

Political Parties and Interests Groups are the dominating factors in determining policy on Capital Hill. These two groups while having significantly different fundamental goals share a mutual relationship in which each side benefits whether through donation, public endorsement or legislative policy. Although some question the ethical and legality of this relationship the presence of interest groups on the political process is a definite influence and reality.

Interest groups are organizations formed with one main goal in mind; passing legislation beneficial and supportive of a certain cause or belief. Working to advance a sole cause is there only objective. The largest current interest groups are the AARP, NRA and AIPAC. Recently interest groups like these have flooded Capitol Hill with over 60,000 lobbyists from various causes currently residing in Washington. In order for these groups to significantly advance there cause in the political process is for them to ally themselves with political parties, who also have one fundamental goal which is winning elections. This alliance benefits both sides but requires significant support from an interest group to survive. These types of support often include the donation of large amounts of money to either the party directly or candidates which the party supports. Also interest groups can publicly endorse candidates or the parties platform, however this risks polarizing the groups members. This type of support is crucial for political parties because it helps win or lose elections, and creates a platform in which its constancy can support. The National Rifle Association supported the Republicans and President Bush with money and an endorsement thus giving the public the perception Bush Jr. was pro

gun before he even assumed the office. This appealed to his base and helped him achieve his goal of becoming President.

Another example would be the forestry and logging industry whose interest groups support the Republicans with money, but not publicly as to risk being labeled as anti-environment and loosing votes. However, there support was repaid once Bush was elected as a chief executive from the logging industry currently resides as the head of the EPA. Money talks in Washington and Political parties repay the support of interest groups if they fulfill there goal. Once elected party members may pass legislation to directly benefit an interest group or fill bills with pork to indirectly advance their cause. Also as in the case with the current administration, may repay them with jobs where interest group members have a direct role in determining policy. Either way backing a party with a significant amount of money reaps rewards which will propel the goal of an interest group as seen with the gun and foresting acts passed under the current administration.

In nature a mutual relationship is when a certain species cannot survive without a certain other. In Washington these same relationships exist most prominently between interest groups and political parties who support and sustain each other in winning elections and dictating policy.