# The President Will See Who Now?: White House Engagement with Organized Interests*

David Miller[†]

April 15, 2020

## Abstract

Presidents can accomplish many of their goals through unilateral powers, but their ultimate electoral, policy, and legacy success depends on their ability to build supportive coalitions. While previous studies have focused on presidents' efforts to build coalitions among members of Congress and the mass public, few have considered how presidents view organized interests as important coalition members. I argue that presidents engage with organized interests to bring them into their coalitions because they possess valuable electoral and policy resources that can promote presidents' goals. To maximize the share of resources at their disposal, I further argue that presidents focus their engagement on organized interests with large resource endowments and who are aligned with the incumbent president's party. I evaluate these arguments through an analysis of presidents' engagement with organized interests drawing on over 7 million White House visitor log entries across three presidencies. My results indicate that presidents' engagement decisions are informed by both organized interests' levels of electoral and policy resources and partisan alignment. These findings suggest that, through engaging with organized interests, presidents amplify the political voice of well-resourced and copartisan interests.

Though polar opposites in most respects, both Presidents Barack Obama and Donald Trump have routinely cast organized interests as antagonists in the American democratic story and vowed to diminish or eliminate their influence in politics.[1] In the first summer of his presidency, Barack Obama told attendees at a bill signing, "When I ran for President, I did so because I believed that despite the power of the status quo and the influence of special interests, it was possible for us to bring change to Washington."[2] Similarly, at a rally also in the first summer of his presidency, Donald Trump proclaimed to supporters that, as part of his "pro-worker agenda... we want to get the special interests out of politics for good."[3] In addition, both presidents issued executive orders at the beginning of their first terms to limit the role of organized interests by restricting former lobbyists' ability to serve in their administrations.[4] Contemporary scholars of the presidency suggest that the antipathy of Trump, Obama, and other presidents towards organized interests is emblematic of the office's relative isolation from the organized interest universe. For example, Light writes that, among the president and the White House staff, "there is a conscious effort to avoid interaction with most groups" (1999, 94). Further, Howell and Moe suggest that presidents' "position of national leadership gives them far more freedom from special interest pressure... than their legislative counterparts" (2016: 102; see also Quirk and Nesmith 2005; Truman 1971; Wechsler 1954; Wilson 1961). Thus, in their public facing statements and actions, and in scholars' appraisals of their behavior and institutional environments, presidents appear to minimize their interactions with organized interests.

However, despite these denunciations, presidents frequently engage with representatives of organized interests.[5] While salient instances of engagement, such as President Bill Clinton's provision

---

[1]I use the phrase "organized interests," rather than the more common "interest groups," to be inclusive in my terminology. Whereas the usage of "interest groups" typically implies that all entities are membership-based groups, the more broad "organized interests" accounts for other entities that lack members but pursue collective goals through political action, such as corporations and non-profit institutions (see Schlozman and Tierney 1986, 9-10).

[2]Barack Obama, "Remarks on Signing the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act of 2009," June 22, 2009, https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/286991.

[3]Donald J. Trump, "Remarks at a 'Make America Great Again' Rally in Huntington, West Virginia," August 3, 2017, https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/330949.

[4]Barack Obama, Executive Order 13490, "Ethics Commitments by Executive Branch Personnel," January 21, 2009 https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/executive-order-13490-ethics-commitments-executive-branch-personnel; Donald J. Trump, Executive Order 13770, "Ethics Commitments by Executive Branch Appointees," January 28, 2017, https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/executive-order-13770-ethics-commitments-executive-branch-appointees.

[5]Similar to the notion of the "legislative enterprise" Salisbury and Shepsle (1981), I consider presidents as presiding

of nights in the Lincoln Bedroom and seats on Air Force One to wealthy donors[6] and President Trump's mingling with businesspersons and activists holding memberships at Mar-a-Lago and his other properties,[7] often attract criticism, these anecdotes belie the White House's commonplace engagement with a broad array of interests, both in public and behind closed doors. For example, when President Obama held a day-long March 2009 White House forum to kick off his healthcare reform campaign, over half of the nearly 150 invited participants were representatives of organized interests,[8] and media accounts of the Affordable Care Act's path through the policymaking process point to the White House's continued engagement with organized interests as key to the law's ultimate enactment.[9] Accounts from White House staffers further substantiate the pervasiveness of White House engagements with organized interests. An aide to President Jimmy Carter recalls that the administration "tried to keep up very good relations with all the major interest group players in town... We tried to do it by... meeting with all of them or as many of them as we could on a regular basis..."[10] Similarly, an aide to President Obama who worked in the Office of Public Engagement—a unit existing since the Gerald Ford administration to manage the White House's relationships with organized interests—reports "represent[ing] the president and his priorities" to organized interests "all the time, every day."[11] Further, despite the White House's efforts to distance itself from organized interests in its public-facing behavior, an aide to President John F.

---

over an organization of staffers accountable to them who facilitate the performance of their duties. Formally, the executive branch employees who fulfill this function are those employed by the Executive Office of the President (EOP), which includes not only the White House Office—home to familiar staffers such as the Chief of Staff—but also other units such as the Office of Management and Budget. Consistent with the notion of the president as head of an "executive enterprise," I consider engagement by any member of the EOP with representatives of organized interests to constitute "presidential engagement."

[6]Glenn F.Bunting and Alan C. Miller, "Clinton Coffee Guests Gave DNC $27 Million," *Los Angeles Times*, January 28, 1997, `http://articles.latimes.com/1997-01-28/news/mn-22891_1_clinton-coffee`; Glenn F. Bunting and Ralph Frammolino, "Up to 900 Donors Stayed Overnight at the White House," *Los Angeles Times*, February 9, 1997, `http://articles.latimes.com/1997-02-09/news/mn-27120_1_white-house-official`.

[7]"Presidential Profiteering: Trump's Conflicts Got Worse in Year Two," *Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington*, January 17, 2019, `https://www.citizensforethics.org/presidential-profiteering-trumps-conflicts-got-worse/`.

[8]Office of the Press Secretary, "White House Forum on Health Reform Attendees and Breakout Session Participants," *The White House*, March 5, 2009, `https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/realitycheck/the-press-office/white-house-forum-health-reform-attendees-and-breakout-session-participants`.

[9]"Obama's Deal," *Frontline*, April 13, 2010, `https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/obamasdeal/`.

[10]David Rubenstein, Interview with the Miller Center for Public Affairs, University of Virginia, March 6, 1982, `https://millercenter.org/the-presidency/presidential-oral-histories/bertram-carp-oral-history-deputy-assistant-domestic`.

[11]Personal interview with a former Obama White House official, May 3, 2018.

Kennedy admits that "interest groups are in the woodwork, under the floors, in the hallways, and in the rose garden" (Light 1999, 95). Notwithstanding the reality that White House's engagement with organized interests is commonplace, scholars seldom consider presidents' relationships with organized interests and, when they do, downplay their importance—a gap that Loomis describes as "remarkable" (2009, 405; but see Holyoke 2004; Peterson 1992).

This paper begins to redress this gap by explaining why presidents engage with organized interests and with which organized interests they engage. In brief, I argue that presidents engage with organized interests in order to bolster their supportive coalitions. Though presidents are endowed with expansive formal and informal powers with which to advance their electoral, policy, and legacy goals, they still require sufficiently-sized supportive coalitions to accomplish many of these goals. Organized interests are valuable coalition members for presidents because they possess myriad resources, from lobbying capacity to campaign contributions and grassroots networks, that can subsidize presidents' political and policy activities and build support among other political actors, such as members of Congress and the public. To maximize the amount of organized interest resources they marshal, I posit that presidents are more likely to engage with interests who offer them the highest expected rates of return for engagement—interests with large resource endowments and who are aligned with the incumbent president's party. To evaluate these expectations, I leverage over 7 million White House visitor logs from the presidencies of Bill Clinton, Barack Obama, and Donald Trump to identify instances in which the White House engaged with organized interest representatives, along with data on organized interests' electoral and lobbying activity and partisan alignment. To enrich my theoretical arguments and understanding of the data-generating process, I also draw on an original survey of over 600 registered lobbyists and 15 original interviews with former White House officials and organized interest representatives.[12] Taken together, my findings indicate that presidents are more likely to engage with organized interests with larger endowments of electoral and policy resources and who are copartisans of the incumbent president.

In addition to enhancing our knowledge of the interactions between presidents and organized interests, this paper also contributes to key themes in the study of the presidency, organized inter-

---

[12]For details on the conduct of these interviews and this survey, please see the Supplemental Information.

ests, and representation. First, I advance the ongoing debate concerning presidential representation by considering the representational priorities presidents signal through engaging with organized interests. Though scholars long asserted that presidents represent all interests within their national constituency (e.g., Moe and Howell 1999; Wechsler 1954; Wilson 1961), recent studies suggest that presidents instead provide more representation to subgroups that can best advance their goals, such as copartisans and the upper-class (e.g., Druckman and Jacobs 2015; Kriner and Reeves 2015a,b; Wood 2009). Whereas these studies consider how presidents represent the mass public, the current study reflects on presidents' representation of a distinct constituency—organized interests, who are both independent political actors and manifestations of the interests of members of the mass public. My results lend support for the notion that presidents provide better representation to preferred subgroups in society. Second, this paper provides new insights on the means by which organized interests influence outcomes in the American political process. While extant studies argue that organized interests, particularly those associated with the upper-class, exercise outsized influence in American politics (e.g. Gilens and Page 2014; Hojnacki et al. 2015; Schattschneider 1960; Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012), some scholars have suggested that presidents, as nationally-elected representatives, temper the influence of powerful interests by engaging equally with all interests in their constituency (e.g. Bentley 1908; Truman 1971; Quirk and Nesmith 2005; Uslander 1998). My results cast doubt on this notion, suggesting instead that presidents contribute to inequalities in political voice present throughout the political system.

