initiative, generally (opposed to 4)	14	1
4	Opponents of permanent and mandatory funding of conservations programs via CARA/Lands Legacy Initiative (opposed to 1, 2, 3)	1	0
40. China Trade (PNTR)			
1	Proponents of normalized trade with China	16	2
2	Opponents of normalized trade with China	15	4
41. Defense Line Item			
1	For	5	2
2	Against	2	0
42. Predator Control			
1	Proponents of ending funding for federal control of predators on private lands	15	2
2	Opponents of ending funding for federal control of predators on private lands	25	1
43. 3% Excise Tax			
1	Proponents for cutting the 3% excise tax	16	4
9	Neutral / No position	2	0
44. Regulation of Internet Prescriptions			
1	Proponents of developing increased regulations for internet prescriptions (opposed to 4, 5)	4	2
2	Proponents of increased federal regulations for internet Prescriptions—disclosure only of pharmacy licensing sought (opposed to 4, 5)	1	0
3	Proponents of increased federal regulations for internet Prescriptions—FDA licensing of internet pharmacies sought (opposed to 4, 5)	1	0
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)	2	0
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)	9	1
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)	5	1
7	Wants better patient education about internet prescriptions, but is neutral regarding how this is done (no direct opponents)	1	0
9	Neutral	6	0
45. Credit Union Membership			
1	Proponents of making it easier to have broad credit union membership	3	2
2	Opponents of making it easier to have broad credit union membership	3	1
46. Bankruptcy Reform			
1	Proponents of bankruptcy reform legislation	17	2
2	Opponents of bankruptcy reform legislation	4	0
9	Neutral—provider of statistics and other information	1	0
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.	13	2
2	Opponents of a federal law requiring OSHA to draft a regulation requiring hospitals to use “safe” needles so that needlesticks are avoided.	2	1
9	Neutral	2	1

48. Commuter Rail Subsidies		
1	Proponents of giving favored treatment to all commuter rail authorities throughout the country.	11 2
2	Opponents of giving favored treatment to commuter rail other than Amtrak.	2 1
49. Criminal Justice Reform		
1	Proponents of changes to the criminal justice system	7 2
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 1
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.	11 1
9	Neutral / no position. Supportive of the two groups coming to some agreement.	4 0
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.	3 1
2	Opponents of releasing the funds.	5 0
60. Aviation Trust Fund		
1	Proponents to mandate aviation trust fund be spent completely on aviation	8 3
2	Opposed to changing status quo	2 0
9	Neutral / no position	2 0
61. Reauthorization of ESEA, Title I		
1	Proponents for reauthorization of ESEA (no direct opponents)	11 2
2	Proponents for funding through a block grant (opposed to 3)	1 1
3	Proponents for funding through categorical grants (opposed to 2)	1 1
62. Ergonomics Standards		
1	Proponents of Ergonomic Regulations	3 1
2	Opponents of Ergonomic Regulations	10 2
9	Neutral / No Position	2 0
63. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act		
1	Support IDEA w/ full mainstreaming, access (no direct opponents)	10 2
2	Support IDEA, general (no direct opponents)	2 0
3	Support strengthening of rights to discipline kids (no direct opponents)	3 0
4	Want greater funding of special ed to help schools (no direct opponents)	4 1
64. Legal Services		
1	Support Legal Services	7 2
2	Against Legal Services	4 0
65. Religious Licenses		
1	Proponents of providing educational broadcast licenses to religious organization rather than more expensive standard licenses	9 1
2	Opponents of providing educational broadcast licenses to religious organization rather than more expensive standard licenses	11 2
66. Nuclear Repository		
1	For Yucca Mountain Nuclear Repository	1 1
2	Against Yucca Mountain Nuclear Repository	7 1
9	Neutral / No Position	1 0
67. Rise in Gasoline Prices		

