**Appendix I. Business- and Mass-Based Interest Groups Included**

**in Net Group Alignment Indices**

Business and professional groups

Airlines

American Bankers Association

American Council of Life Insurance

American Farm Bureau Federation

American Hospital Association

American Medical Association

Association of Trial Lawyers

Automobile companies

Chamber of Commerce

Computer software and hardware

Credit Union National Association

Defense contractors

Electric companies

Health Insurance Association

Independent Insurance Agents of America

Motion Picture Association of America

National Association of Broadcasters

National Association of Home Builders

National Association of Manufacturers

National Association of Realtors

National Beer Wholesalers Association

National Federation of Independent Business

National Restaurant Association

Oil Companies

Pharmaceutical Research & Manufacturers

Recording Industry Association

Securities and investment companies

Telephone companies

Tobacco companies

Mass-based groups

AARP

AFL-CIO

American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees

American Israel Public Affairs Committee

American Legion

Christian Coalition

International Brotherhood of Teamsters

National Rifle Association

National Right to Life Committee

United Auto Workers union

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.

Not coded as either business or mass-based

National Education Association (includes a mass base of teachers but also university professors)

National Governors' Association (affected by interest groups rather than acting as an independent group)

Universities (unclear status as businesses or nonprofits)

**Appendix 2. Correcting for Measurement Error**

Measurement error is unavoidable in social science data. Its consequences depend on both the magnitude and the nature of error and, in particular, on whether the errors in measurement of one variable are correlated with the errors of other variables in a given model.

The predictors used in our analyses come from two distinct data sources: aggregate survey data, for estimating the policy preferencs of median- and high-income Americans; and historical data on interest group issue engagement, for generating the Net Interest Group Alignment Indices. Because our measures of interest group alignments are entirely distinct from the preference measures in origin, there is no reason to expect that their measurement errors would be correlated across policies with those for our other two independent variables. In the case of interest group policy dispositions, then, we have only uncorrelated (random or “classical”) measurement error to consider. We estimate this error based on inter-coder reliability (Chronbach’s alpha) of .87.

But our two other independent variables come from a single data source, the same set of national opinion surveys. Consequently, errors in our measures of the policy preferences of average citizens and those of economic elites are likely to be positively correlated with each other. Errors affecting both measures in the same way within a particular survey can arise from such factors as sampling, question wording, question order, topics in the news at the time the survey was in the field, and so on.[[1]](#endnote-1) Correlated errors on these preference measures tend to produce upwardly biased statistical relationships between the two independent variables, producing a higher uncorrected correlation between them (r=.94) than the corrected r=.78 shown in Table 2.

In order to assess the magnitude of correlated errors, multiple measures of the same underlying concept or attitude are needed. These are available for a subset of 387 of the 1,779 proposed policy changes in our dataset, for which which more than one survey question addressed essentially the same policy issue and was asked in the same calendar year. Using the subset of proposed changes with multiple measures, the error covariance between preferences of median and high income Americans was estimated to account for 17 percent of the total covariance between these measures.[[2]](#endnote-2)

Using the measurement error estimates described above, we estimated structural equation models in AMOS that purged of error the structural coefficients representing the associations of the predictors with our outcome measure. The resulting coefficients are reported in tables 3 and 4 and are translated into predicted probabilities in figure 1.

For comparison, appendix table A1 shows the results from an ordinary least squares regression that parallels the multivariate model in table 3 but in which measurement error is not taken into account. The implausible negative coefficient for average citizens and the impluasibly large positive coefficient for economic elites suggests the presence of correlated measurement error.[[3]](#endnote-3)

As noted above, the corrections for measurement error described here can help reduce flaws in our measures that affect the relationship between our indictors and their underlying concepts. But these corrections cannot address the flaws that arise from the imperfect fit between those concepts and the characteristics we would prefer to measure (such as our use of the 90th income perenctile as a proxy for economic elites).

**Table A1. Ordinary Least Squares Analysis Parallel to the Structural Equation Model Presented in Table 3.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Compare with table 3, model 4 |
| Preferences of average citizens  Preferences of economic elites  Alignment of Interest groups | -.93 (.24) \*\*\*  1.66 (.24) \*\*\*  .46 (.07) \*\*\* |
| N  R-sq | 1,779  .08 |
| \*\*\*p<.001  Note: All predictors are scaled to range from 0 to 1. The dependent variable is the policy outcome, coded 1 if the proposed policy change took place within four years of the survey date and 0 if it did not. Predictors are the logits of the imputed percent of respondents at the 50th (“average citizens”) or 90th (“economic elites”) income percentile that favor the proposed policy change, and the Net Interest Group Alignment Indices described in the text. | | |

1. Since these factors do not affect the interest group coding we are less concerned about possible correlated error between the mass and business interest group indices. See O'Brien, Robert M. "Correcting Measures of Relationship between Aggregate-Level Variables." Sociological Methodology 21 (1994): 125-65 and O'Brien, Robert M. "Correcting Measures of Relationship between Aggregate-Level Variables for Both Unreliability and Correlated Errors: An Empirical Example." Social Science Research 27, no. 2 (Jun 1998): 218-34. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. See pp.62-66 and the appendix to Gilens 2012 for details on this calculation and the comparability of the 387 survey questions with multiple meaures with the full set of 1,779 items. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. For a discussion of diagnosing and correcting for correlated measurement error see Achen 1985 and Gilens 2012, pp.253-258. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)