This paper proceeds as follows. In the next section, I consider how presidents engage with organized interests to build and maintain their supportive coalitions. In the third section, I describe how I use the White House visitor logs to identify presidents' engagement with organized interests and model the relationship between the access presidents provide to interests and those interests' resource endowments and partisan alignment. In the fourth section, I present the results from these models, which suggest that presidents are more likely to engage with interests with higher resource levels and from industries aligned with the president's party. In the final section, I situate my findings in extant scholarship on the presidency and organized interests and highlight pathways for future research.

# Presidents' Engagement with Organized Interests as Coalition Building

Presidents, like members of Congress (Mayhew 1974), judges (Epstein and Knight 2013), and other political elites, are goal-oriented actors, pursuing electoral success for themselves and their copartisans, good public policy, and favorable legacies (Light 1999). Though presidents enjoy extensive unilateral powers with which to pursue these goals, including the issuance of executive orders (Howell 2003), the appointment of judges and executive branch officials (Lewis 2008; Nemacheck 2008), and ultimate control over the conduct of the bureaucracy (Moe 1985), the institutional design of American government requires that presidents secure the cooperation or consent of other political actors to achieve most of their aspirations. For example, presidents' electoral success ultimately rests in the voters' hands. Again, policy initiatives necessitating legislative change and most nominations to executive and judicial positions require sufficient congressional support. Further, because presidents must contend with myriad responsibilities and demands for action that stretch the limits of their office (Cronin 1980; Lowi 1986; Neustadt 1991), they often rely on political actors to subsidize their pursuits by providing own resources in service of presidents' goals. For instance, Beckmann (2010) suggests that presidents work to advance their agendas on Capitol Hill not by expending effort on lobbying each member, but instead by working with allied congressional leaders who provide them with political intelligence and push their agendas in Congress on their behalf. Additionally, Galvin (2009) asserts that presidents utilize their political parties as service organizations to aid their electoral aspirations and those of their copartisans.

Therefore, presidents' ultimate success depends on their ability to build and maintain supportive coalitions that can both directly provide support at the ballot box, on the floors of the House and Senate, and in other political institutions on whose consent presidents rely, and indirectly subsidize presidents' pursuit of their goals (Cronin 1980; Neustadt 1991; Seligman and Covington 1989). While previous studies of presidential coalition-building have focused primarily on the mass public and Congress (see Edwards 2000), they have largely neglected an additional class of political actors from which presidents often court coalition members: organized interests. Unlike members

of Congress and the mass public, organized interests do not wield any formal powers. However, they do possess a wide range of capabilities and resources through which they seek to influence other political actors and the political system as a whole, such as cultivating relationships with policymakers, providing information and expertise, engaging in campaign finance, and engaging with their memberships and the public (e.g., Baumgartner et al. 2009; Hall and Deardorff 2006; Schlozman and Tierney 1986; Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012). Thus, despite their lack of formal powers, presidents view organized interests as valuable coalition members whose resources can contribute to the pursuit of presidents' goals.

The resources which presidents seek to obtain from organized interests can manifest in one of two forms. First, organized interests can provide presidents with subsidies that directly support presidents' electoral, policy, and legacy goals. For instance, to promote their electoral success, presidents can stimulate organized interests to provide them with campaign contributions, independent expenditures, and voter mobilization efforts (Peterson 1992; Pika 1999; Schlozman and Tierney 1986). Again, presidents can draw on organized interests' policy expertise and political intelligence to improve the quality of their proposals, elucidate the preferences of other actors, and modify proposals to secure sufficient support (Haeder and Yackee 2015; Kumar and Grossman 1984; Peterson 1992; Pika 1999). Second, organized interests can indirectly assist presidents in pursuing their goals by exerting pressure on other political actors whose support is necessary for presidents' success. For example, because presidents' legislative success hinges on the strength of their party in Congress (Bond and Fleisher 1990), presidents exert effort on electing copartisans to Congress, and organized interests can promote this aim by committing the same electoral resources they provide presidents to congressional candidates of the president's party. Additionally, to sustain a sufficient winning coalition in Congress, presidents can recruit organized interests' lobbying apparatuses to pressure members to support their initiatives (Beckmann 2008, 2010; Holyoke 2004; Loomis 2009; Peterson 1992). Further, to promote and sustain public support for themselves and their initiatives, presidents can encourage organized interests to conduct grassroots lobbying that enhances approval of presidents and their policies among interests' membership bases and the public at large (Cohen 2012; Holyoke 2004; Kumar and Grossman 1984; Loomis 2009; Peterson 1992). Taken together,

presidents value organized interests' support because it both contributes to their own efforts to succeed electorally, make good policy, and craft favorable legacies, and buoys and bolsters their supportive coalitions in other audiences on whose favor they ultimately depend.

Given presidents' incentives to enlist organized interests into their supportive coalitions, their interactions with organized interests are fundamentally different than those between organized interests and other political elites. Whereas in most political arenas, such as Congress, interactions between organized interests and policymakers are characterized as "outside-in" lobbying, wherein organized interests try to contact and influence policymakers, interactions between presidents and organized interests are often a product of "inside-out" lobbying, whereby presidents reach out to organized interests and try to align their priorities and activities with those of the White House (Loomis 2009; Shaiko 1998; Tenpas 2005). In some cases, mere requests from the president are sufficient to induce organized interests to cooperate; when asked about his client's general willingness to comply with White House requests, one organized interest representative reported that "if the White House asks, then you figure out a way to make that work for you... it's very hard to say no to a White House."[13] However, presidents can also leverage their unilateral powers to reward organized interests who cooperate with and commit higher levels of effort to presidents' ambitions. For example, as chief executive, the president can help organized interests realize desired outcomes by exercising influence over the bureaucracy (Haeder and Yackee 2015; Moe and Howell 1999), appointing preferred officials to executive and judicial positions (Lewis 2008; Nemacheck 2008), and employing unilateral action (Howell 2003; Kriner and Reeves 2015a). Again, presidents can utilize their bully pulpit to increase the salience of and support for organized interests' priorities (Cohen 1995; Edwards and Wood 1999; Kernell 2006); as Baumgartner et al. find, one of the strongest determinants for organized interest success in achieving or stifling policy change is the support of the president in the form of taking "an advocacy role in a public-policy debate" (2009, 238). Additionally, presidents can help an organized interest perform institutional maintenance (Olson 1965) by bringing attention to it and enabling it to advertise connections with high-level government officials to its members and other stakeholders (Dark 2018; Peterson 1992). Thus, presidents have

---

[13]Personal interview with a chemical industry lobbyist, September 13, 2019.

both the motivation to enlist and the capability to coax organized interests into their supportive coalitions.

However, the White House's time and resources which it can devote to engaging with organized interests is necessarily limited. As head of the executive branch and the sole nationally elected government official, presidents face an unceasing flow of demands for action that outpace the expansion in the formal powers, personnel, and resources available to them. Neustadt (1991, 7) asserts that presidents are unreasonably expected to "do something about everything." Similarly, Lowi (1986, 151) posits that presidents are perceived as "the Wizard of Oz," and that the "the legal powers and responsibilities focused so directly upon the presidency have contributed to myths about the ability of presidents to meet those responsibilities" (see also Cronin 1980; Kane 2016; Miller and Reeves 2017). Consequently, presidents are constrained in their ability to engage with the tens of thousands of organized interests active in federal policymaking (Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012). As explained by one former Obama administration official, "We wanted [to engage with] everybody, but, at the end of the day, there are a million organizations out there and every single organization isn't going to be a part of everything."[14] Rather, the White House must solve a constrained maximization problem wherein they determine the subset of organized interests on which it should expend engagement effort in order to maximize the share of organized interest resources at its disposal. How presidents evaluate this problem is the topic to which we turn next.

## The Contours of Presidents' Organized Interest Coalitions

Coalition-building is an important activity for presidents in several political contexts, such as the public and Congress, and our knowledge of the types of political actors presidents bring into their supportive coalitions in these contexts can inform our expectations concerning with which organized interests presidents engage. First, presidents look to build and maintain supportive coalitions in the public both to win elections and to consolidate their approval while in office. In both cases, extant studies emphasize that presidents focus their coalition-building efforts on copartisans because presidents expect that this subconstituency will respond more favorably to their entreaties. For

---

[14]Personal interview with a former Obama White House official, May 4, 2018.

8

example, Wood (2009) argues that presidents more closely reflect the policy preferences of their copartisans than of the median voter in their public remarks in order to sustain their partisan coalition (see also Druckman and Jacobs 2015; Griffin and Newman 2016; Eshbaugh-Soha and Rottinghaus 2013; Rogowski 2016). Again, Kriner and Reeves (2015a) assert that presidents direct distributive goods, such as federal grants and disaster aid, to counties and states with higher concentrations of copartisans, in order to bolster support among copartisans and mobilize them to vote (see also Berry, Burden, and Howell 2010; Dynes and Huber 2015; Lowande, Jenkins, and Clarke 2018). Extant studies also indicate that presidents target citizens and voters who possess more political influence. For instance, Kriner and Reeves (2015a) demonstrate that presidents channel more distributive goods to swing states in presidential election years because the votes of residents in those states are more strategically valuable than are the votes of residents in other states. Further, Druckman and Jacobs (2015) suggest that presidents put more emphasis on the support of more affluent citizens, as their higher levels of personal resources and political engagement make their support more consequential (see also Griffin and Newman 2016).