The Structure of Policy Conflict

1	Against Gov. Intervention to Lower Gas Prices (opposed to 2)	2	2
2	For Increase in CAFE Standards (opposed to 1, 3)	3	0
3	Against Increase in CAFE Standards (opposed to 2)	2	1
9	Neutral / No Position	1	0
99	Unknown/Missing Data	3	0
68. Roads in National Forests			
1	Proponents of a moratorium on new road building in national forests (opposed to 2)	13	3
2	Supports status quo, allowing new road building in national forests (opposed to 1)	3	1
3	Want Access to forest roads maintained (no direct opponents)	3	1
69. WTO Membership			
1	Support Renewed Membership in the WTO	5	1
2	Oppose Renewed Membership in the WTO	2	0
70. Airline Merger			
1	Proponents of US Air - United Airlines merger	5	1
2	Opponents to US Air - United Airlines merger	5	2
9	Neutral / No position	1	0
80. Internet Sales Tax			
1	allow states to collect sales taxes on purchases over the Internet	23	4
2	opposed to any taxation of Internet commerce	11	2
99	Unknown / missing data	1	0
81. Physician Anti-trust Waivers			
1	Proponents of physician antitrust waivers	4	2
2	Opponents of physician antitrust waivers	17	4
82. Internet Expense Rules			
1	Proponents of changing the tax treatment of interest expenses for foreign subsidiaries of U.S. companies	9	1
83. Class Action Reform			
1	Proponents for Class Action Reform	20	4
2	Opposed to Class Action Reform	10	1
84. Prevailing Wage Rules			
1	Wants to maintain prevailing wage laws like Davis-Bacon	8	2
2	Wants to move toward repeal of Davis-Bacon law	9	1
9	Neutral / No position	1	0
85. Computer Depreciation			
1	Wants to reduce depreciation period for computer equipment (opposed to 2)	7	3
2	Opposes changes in depreciation because of loss of federal revenue (opposed to 1, 3)	2	0
3	Wants to overhaul depreciation schedules for all industries (opposed to 2)	1	0
86. Right to Carry			
1	Favors right-to-carry bills as well as broader gun rights laws (opposed to 2, 3, 4)	4	0
2	Wants to allow off-duty and retired police officers to carry a concealed gun (opposed to 1, 3)	9	2
3	Opposes right-to-carry law for officers (opposed to 1, 2)	5	0
4	Favors gun control but neutral on right-to-carry for police officers (opposed to 1)	1	0
87. Late-term Abortions			
1	Opposes a ban on late-term abortions	13	1

The Structure of Policy Conflict

2	Supports a ban on late-term abortions	6	0
90. Export Controls			
1	Computer Industry against export controls	10	3
2	National Security Types for export controls	10	0
91. Airline Age 60 Rule			
1	Opponents of raising mandatory retirement at 60 for commercial airline pilots—airlines, pilots union, younger pilots	5	1
2	Proponents of raising mandatory retirement at 60 for commercial airline pilots—older pilots	13	1
92. C-130 Procurement			
1	Opponents of procuring new C-130 aircraft vessels	2	1
2	Proponents of procuring new C-130 aircraft vessels	13	3
93. OBD Service			
1	Proponents of new regulations governing on-board diagnostic service information, tools, and training	18	4
2	Opponents of new regulations	3	2
94. Right to Know			
1	Opponents of parental consent for non-emergency health service in school setting	29	2
2	Proponents of parental consent—Pro-life advocates	11	1
9	Neutral / No Position	2	0
95. Cuba Sanctions			
1	Proponents of complete repeal of trade sanctions with Cuba (opposed to 3)	18	1
2	Proponents of partial repeal trade sanctions with Cuba for food and medicine (opposed to 3)	3	0
3	Opponents of repeal of trade sanctions with Cuba—support status quo (opposed to 1, 2)	17	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	8	2
2	Opponents of new rule to allow newspapers and TV stations to be owned by the same company, in the same market—maintain status quo rule banning crossownership	7	1
9	Neutral—FCC given rulemaking authority in 1996 Communications Act	2	1
97. Steel Safeguard			
1	Proponents of steel safeguard investigation and increased tariffs—Domestic steel manufacturers/suppliers	13	2
2	Opponents of steel safeguard investigation and tariffs—Domestic consuming industries that purchase raw steel for manufacturing	1	1
9	Neutral—ITC investigating by presidential order	3	0
100. NAFTA Foreign Investment Reform			
1	Proponents of re-negotiating Chapter 11 of NAFTA	8	1
2	Opponents of re-negotiating Chapter 11 of NAFTA	5	1
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)	34	1
2	Proponents of new Medicare prescription drug coverage, to be administered by HCFA/state Medicare agencies (that would have authority to institute	30	1