Second, presidents work to build supportive coalitions in Congress to facilitate the adoption of their preferred legislative proposals. As with the mass public, previous studies indicate that presidents prioritize copartisans and members with greater institutional influence. In the former instance, Berry, Burden, and Howell (2010) and Christenson, Kriner, and Reeves (2016) argue that presidents reward congressional copartisans by funneling federal grants to their constituencies (but see Dynes and Huber 2015). Turning to the latter case, Beckmann (2010) indicates that presidents' coalition-building efforts focus on institutional leaders, such as party leaders and committee chairs, who can use their own powers to control the legislative agenda on presidents' behalf and exert pressure on their members (see also Beckmann 2008; Beckmann, Chaturvedi, and Garcia 2017). While presidents lobby congressional leaders of both parties, they lean more on their copartisan leaders. Additionally, in contrast to traditional pivotal politics models, Beckmann (2010) asserts that presidents tend not to expend additional effort on moderate members relative to others. Together, these empirical trends lend further evidence that presidents rely on copartisans to form the basis of their congressional coalitions.

The findings from previous studies of presidential coalition-building highlight two important characteristics of organized interests that likely inform presidents' decisions about with which interests to engage. First, presidents should be more likely to engage with organized interests who are copartisans, or who are aligned with the incumbent's party and share their preferences. This is not to say that presidents never engage with non-copartisan organized interests; indeed, engagement with such interests can help presidents by demobilizing opposition or eliminating threats to the integrity of their coalitions (Austen-Smith and Wright 1994; Groseclose and Snyder 1996). As a former White House official expressed, the White House engages with organized interests both to "increase the likelihood that you... maximize a positive reaction" and to "avoid a negative reaction"[15] (see also Beckmann 2010). However, since presidents can exert only finite effort on engaging with organized interests, they engage more with copartisan interests who they expect to be more receptive and willing to commit resources to presidents' pursuits (see Cox and McCubbins 1986).

Second, presidents should be more likely to engage with organized interests who maintain larger resource endowments. In the public and congressional contexts, presidents focus their attention on those whose personal characteristics and institutional roles provide them with more political influence, such as voters in swing states, citizens in higher socioeconomic strata, and congressional leaders. For organized interests, the currency of political influence is their resource endowments, which includes currency itself, but also includes non-monetary assets such as policy expertise and political information. While all organized interests maintain some stock of resources, the distribution of resources in the organized interest universe is heavily skewed such that a small subset of interests possess the majority of resources (Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012). As a result, presidents can most efficiently recruit the maximal amount of organized interest resources into their coalitions by engaging with interests with large resource endowments.

## Research Design and Methods

To evaluate the preceding expectations, I focus on in-person direct contacts at, or access to, the White House that presidents provide to organized interests. Despite advances in communications

---

[15]Personal interview with a former White House official, August 23, 2019.

technology enabling political actors to interact remotely through telephone, email, and social media, policymakers across institutions and organized interests alike perceive access as the most valuable means of engagement (e.g., Baumgartner et al. 2009; Levine 2009; Schlozman and Tierney 1986). Access provides policymakers and organized interests with each other's attention, enabling them to better transmit resources, such as information and expertise, than they can through other means (Hall and Wayman 1990; Kalla and Broockman 2016). Access also makes each other's preferences more salient, or mentally accessible, such that policymakers and organized interests afford each other preferential treatment in future interactions and are more likely to consider their preferences in their decision-making processes (Miler 2010; Wright 1990). One organized interest representative echoed these two benefits of in-person access to the White House, reporting that, relative to other modes of communication, in-person access "tends to be more effective in terms of sharing knowledge... and just sort of raising our issues."[16] In addition, access encourages the cultivation of interpersonal relationships between the policymakers and organized interest representatives that can enhance cooperation and trust (Levine 2009; Schlozman and Tierney 1986). Another organized interest representative underscored this point in suggesting that in-person access to a White House official allows her to "get a much better feeling for the person when you can read their body language and interact with them in human form."[17]

White House access is a strong measure of presidents' willingness to engage with organized interests not only because it facilitates efficient communication, mobilization, and coordination, but also because, relative to other institutions, presidents exercise high degrees of control over organized interests' in-person access. This assertion is supported not only by previous scholarship (Loomis 2009; Peterson 1992; Schlozman and Tierney 1986; Tenpas 2005), but also by the evidence I draw from original interviews with former White House officials and organized interest representatives and an original survey of over 600 federal lobbyists. Much of the White House's control stems from limits on its ability to provide access; because the president and his staff have finite time and attention with which to engage with organized interests, demand for access far outpaces supply, such that the White House must be selective in deciding to which interests it provides

---

[16]Personal interview with a policy advocate for an education organization, May 11, 2018.
[17]Personal interview with a policy advocate for a reproductive rights organization, May 4, 2018.

access. Further, White House access is costly for both presidents and organized interests, as arranging meetings requires conducting security screenings for visitors and coordinating personnel to attend—costs which are less prohibitive when using other means of communication or working in other institutional settings.[18] Because White House access is scarce and costly, organized interests tend to focus their contact efforts on more easily accessible institutions, such as Congress and the bureaucracy, where contact points are more abundant and the logistical barriers to access are lower. Of the respondents to my survey of lobbyists, while 92.0% and 82.3% reported that Congress and the bureaucracy, respectively, are "very" or "extremely" important lobbying venues, only 37.3% expressed similar sentiments for the White House.[19] Consequently, presidents tend to take the lead in initiating contact and maintaining relationships with organized interests through "inside-out" lobbying, as opposed to the more typical "outside-in" lobbying where interests aggressively pursue access (Loomis 2009; Peterson 1992; Pika 1999; Shaiko 1998; Tenpas 2005). My survey respondents substantiate this president-centered model of how access arises. When asked about their experiences during the Obama presidency, 53% of respondents who reported having in-person White House access indicated that at least half of their White House visits were initiated by the White House. Further, while 95.1% of these respondents "usually" or "always" accepted invitations to visit the White House, only 56.5% reported that their requests for White House access were similarly "usually" or "always" granted. Additionally, among respondents who reported not experiencing in-person White House access, only one indicated that the Obama administration invited them but they did not go.[20] Thus, through both their primary role in managing contacts

---

[18]As one former Obama administration official expresses, the cost of coordinating meetings at the White House is "not trivial," as visitors need to be cleared by security and staffers need to find time "given the crush of work" to attend meetings. As a result, for most interactions with organized interests, "the default was typically email," even though communicating in-person or, if that is not possible, by phone "is more effective" (Personal interview with a former Obama White House official, May 3, 2018). That the White House often relies on less costly modes of communication, such as email and phone calls, to interact with organized interests is also expressed in my survey responses; while 40.2% of respondents indicated communicating with the Obama White House via phone or email five or more times in an average year, only 20.7% reported visiting the White House at the same frequency.

[19]As a former aide to President Lyndon Johnson suggests, "There are 535 opportunities in Congress and only one in the White House. You get an hour to present your case before each representative; you get fifteen minutes once a year with the president. Where would you put your effort?" (Light 1999, 94)

[20]My interviewees expressed similar understandings of this presidency-centered model. One policy advocate reported, "I have not ever turned down a meeting. I always think of meeting as productive. In terms of getting the meetings, yes, it's very challenging" (Personal interview with a policy advocate for a water policy organization, August 28, 2019). While another policy advocate indicated that, in his experience, engagement was initiated more frequently by his organization than by the White House, he also admitted that "they're the drivers. They determine

with organized interests and their ability to control the allocation of access, presidents manifest their preferences over with which organized interests they engage.

In order to use presidents' provision of access to organized interests as a measure of engagement, we need to be able to observe this provision of access. Traditionally, empirical studies of policymakers' provision of access to organized interests have been difficult to conduct due to data scarcity (see Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012, 295-304; De Figueiredo and Richter 2014). In most contexts, access is unobservable, and complete records of organized interests' access to policymakers are rarely made available, even after long periods of time have passed.[21] However, recent releases of over 7 million White House visitor logs records from the presidencies of Bill Clinton, Barack Obama, and Donald Trump provide a rare opportunity to directly observe organized interests' access to the White House. Pairing these records with lobbying and campaign finance reports, I am able to identify instances in which presidents provided access to representatives of organized interests and assess with which types of interests presidents engage.

## Measuring Access with the White House Visitor Logs

As one of the most secure workplaces in the the United States and the world, the White House closely screens and monitors all individuals entering and exiting the White House complex, which includes the White House itself and the adjacent Eisenhower Executive Office Building (EEOB) and New Executive Office Building (NEOB). The comings and goings of individuals without permanent access passes, such as White House staffers and reporters, are recorded in the Worker and Visitor Entry System (WAVES)—more commonly referred to as the White House visitor logs—a database maintained by the Secret Service. Each record in WAVES contains information including the name of the visitor, the date and time of the visit, and the visitee (i.e., the person inside the White House that they are visiting). While many entries pertain to visitors attending tours or other social events,

whether they want to be responsive or not" (Personal interview with a policy advocate for a religious organization, May 3, 2018). Similarly, a former White House official expressed that, while the White House must be selective in what meeting requests it fulfills, "by and large, when the White House calls, people take the call. People were generally always willing to meet" (Personal interview with a former Obama White House official, May 3, 2018).

[21] For example, the records of members of Congress, who are most often the subject of studies of organized interest access, are not publicly available or subject to the Freedom of Information Act. As a result, scholars can rarely observe which organized interests have access to which members of Congress (but see You n.d.).

WAVES also contains the names of individuals visiting the White House on official business, such as organized interest representatives.