The Structure of Policy Conflict

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)	1	1
99 Unknown/Missing Data	7	0
102. Terrorism Re-insurance		
1 Opponents of creating terrorism reinsurance program	6	1
2 Proponents of creating terrorism reinsurance program	9	1
103. Outsourcing Reform		
1 Proponents of status quo government contract practices	8	1
2 Opponents of status quo government contract practices	22	2
104. Military Property Movement		
1 Proponents of status quo competition for military personnel movement and storage services	6	1
2 Opponents of status quo competition for military personnel movement and storage services	9	1
105. Predatory Lending		
1 Proponents of reforming RESPA, requiring more disclosure of fees/costs; opposed to “bundling” realty/mortgage services	11	2
2 Proponents of reforming RESPA by “bundling” realty/mortgage services	10	1
9 Neutral / No Position	3	0
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	5	2
2 Opponents of requiring owners of broadband infrastructure to give access to Internet service providers/other media—cable companies	11	1
107. Maritime Security Act		
1 Proponents of increased funding for Maritime Security Fleet	12	1
108. Food Allergen Labeling		
1 Proponents of status quo voluntary food allergen labeling	5	1
2 Opponents of status quo voluntary food allergen labeling	6	1
109. Bear Protection		
1 Proponents of prohibiting trade of black bear viscera	7	1
2 Opponents of prohibiting trade of black bear viscera	11	1
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	24	2
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	6	1
9 Neutral / No Position	2	0
115. Derivatives		
1 Proponents of SEC regulation of Over-the-Counter derivatives	12	1
2 Opponents of SEC regulations of Over-the-Counter derivatives	16	2
116. WI and RSF		
1 Proponents of increasing funding for water infrastructure through state revolving funds	10	2
2 Opposed to funding water infrastructure through federal funds	7	1

The Structure of Policy Conflict

99	Unknown / missing data	5	0
117. Effluent Limitation			
1	Opponents to strict EPA effluent limitation guidelines for transportation equipment cleaning	7	1
9	Neutral / No position	2	1
118. Optometric Funding			
1	Proponents of graduate medical clinical education training for optometry	2	2
9	Neutral / No position	1	0
119. Student Visas / Lab Security			
1	Proponents of stricter regulations concerning national security and terrorism	28	4
2	Opposed to strict regulation, support moderate regulations concerning foreign students or laboratory security	12	1
9	Neutral / No position	12	0
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)	22	3
9	Neutral / No position	3	0
121. Human Cloning			
1	Proponents of a ban on all forms of human cloning	20	3
2	Opponents of a ban on all forms of human cloning (but may support ban on reproductive cloning specifically)	16	2
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	11	2
123. Farm Bill			
1	Proponents of Price supports (opposed to 2, 3)	37	2
2	Opponents of Price supports (opposed to 1, 3)	12	2
3	Proponents of provisions protecting smaller (alternative) farmers (opposed to 1, 2)	1	0
4	Proponents of environmental and animal welfare provisions within Farm Bill (no direct opponents)	25	1
124. Wind Energy			
1	Proponents of renewing the tax credit for producers of wind energy	22	3
2	Opponents of renewing the tax credit for producers of wind energy	1	0
125. Smart Growth & Transportation			
1	Proponents of funding "SMART" transportation programs in the Transportation reauthorization	19	3
2	Proponents of funding all, and especially large, transportation programs	14	2
126. CAFE Standards 2			
1	Proponents of Increased Corporate Average Fuel Economy standards	22	2
2	Opponents of Increased Corporate Average Fuel Economy standards	17	1
127. Basic Education			
1	Proponents of increasing funding for international basic education programs	17	3
128. PURPA			
1	Proponents of maintaining PURPA protections for co-generation facilities	28	2
2	Opponents of maintaining PURPA protections for co-generation facilities	4	1
129. Recreation Marine			
1	Proponents of excluding recreational marine facilities from longshoreman	10	2