Prior to 2009, no sitting president had ever made public the White House's visitor logs. However, in September of that year, Barack Obama fulfilled a campaign promise by announcing a voluntary disclosure policy under which the White House would release the visitor logs on a quarterly basis.[22] When President Obama left office, his administration had released nearly 6 million unique visitor records covering the time between September 15, 2009 and September 30, 2016.[23] Though President Donald Trump ceased voluntary disclosure of the White House visitor logs upon taking office, his administration later agreed to release WAVES records on a monthly basis for visitors to officials in four agencies in the Executive Office of the President housed in the White House complex—the Office of Management and Budget, the Office of Science and Technology Policy, the Council on Environmental Quality, and the Office of National Drug Control Policy.[24] To date, these disclosures have yielded over 80,000 additional White House visitor logs records spanning from January 20, 2017 to September 31, 2018. Finally, starting in 2015, the Clinton Presidential Library began releasing the White House visitor logs for the final five years of the Clinton administration (1996-2001) in response to Freedom of Information Act requests.[25] Because the earliest Lobbying Disclosure Act

---

[22]Norm Eisen, "Opening Up the People's House," *The White House*, September 4, 2009, `https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2009/09/04/opening-peoplersquos-house`; "White House Voluntary Disclosure Policy Visitor Access Records," *The White House*, `https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/VoluntaryDisclosure`. Under the voluntary disclosure policy, the Obama White House reserved the right to withhold visitor records related to "national security interests," "purely personal guests of the first and second families," and "a small group of particularly sensitive meetings," such as the visits of Supreme Court nominees. These exemptions should not impede the current analysis because few meetings with organized interest representatives fall into these categories. However, if the Obama White House used these exemptions to conceal engagement with organized interests, they would likely conceal meetings with representatives from well-resourced and copartisan interests, as those meetings would be most likely to spark public backlash. Given that I expect that presidents are more likely to engage with well-resourced and copartisan interests, this concealment would bias downward the effect of resources and copartisanship in my analyses, making it more difficult to detect evidence for my expectations.

[23]The visitor logs provided by the Obama administration included a "Description" column, which allowed White House personnel to provide text entries indicating he nature of the visit. Using these text entries, I discard all visits that do not represent meaningful opportunities for engagement with organized interests, such as White House tours. After doing so, approximately 2.3 million unique records remain.

[24]Josh Gerstein, "Trump Administration Agrees to Post Visitor Logs for Some White House Offices," *Politico*, February 15, 2018, `https://www.politico.com/story/2018/02/15/trump-visitor-logs-white-house-413016`. The Trump administration agreed to release records for visits to officials in these agencies because, unlike officials in the White House Office (WHO), these agencies have independent statutory authority and are led by Senate-confirmed officials. As a result, these agencies are subject to the Freedom of Information Act rather than the Presidential Records Act, making it easier for the public to secure information about their activities while the president is in office.

[25]"Worker and Visitor Entry System (WAVES), 1996-1998 - Collection Finding Aid," *Clinton Digital Library*, `https://clinton.presidentiallibraries.us/items/show/57587`; "White House Worker and Visitor Entry System

data on which I rely to identify organized interest representatives begins in 1998, I only utilize records from the Clinton administration for the final three years of the term, contributing an additional 1.3 million White House visitor logs records. In total, my analyses make use of over 7 million White House visitor logs records.[26]

The White House visitor logs are valuable because they contain evidence of organized interests' access to the White House. However, because the only information the visitor logs contain about the visitors is their names, identifying which records correspond to access granted to which organized interests requires knowledge of the names of the organized interest representatives who could appear in the logs. I construct this roster of names using organized interests' filings under the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 (LDA), as curated by the Center for Responsive Politics (CRP).[27] Under the LDA and subsequent amendments,[28] individuals who meet the thresholds for being a lobbyist[29,30] must submit regular reports for each of their clients detailing their lobbying activities on behalf

---

(WAVES), 1999-2000 - Collection Finding Aid," *Clinton Digital Library*, `https://clinton.presidentiallibraries.us/items/show/44133`.

[26]The White House visitor logs from the George W. Bush administration are the subject of a pending FOIA request (2014-0237-F). To date, the George W. Bush Presidential Library has only made available a handful of records from January 20, 2001("White House Visitor's Log Records from January 20, 2001 - January 20, 2009," *George W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum*, `https://www.georgewbushlibrary.smu.edu/en/Digital-Library---2/~/link.aspx?_id=84B337B067DE460393D2AB6C7DE5132C&_z=z`.), and has no expected timetable for the release of additional records (Personal correspondence with an archivist at the George W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum, January 16, 2020).

[27]*Center for Responsive Politics*, `https://www.opensecrets.org/`.

[28]Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. §1601) `https://www.senate.gov/legislative/Lobbying/Lobby_Disclosure_Act/TOC.htm`; Lobbying Disclosure Act Guidance, January 31, 2017, `https://lobbyingdisclosure.house.gov/ldaguidance.pdf`.

[29]Under the LDA, a lobbyist is an individual who, in working on behalf of a client, makes a "lobbying contact," or an "oral, written, or electronic communication" regarding public policy, with more than one "covered official," which includes most members of the executive and legislative branches, and spends 20 percent or more of her time working for the client on lobbying activities in a given reporting period. As of January 2017, a lobbyist employed directly by a client spending less than $13,000, or a lobbyist contracted by a client spending less than $3,000, on lobbying activities in a given quarter is not required to file a report for that quarter.

[30]Because filings contain only the names of a client's lobbyists, and not other employees of the client who might engage in lobbying activity, such as top executives, focusing on organized interests' registered lobbyists might undercount instances of White House access when the organized interest representative visiting the White House is not classified as a lobbyist. To explore the extent to which this measurement error exists, I asked respondents to my survey of lobbyists who reported that their organized interests had meetings at the Obama White House to indicate which of the following types of employees attended these meetings: "executive officers," "registered lobbyists," "government affairs employees who were not registered lobbyists," or "other" persons. 76.4% of respondents indicated that White House meetings were attended by registered lobbyists, and 71.2% reported that meetings were attended by executive officers (who are often listed as lobbyists on LDA reports). These results indicate that measurement error stemming from my focus on organized interests' lobbyists should be minimal, particularly because instances of access are counted on the basis of appointments, rather than individuals gaining access. As a result, I detect instances of access by an organized interest so long as at least one member of its contingent to the White House is a registered lobbyist.

of the client.[31] While LDA filings do not identify all potential lobbying clients who might express interest in lobbying the federal government, they do contain all lobbying clients who are actively engaged in a non-negligible amount of lobbying activity at the federal level, and therefore define the full population of organized interests actively engaged in lobbying activities.[32]

To identify instances of presidents' engagement with organized interests, I match the names of organized interests' lobbyists with the names in the White House visitor logs for the period during which those organized interests retained those lobbyists.[33] CRP currently provides information from all LDA filings from 1998 to 2018, enabling me to detect instances of White House engagement with organized interests across the over 7 million visitor logs records described above. To maintain consistency with the timing of LDA filings, I aggregate all instances of access associated with each organized interest for the relevant temporal unit—semestral for the Clinton era, and quarterly for the Obama and Trump eras—to construct binary indicators and counts of organized interests' White House access in those time periods.[34] This level of observation—the organized interest-time

---

[31] From 1995 to 2007, lobbyists were required to file reports on a semestral basis. However, under the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2007, lobbyists started submitting reports on a quarterly basis in 2008.

[32] LDA filings admittedly do not contain every organized interest or lobbyist active in federal policy in a given period (Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012). However, LDA filings provide an inclusive list of all lobbying clients who express more than a transient interest in lobbying the federal government. First, the thresholds for meeting the definition of a lobbyist, and thus requiring the reporting of a lobbyist's reporting of a client's activities, as described in Footnote 29, are fairly low. Second, *Washington Representatives*, the premiere data source for information on federal lobbying used by both practitioners and scholars (e.g. Baumgartner et al. 2009; Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012), relies on the LDA filings as its primary source of lobbyists and lobbying clients, suggesting that LDA filings provide a comprehensive recording of federal lobbying activity. At worst, the LDA Database defines the full population of organized interests as those interests engaged in federal lobbying activity who meet the registration requirements under the LDA, and excludes only interests who are minor participants in federal lobbying.

[33] The spelling and punctuation of the name of the same individual in the White House visitor logs and the LDA filings may vary slightly, such that matching on the raw names may induce measurement error. To account for differences in the presentation of lobbyists' names in both data sources, I preprocess the names to remove punctuation and use approximate string matching, which identifies a match when the difference between the strings is below a specified tolerance threshold. Specifically, I use the `fuzzyjoin` package in `R` and match names using the Damerau-Levenshtein distance metric at four different tolerance levels—zero edits (i.e. perfect matches), one edit, two edits, and three edits. All models presented in the main paper use measures of access based on perfect name matches across the two data sources. However, to assess the robustness of my results, I present models which use more permissive tolerance levels in the Supplemental Information. The coefficient estimates and substantive conclusions drawn are generally consistent across tolerance levels.

[34] This measurement assumes that all instances of access are equally strong indicators of presidents' willingness to engage with a given organized interest. However, the quality of each instance of access can vary; in the most extreme example, a White House meeting with the president is of higher subjective quality than a meeting with a White House intern (Kalla and Broockman 2016). As one former White House official communicated, "We might assign as more junior person to take the meeting or we might elevate the meeting to a senior official depending on the significance of the issue and, frankly, the significance of the individual" (Personal interview with a former White House official, May 3, 2018). To explore whether the relationships I present below between organized interests' resources and partisan alignment differ by access quality, I leverage knowledge of the visitee in each White House visitor log record to code

period unit—constitutes the unit of analysis for my empirical models.

## Measures of Organized Interest Resources and Partisan Alignment

To obtain measures of organized interests' resource endowments and partisan alignments, I draw on quantitative and qualitative data provided by CRP. Because most organized interests specialize in either electoral politics or policymaking (Tripathi, Ansolabehere, and Snyder 2002), I incorporate measures of both organized interests' electoral and policy resources. First, I measure organized interests' electoral resources as the aggregate amount of campaign contributions they make to candidates for federal office. I focus on aggregate contributions rather than only contributions to the incumbent president because aggregate contributions reflect interests' overall electoral resources, which presidents can channel in support of themselves and their copartisans. Using CRP's compilation of the Federal Election Commission's campaign contribution reports for the election cycles immediately preceding and including the time periods for which I have White House visitor logs records—1995-1996 to 1999-2000 for the Clinton records, and 2007-2008 to 2017-2018 for the Obama and Trump records—I generate a binary indicator for each organized interest-time period observation for whether the interest made any contributions in the preceding two years (i.e., the length of an electoral cycle) and a continuous measure of the amount of money it contributed to candidates for federal office in that period. By including both measures in my empirical models, I can distinguish between the effects of participating in electoral politics and the level of resources devoted to electoral politics. Second, I measure organized interests' policy resources in a given time period with their reported amounts of lobbying expenditures in their LDA filings.[35,36] Given the

each instance of access as "high" or "low" quality. In the Supplemental Information, I present models which account for visit quality; the results of these models are substantively similar to those presented in the main paper.

[35]Under LDA guidelines, lobbying activities for which expenditures must be reported include not only lobbying contacts themselves, but also "any efforts in support of such contacts, including preparation or planning activities, research, and any other background work that is intended, at the time of its preparation, for use in contacts, and coordination with the lobbying activities of others" (Lobbying Disclosure Act Guidance, January 31, 2017, https://lobbyingdisclosure.house.gov/ldaguidance.pdf). Thus, lobbying expenditures capture a wide range of organized interests' policy resources, including staff salaries, accrued policy expertise and political information, and expenses incidental to their direct lobbying efforts.

[36]Lobbying Disclosure Act reports require filers to first indicate if their expenditures met a minimum threshold—$10,000 for reports filed in 2007 or earlier, $5,000 for reports filed in 2008 or later—and then to report a specific amount if in excess of that threshold. Thus, expenditures are left-censored at the threshold amounts. To account for this left-censoring, I subtract the threshold amount from the expenditures reported for each organized interest in each time period, such that the continuous measure indicates additional expenditures exceeding the threshold.

right-skewedness of both campaign contributions and lobbying expenditures, I apply log transformations to both measures.

Measuring interests' partisan alignment is relatively less straightforward. Few measures of organized interest partisanship or ideology exist, and those that do offer coverage for only a sliver of the interests who file LDA reports. For example, McKay (2008) uses organized interests' evaluations of members of Congress roll call votes to scale their ideology, but can only do so for the 72 interests who offer such evaluations. Again, Bonica (2013) uses campaign contributions to estimate the ideology of donors, such as organized interests, but, because most organized interests do not make campaign contributions (Tripathi, Ansolabehere, and Snyder 2002), offers ideology scores for only 1,416 of the 32,421 unique organized interests included in my analyses, or 4.4%. In light of this data limitation, I classify the partisan alignment of the 92 industries into which CRP categorizes organized interests using CRP's industry summaries and assign each interest the partisan alignment of its industry. For each industry, CRP provides a written summary of its political activity and policy preferences, and these summaries often provide qualitative statements of the partisan leanings of interests in the industry.[37] If an industry's summary expresses a clear preference for either the Democratic or Republican Party, then that industry is coded as being aligned with that party. If the summary does not express a clear preference for either party, then it is coded as Independent, or not aligned with either party. While this trichotomous classification scheme may misattribute the partisan alignment of some individual interests, studies using other measures of organized interest ideology find that the distributions of ideology within industries typically exhibit clear central tendencies (e.g., Bonica 2013). Given the dearth of measures of organized interest partisanship or ideology, industry-level partisan alignment is a imperfect but informative measure of individual interests' partisan leanings that provides coverage for the full data set.[38]

---

[37] "Alphabetical Listing of Industries," *Center for Responsive Politics*, `https://www.opensecrets.org/industries/alphalist.php`.

[38] To try to strike a balance between retaining all of the observations in the data set and measuring organized interest preferences at level of each organized interest, I reestimate the models presented in the main paper using the interest-level ideology scores provided by (Bonica 2013). In doing so, the models drop over 90% of the observations because they lack ideology scores. Additionally, because the ideology scores are estimated with information about organized interests' campaign contributions, the models inherently select on interests who are active in electoral politics, which is a distinct subset of the organized interest universe. However, the results from these alternative models, which are presented in the Supplemental Information, are substantively similar to those presented here using industry-level partisan alignment.

## Estimation Strategy

The data structure described above poses non-trivial challenges for analysis. One set of challenges stems from inconsistencies in temporal units of measurement and disparities in data availability. While some time-varying components of the data are observed at granular daily levels, such as instances of White House access and campaign contributions, others are observed at less frequent intervals, such as quarterly reports of lobbying expenditures and the names of registered lobbyists. Further still, because amendments to the Lobbying Disclosure Act implemented in 2008 changed the required frequency of filings from semestral (through 2007) to quarterly (2008 and after), the temporal units associated with data drawn from LDA reports vary across the Clinton and Obama and Trump presidencies. Additionally, because the Obama logs only extend to September 31, 2016, I am missing data for my measure of access to the four EOP agencies which have released visitor logs during the Trump administration for the fourth quarter of 2016, creating a gap in the time series extending through the Obama and Trump presidencies for those agencies. Finally, while the visitor logs from the Clinton and Obama presidencies cover the full White House complex, those from the Trump presidency cover only four agencies in the Executive Office of the President over which presidents have relatively less political control.[39] Thus, direct comparisons between results drawn from the full visitor logs from the Clinton and Obama presidencies and the partial visitor logs from the Trump presidency may lead to false conclusions.

I address these inconsistencies in three ways. First, given the temporal changes in LDA filings between the Clinton and the Obama and Trump presidencies and the disparity in data availability at the end of the Obama presidency, I estimate models for each presidency separately. Second, to make units of measurement for all variables consistent within presidencies, I aggregate all data

---

[39]While presidents exercise high degrees of control over all agencies within the Executive Office of the President relative to other parts of the bureaucracy, the four agencies for which the Trump administration has released visitor logs are distinct from the more visible units typically associated with the White House. First, as explained in Footnote 24, these four agencies have independent statutory authority and Senate-confirmed leaders, making them more subject to congressional oversight and Freedom of Information Act requests than officials from the White House Office, such as the president's chief of staff or press secretary. Second, whereas nearly all officials in policy or political roles in the White House office are political appointees of the president, civil servants occupy over 80% of the jobs in these four agencies for each of the time periods in my analysis, making them less responsive to presidents' whims. Together, these differences suggest that presidents may be less able to use these agencies to implement his engagement strategies with organized interests, and therefore any evidence of engagement detected in these agencies may be weaker than that detected across the full White House complex.

up to the temporal unit associated with contemporary LDA filing requirements—semestral for the Clinton presidency, and quarterly for the Obama and Trump presidencies. Third, to make appropriate comparisons across presidencies where the coverage of the visitor logs we observe differs, I separately model presidents' engagement with organized interests using records for the full White House complex during the Clinton and Obama presidencies and using records for the four EOP agencies which are included in both the Obama and Trump records.

A second set of challenges stems from the time-series cross-sectional structure of the data. Each observation corresponds to a unique organized interest in a given time period, and each organized interest is further nested within one of 92 industry groupings as specified by CRP. One clear implication is that observations are not independent, as multiple observations correspond to the same organized interests, industries, and time periods. In order to recover unbiased parameter estimates and associated measures of uncertainty, the analysis requires empirical techniques which account for this non-independence. Another challenge imposed by the data structure is that one of the key covariates—organized interests' partisan alignment—is measured at the industry-level, such that it is repeated across observations nested within the same organized interests and industries. As a result, standard regression models cannot estimate parameters for both organized interest- and industry-level effects and partisan alignment due to collinearity.

To account for the non-independence of observations and collinearity between group-specific effects and partisan alignment, I utilize Bayesian multilevel models (Gelman and Hill 2006). Multilevel models enable the researcher to explicitly account for nesting in data structures by allowing parameter estimates to vary for each grouping in the data. Additionally, multilevel models can feasibly estimate parameters for covariates nested at the group-level. The multilevel models for which I present results in the main paper take the following general form. Each observation $i, t$ is nested within an organized interest $j$ and a time period $p$. Each interest $j$ is further nested within an industry $k$. To estimate the independent effects of interests' electoral and political resources and their partisan alignment on presidents' provision of access to those interests during the Clinton

presidency, I fit the following multilevel logistic regression model:[40,41]

$$Pr(\text{access}_{i,j,t} = 1) = \text{logit}^{-1}(\alpha + \beta_1 \cdot \text{access}_{i,t-1} + \beta_2 \cdot \log(\text{lobby\_exp})_{i,t-1} +$$

$$\beta_3 \cdot \text{any\_contribs}_{i,t-1 \to t-4} +$$

$$\beta_4 \cdot \text{any\_contribs}_{i,t-1 \to t-4} \cdot \log(\text{contrib\_amt})_{i,t-1 \to t-4} +$$

$$\boldsymbol{\xi} \mathbf{Z}_{i,t-1} + \alpha_{j[i]} + \gamma_{p[t]}) \text{ for all } i \text{ in } 1, ..., N$$

$$\alpha_j \sim N(\mu_{\alpha,0} + \mu_{\alpha,1,k[j]}, \sigma_\alpha^2) \text{ for all } j \text{ in } 1, ..., J$$

$$\mu_{\alpha,1,k} \sim N(\delta_{\mu_{\alpha,1}0} + \delta_{\mu_{\alpha,1}1} \cdot \text{pty\_align}_k, \sigma_{\mu_{\alpha,1,k}}^2) \text{ for all } k \text{ in } 1, ..., K$$

$$\gamma_p \sim N(\mu_{\gamma_0}, \sigma_\gamma^2) \text{ for all } p \text{ in } 1, ..., P$$

The outcome measure, $\text{access}_{i,j,t}$, is a binary indicator for whether observation $i$ of organized interest $j$ in time period $t$ experienced White House access. The key covariates in the model are $\text{lobby\_exp}_{i,t-1}$, the amount of lobbying expenditures reported by interest $j$ in the preceding period; $\text{any\_contribs}_{i,t-1 \to t-4}$, a binary indicator for whether interest $j$ made campaign contributions to any candidates for federal office in the preceding four periods (i.e., the preceding two years); contrib\_amt$_{i,t-1 \to t-4}$, the amount of contributions made by interest $j$ to candidates for federal office in the preceding four periods; and $\text{pty\_align}_k$, a trichotomous indicator of the partisan alignment of the industry $k$ of which interest $j$ is a member. Other covariates in the model include a lagged measure of the dependent variable, $\text{access}_{i,j,t-1}$, to account for the dynamic nature of presidents' provision of access to interest $j$ across periods, and binary indicators drawn from interests' LDA

[40]In the main paper, I present results from models using binary indicators of presidents' provision of access to organized interests. In the Supplemental Information, I present results from analogous negative binomial models which instead use a count of the number of times each organized interest received White House access as the outcome measure. The coefficient estimates and substantive conclusions are generally consistent across outcome measures.