The Structure of Policy Conflict

insurance requirements		
9 Neutral / No position	1	0
130. Public Safety Officers		
1 Proponents of extending federal housing programs to federal public safety officers	3	2
9 Neutral / No position	1	0
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)	5	1
2 Opponents of increasing regulation of affiliate relationships between members of corporate families, in both the natural gas and electricity industries (opposed to 1)	9	2
3 Not opposed to all aspects of the FERC regulations but seeking a special exemption (no direct opponents)	1	1
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)	46	2
2 Proponents of increasing funding for Department of Education's Math and Science partnerships program (opposed to 3)	1	0
3 Proponents of increasing funding for NES Math and Science program (opposed to 2)	2	1
133. Cystic Fibrosis Research		
1 Proponents of increasing funding for Cystic Fibrosis Clinical Trials Network	4	1
9 Neutral / No position	2	1
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	10	1
2 Opponents of requiring companies to report stock options as an expense on end of the year financial statements	18	2
135. Title IX		
1 Proponents of efforts revise the application of Title IX regulations to athletics	10	1
2 Opponents of efforts revise the application of Title IX regulations to athletics	14	1
9 Neutral / No Position	1	0
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)	6	2
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	0
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	3	0

The Structure of Policy Conflict

	allowing pilots to carry guns on planes and to requiring self-defense training for flight attendants (opposed to 1)		
9	Neutral / No position	1	0
Total		2,220	315

NOTE: The table lists the number of major participants in each perspective, for 98 cases as well as the number of interviews we conducted with leaders of each. Those listed as “neutral / no position” were typically government decisions makers who played important roles in the issue but who did not actively advocate a given proposal to other government officials. Typically this included agencies providing purely technical / cost estimates or else government decision-makers who had final authority to decide, but who did not actively engage in advocacy themselves. Only 13 actors out of 2,220 are listed as non-advocate decision makers in this way.

The Structure of Policy Conflict

Table A.2. Participants by Organizational Type

Type of Actor	Number
Outside Interest Groups	1,271
Coalition specific to an issue or an issue area	91
Citizen, ideological, or cause oriented group	323
Foundations, non-profit providers, etc.	41
Religious group- affiliated group or denomination	10
Union	72
Professional association (members individual professional)	146
Trade association (members, corporations, or businesses)	238
Business association (e.g. business roundtable, Chamber of Commerce)	33
Lobbying or consulting firm	5
Corporation-for profit (includes HMOs)	68
Corporation-Fortune 500 or Global 500	113
Think-Tank or Research Institute	37
Institution (hospitals, universities)	5
Association of Institutions (hospitals, universities)	19
State and Local Governmental Unit	10
Association of Government Units	41
Foreign Government	0
Individual outside expert	5
International Non-Governmental Organization	14
Congressional Actors	769
Republican Party leadership or entire Caucus	25
Republican committee or subcommittee leader	181
Republican rank and file	189
Democratic Party leadership or entire Caucus	23
Democratic committee or subcommittee leader	154
Democratic rank and file	179
CBO, GAO, other staff agencies	8
Task forces or ad hoc groups	10
Executive Branch Actors	178
White House	18
Department or Agency	111
Lower level/bureau	34
Individual White House official	6
Individual Department or Agency official	7
Individual Bureau official	2
Not Identified	2
Total	2,220