[41]The corresponding model for the Obama and Trump presidencies is nearly identical. The only distinction concerns the number of previous time periods for which campaign contributions are considered in the present period, $t$. Recall that the measures of whether an organized interest made any campaign contributions to candidates for federal office and the amount of those contributions are calculated by looking at the interest's campaign finance activity for the preceding two-year period, or the length of an election cycle. Because observations for the Clinton presidency are semestral, or twice a year, these measures require information from the preceding four periods. However, because observations for the Obama presidency are quarterly, or four times a year, these same measures require information from the preceding eight periods. Thus, the comparable model for the Obama and Trump presidencies subscripts the variables for campaign finance activity to look back over the preceding eight time periods (i.e., any\_contribs$_{i,t-1 \to t-8}$ and contrib\_amt$_{i,t-1 \to t-8}$).

filings for whether they retained their own in-house lobbyists or relied solely on lobbying firms and for which of 80 possible issue areas they reported lobbying on in the preceding period ($\boldsymbol{\xi}\mathbf{Z}_{i,t-1}$). Finally, the model includes varying intercepts for the unique organized interests ($\alpha_{j[i]}$), industries ($\mu_{\alpha,1,k[j]}$), and time periods ($\gamma_{p[t]}$) in which each observation $i$ is nested.

To estimate these models, I use the `R` package `brms` (Bürkner 2017), an interface for using the C++ package Stan (Carpenter et al. 2017). All models are fitted using the NUTS (No-U-Turn Sampler) algorithm (Hoffman and Gelman 2014) with 4 chains and 2000 iterations per chain (1000 for warmup, 1000 for sampling). All models presented here report no divergent transitions during the sampling phase and indicate convergence with $\hat{R}$ statistics of $\leq 1.10$ for all parameters.

## Results

Interpreting results from multilevel models can be difficult because of the large number of parameters they estimate. To ease discussion of the results, I present the predicted probabilities of access for organized interests with fixed values of lobbying expenditures, campaign contributions, and partisan alignment, and vary each covariate independently to demonstrate its marginal effect. Unless otherwise specified, when fixed, lobbying expenditures and campaign contributions take on their median values, and partisan alignment is set as Independent. This approach provides the added benefit of illustrating how the predicted probability of access changes across levels of the covariates and whether the differences in predictions across levels are distinguishable from each other.[42]

### Access to the White House Complex: Clinton and Obama

I begin by focusing on the Clinton and Obama presidencies, where the visitor logs cover the full White House complex. Subsequently, I turn to an analysis using data from the Obama and Trump presidencies that centers on the four Executive Office of the President agencies for which visitor logs are available from both administrations. In the left panes of Figures 1 and 2, I plot the predicted

---

[42]To determine whether the predicted probability of access given some fixed set of covariate values is distinguishable from the predicted probability of access given a change in one covariate, I obtain the posterior distributions of the probability of access for both sets of covariate values and difference the distributions. If the 95% credible interval for the distribution of differences does not include zero, I refer to the difference as distinguishable.
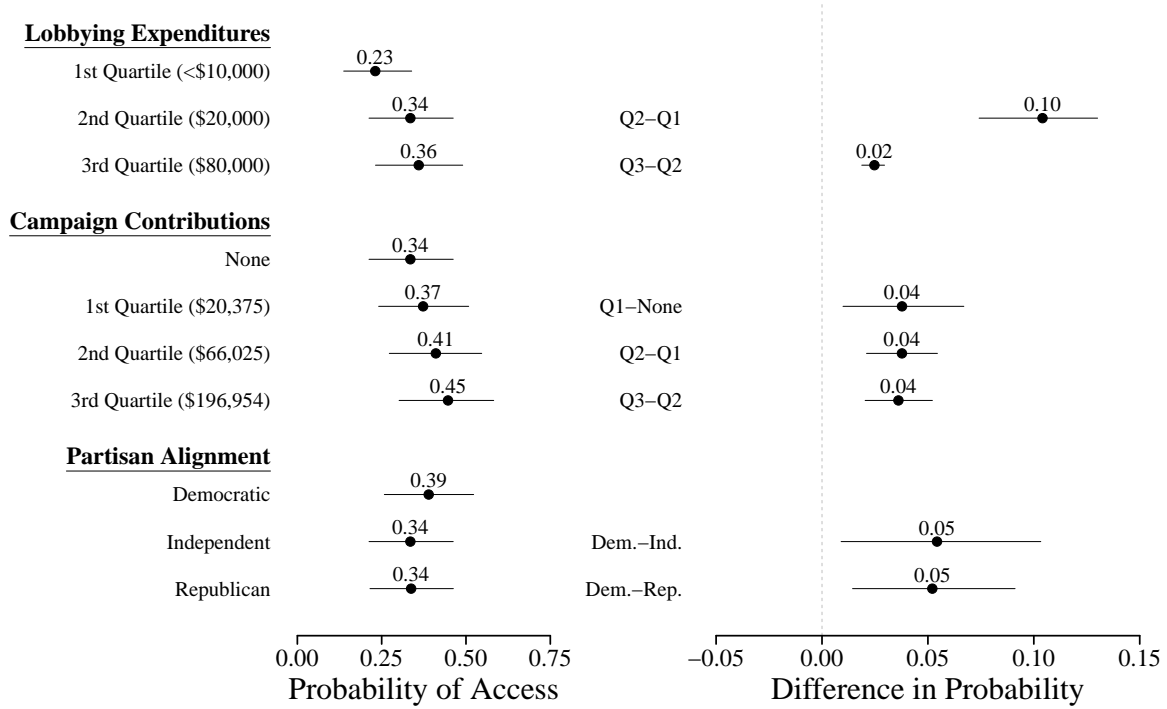
Figure 1: **Effect of Organized Interests' Resources and Partisan Alignment on Probability of White House Access (Clinton)** In the left pane, points and lines represent the posterior means and 95% credible intervals of the predicted probabilities calculated with parameter estimates from the sampling iterations stored from the model using data from the Clinton White House. For each of the three types of organized interest characteristics specified in bold and underlined, I calculate predicted probabilities for each of the specified variable values while fixing other covariates values. In the right pane, I plot the differences in the distributions of predicted probabilities and their 95% credible intervals for pairs of predictions in the left pane, as specified by the labels on the left side of the right pane. For example, looking at the predicted probabilities of access across levels of lobbying expenditures, the three points in the left pane indicate the predicted probabilities of access when lobbying expenditures are set to the first, second, and third quartile values, with campaign contributions fixed at None (the median value), partisan alignment fixed as Independent, and other variables fixed at their median values. In the right pane, the two topmost points indicate the differences in the predicted probabilities of access when lobbying expenditures are set to their first and second quartile values, and their second and third quartile values, respectively. Taking the predictions associated with lobbying expenditures together, we observe that organized interests with higher levels of lobbying expenditures have a distinguishably higher probability of White House access. Please note that some differences indicated in the right pane may not equal the differences between the corresponding values in the left pane due to rounding.

probabilities of an organized interest receiving White House access with the levels of resources and partisan alignment specified on the far left during the Clinton and Obama presidencies, respectively. In the right panes of those figures, I present the differences in specific pairs of predicted probabilities plotted in the left panes as resource levels and partisan alignment vary, with all other
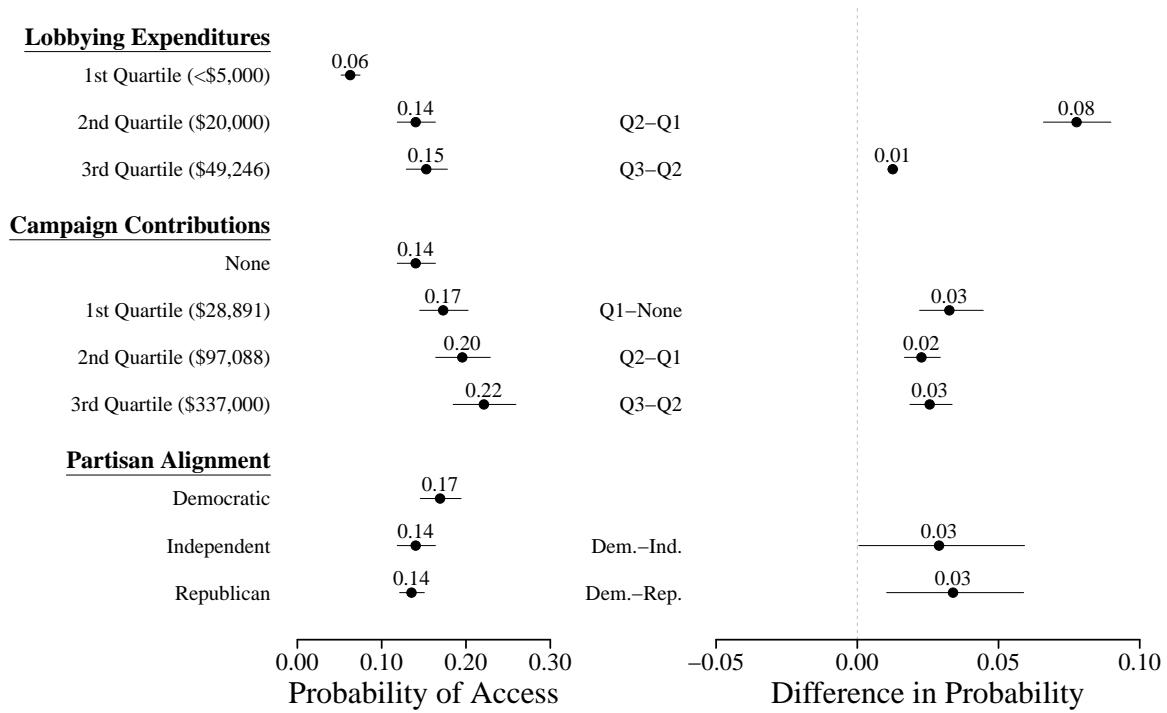
Figure 2: **Effect of Organized Interests' Resources and Partisan Alignment on Probability of White House Access (Obama)** In the left pane, points and lines represent the posterior means and 95% credible intervals of the predicted probabilities calculated with parameter estimates from the sampling iterations stored from the model using data from the Obama White House. For each of the three types of organized interest characteristics specified in bold and underlined, I calculate predicted probabilities for each of the specified variable values while fixing other covariates values. In the right pane, I plot the differences in the distributions of predicted probabilities and their 95% credible intervals for pairs of predictions in the left pane, as specified by the labels on the left side of the right pane. For example, looking at the predicted probabilities of access across levels of lobbying expenditures, the three points in the left pane indicate the predicted probabilities of access when lobbying expenditures are set to the first, second, and third quartile values, with campaign contributions fixed at None (the median value), partisan alignment fixed as Independent, and other variables fixed at their median values. In the right pane, the two topmost points indicate the differences in the predicted probabilities of access when lobbying expenditures are set to their first and second quartile values, and their second and third quartile values, respectively. Taking the predictions associated with lobbying expenditures together, we observe that organized interests with higher levels of lobbying expenditures have a distinguishably higher probability of White House access. Please note that some differences indicated in the right pane may not equal the differences between the corresponding values in the left pane due to rounding.

covariates fixed.[43] Looking first at the predicted probabilities associated with varying levels of

---

[43]For each set of covariate values in Figures 1 and 2, the probability of White House access during the Clinton administration is roughly twice as high as during the Obama administration. At least two contextual factors explain this difference. First, the temporal range accounted for by each observation during the Clinton era is half as large as during the Obama era (semestral vs. quarterly), such that each organized interest in the Clinton era has twice as long to obtain White House access and have an outcome value of "1." Second, the number of organized interests filing LDA reports during the Obama presidency is roughly two and a half times higher than during the Clinton presidency. Given that the White House's ability to engage with organized interests likely remained constant, the likelihood that any given interest would obtain access is lower during the Obama presidency.

lobbying expenditures and campaign contributions—my measures of policy and electoral resources, respectively—we observe consistent increases in the probability of access as an organized interest's resource levels increase. For example, turning to the left pane of Figure 1, whereas the probability of an organized interest whose lobbying expenditures fell into the first quartile (less than \$10,000) experiencing White House access during the Clinton presidency is 0.23, this probability increases to 0.34 for an otherwise identical organized interest with the median level of lobbying expenditures (\$20,000)—an increase of over 40%. Further increasing lobbying expenditures from the median value to the third quartile value (\$80,000) is associated with a smaller increase in the probability of access of 0.02—an increase of 6%. Again, in the left pane of Figure 2, the probability of an organized interest who did not make campaign contributions to candidates for federal office in the preceding electoral cycle experiencing White House access during the Obama presidency is 0.14, but an otherwise identical interest whose campaign contributions equal the first quartile value (\$28,891) had a probability of receiving access of 0.17—an increase of 21%. Additional increases in campaign contributions to the median and third quartile values (\$97,088 and \$337,000, respectively) are also associated with additional increases in the probability of access. Turning to the right panes of both figures, we see that all of the stepwise increases in lobbying expenditures and campaign contributions for the Clinton and Obama presidencies are statistically distinguishable, as the 95% credible intervals for the differences do not include zero.

The predicted probabilities associated with organized interests' partisan alignment indicate that interests in industries aligned with the Democratic Party, or the party of both Presidents Clinton and Obama, are more likely to experience White House access. For the Clinton presidency, we observe in the left pane of Figure 1 that the predicted probability of access for an organized interest in an industry aligned with the Democratic Party and with median levels of lobbying expenditures and campaign contributions is 0.39, but that the predicted probability of access for otherwise identical interests in industries aligned with the Republican Party or with neither party is 0.34—a difference of 15%. In the Obama presidency, we observe a similar effect in the left pane of Figure 2, as organized interests aligned with the Democratic Party have a predicted probability of access of 0.17, but the predicted probability of access for interests in industries aligned with

the Republican Party or with neither party is 0.14—a difference of 21%. In the right panes of both figures, we see that the differences in the predicted probabilities of access between interests in copartisan and non-copartisan industries are statistically distinguishable in both presidencies. Thus, in line with my empirical expectations, organized interests with high levels of electoral and policy resources and who were aligned with the incumbent's party were more likely to experience White House access during the Clinton and Obama presidencies.

### Access to Four EOP Agencies: Obama and Trump

Next, I turn to analyses conducted with the visitor logs records from the Obama and Trump administrations which cover access provided to organized interests to four agencies in the Executive Office of the President—the Office of Management and Budget, the Office of Science and Technology Policy, the Council on Environmental Quality, and the Office of National Drug Control Policy.[44] These analyses complement the findings obtained by using the visitor logs from the Clinton and Obama administrations for the full White House complex in two ways. First, because these four agencies are less susceptible to presidential control than are other offices in the EOP,[45] focusing on visitor logs records from these agencies constitutes a difficult test of the notion that presidents engage with organized interests to build supportive coalitions. Second, whereas the previous analyses included only Democratic presidents, drawing on visitor logs from the Trump presidency allows me to test my expectations in a Republican administration and generalize my findings across parties.

Figures 3 and 4 present the predicted probabilities of access to the four Executive Office of the President agencies for organized interests with the levels of resources and partisan alignment specified on the far left, as well as the differences in specific pairs of predicted probabilities, during the Obama and Trump presidencies, respectively. Examining the relationship between organized interests' resources and the probability of experiencing access, we see similar patterns as in Figures 1

---

[44]To subset the visitor logs entries from the Obama presidency, I draw on Office of Personnel Management records which provide the names of all individuals working in the four agencies in each quarter (Singer-Vine, Jeremy, "We're Sharing a Vast Trove of Federal Payroll Records," *Buzzfeed News*, May 24, 2017, `https://www.buzzfeed.com/jsvine/sharing-hundreds-of-millions-of-federal-payroll-records?utm_term=.oe3w86gYqa#.yi5wM9oY5Q`). Because the legal settlement governing the Trump administration's release of visitor logs records requires only the release of visits entered into WAVES by employees of the four agencies, I mirror that scope with the Obama visitor logs records by retaining only visits scheduled by individuals working in those agencies.
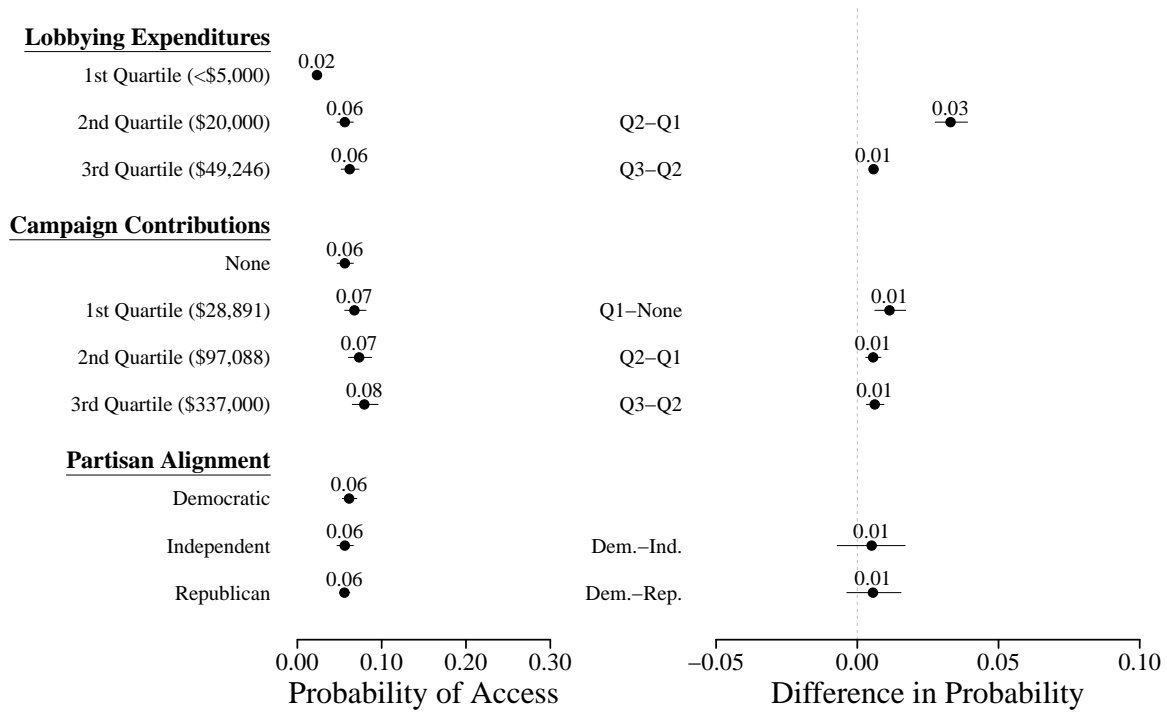
[45]See Footnote 24.

Figure 3: **Effect of Organized Interests' Resources and Partisan Alignment on Probability of Access to Four Executive Office of the President Agencies (Obama)** In the left pane, points and lines represent the posterior means and 95% credible intervals of the predicted probabilities calculated with parameter estimates from the sampling iterations stored from the model using data from the Obama White House for the four Executive Office of the President agencies listed in the text. For each of the three types of organized interest characteristics specified in bold and underlined, I calculate predicted probabilities for each of the specified variable values while fixing other covariates values. In the right pane, I plot the differences in the distributions of predicted probabilities and their 95% credible intervals for pairs of predictions in the left pane, as specified by the labels on the left side of the right pane. For example, looking at the predicted probabilities of access across levels of lobbying expenditures, the three points in the left pane indicate the predicted probabilities of access when lobbying expenditures are set to the first, second, and third quartile values, with campaign contributions fixed at None (the median value), partisan alignment fixed as Independent, and other variables fixed at their median values. In the right pane, the two topmost points indicate the differences in the predicted probabilities of access when lobbying expenditures are set to their first and second quartile values, and their second and third quartile values, respectively. Taking the predictions associated with lobbying expenditures together, we observe that organized interests with higher levels of lobbying expenditures have a distinguishably higher probability of White House access. Please note that some differences indicated in the right pane may not equal the differences between the corresponding values in the left pane due to rounding.

and 2. For example, looking at Figure 4 for the Trump presidency, we see that increases in lobbying expenditures from the first quartile value ($10,000) to the second quartile value ($21,876), and from the second quartile value to the third quartile value ($60,000), are each associated with increases in the probability of access of 0.01, and that these increases are statistically distinguishable. Again, looking at Figure 3 for the Obama presidency, we observe that each stepwise increase in an organized
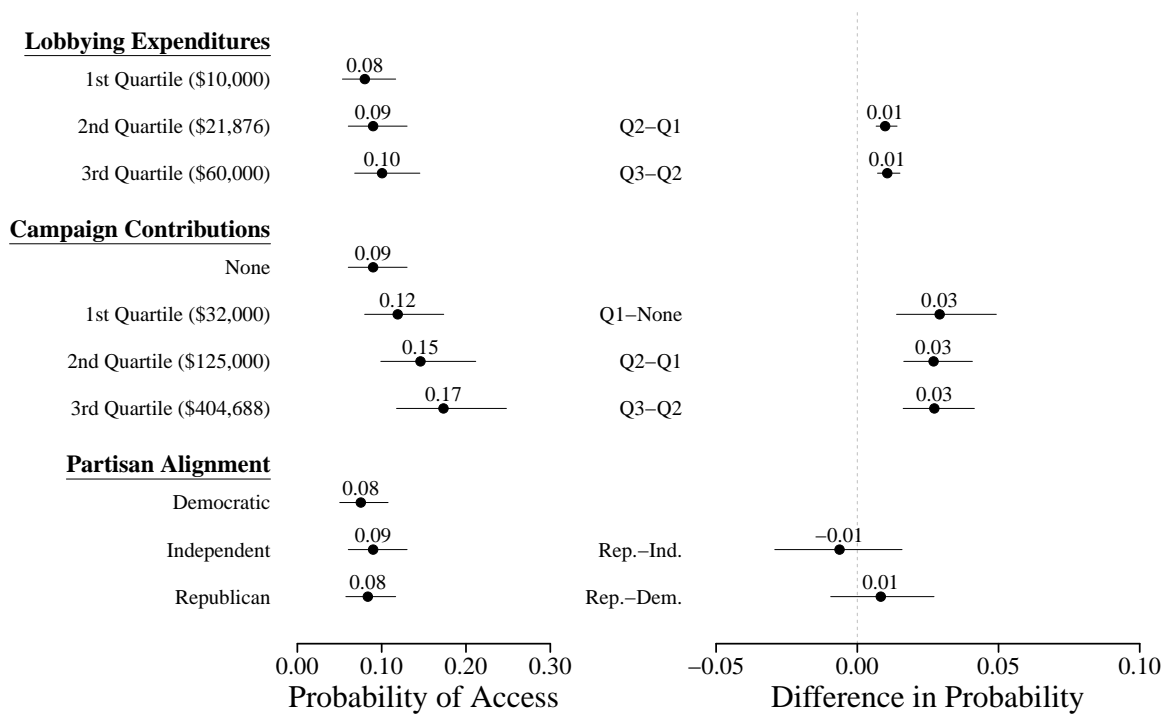
Figure 4: **Effect of Organized Interests' Resources and Partisan Alignment on Probability of Access to Four Executive Office of the President Agencies (Trump)** In the left pane, points and lines represent the posterior means and 95% credible intervals of the predicted probabilities calculated with parameter estimates from the sampling iterations stored from the model using data from the Trump White House for the four Executive Office of the President agencies listed in the text. For each of the three types of organized interest characteristics specified in bold and underlined, I calculate predicted probabilities for each of the specified variable values while fixing other covariates values. In the right pane, I plot the differences in the distributions of predicted probabilities and their 95% credible intervals for pairs of predictions in the left pane, as specified by the labels on the left side of the right pane. For example, looking at the predicted probabilities of access across levels of lobbying expenditures, the three points in the left pane indicate the predicted probabilities of access when lobbying expenditures are set to the first, second, and third quartile values, with campaign contributions fixed at None (the median value), partisan alignment fixed as Independent, and other variables fixed at their median values. In the right pane, the two topmost points indicate the differences in the predicted probabilities of access when lobbying expenditures are set to their first and second quartile values, and their second and third quartile values, respectively. Taking the predictions associated with lobbying expenditures together, we observe that organized interests with higher levels of lobbying expenditures have a distinguishably higher probability of White House access. Please note that some differences indicated in the right pane may not equal the differences between the corresponding values in the left pane due to rounding.

interest's contributions to candidates for federal office is associated with a 0.01 increase in the probability of access, and that each of these increases are also statistically distinguishable. As for the full White Houses of Presidents Clinton and Obama, the four EOP agencies included in this analysis were more likely to provide access to organized interests with larger resource endowments.

However, when turning to the relationship between organized interests' partisan alignment and

their probability of access to these four EOP agencies, we see that the patterns exhibited in Figures 3 and 4 differ from those in Figures 1 and 2 using data from the full White House. While organized interests in industries aligned with the party of the incumbent president are more likely to receive access than interests in industries aligned with the opposite party, this difference in probability (0.01) is not distinguishable for either the Obama or Trump administrations. In addition, while the probability of access for interests in industries that are not aligned with either party is higher (lower) than the probability of access for copartisan interests in the Obama (Trump) presidency, this difference is again not distinguishable for either administration. Thus, whereas presidents are more likely to provide White House access to interests in copartisan industries, this partisan preference does not carry over to the four EOP agencies included in this analysis.

## Conclusion

Scholars have long acknowledged that presidents expend great time and effort to build coalitions whose support is integral to their success. While studies of presidents as coalition-builders typically focus on presidents' efforts among members of Congress and the mass public (e.g., Beckmann 2010; Edwards 2000; Kriner and Reeves 2015$a$; Neustadt 1991), I highlight organized interests as another class of political actors who presidents seek to bring into the fold. While I emphasize that presidents are more likely to engage with organized interests with high levels of resources and who are aligned with the president's party, my data more broadly indicates that presidential engagement with organized interests is quite common. For example, in the time period for which I have visitor logs records from the Obama White House, of the 24,009 unique organized interests that filed at least one LDA report, President Obama and his staff engaged at least once with representatives from 13,838 of these interests, or nearly 58%, and engaged with some interests much more frequently. Considering that each of these engagements requires non-negligible effort to schedule and execute on both sides, presidents' interactions with organized interests comprise an underappreciated activity that can enlighten future research activity on both types of actors.

My findings not only improve our understanding of with which organized interests presidents are more likely to engage, but also offer substantive implications for the study of presidents, organized

interests, and political voice in the American policymaking process. First, contrary to the hopes expressed by some that presidents dampen the influence interests exercise in other political venues (e.g., Bentley 1908; Truman 1971; Quirk and Nesmith 2005; Uslander 1998), I find that presidents associate more closely with interests who represent the preferences of their copartisans and the upper-class, and in doing so contribute to the disproportionate voice given to these constituencies in American politics (Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012). By engaging more with interests who represent these preferences, presidents, intentionally or unintentionally, heighten the salience of those preferences within the White House and consequently marginalize the preferences of other constituencies (Miler 2010); as Schlozman, Verba, and Brady write, "Public officials cannot consider voices they do not hear... if [the voices officials hear] come from an unrepresentative set of individuals and organizations, government policy is likely to reflect more fully the preferences and needs of the active part of the public" (2012, 6). Therefore, scholars and practitioners concerned about inequality in political voice must recognize presidents' role in perpetuating this inequality.

Second, while recent studies of presidential representation stress that presidents use their office to satisfy the preferences of and materially benefit their copartisans (e.g., Druckman and Jacobs 2015; Kriner and Reeves 2015a; Wood 2009), my finding that presidents' decisions concerning with which interests to engage are also driven by organized interests' resources suggests that presidents' representational emphases may vary across political contexts (Griffin and Newman 2016). Most studies of presidential representation focus on the mass public, where each person possesses roughly equal resources they can provide the president—while some persons may be more willing or able to participate in politics, each can only provide the president with a single vote at the ballot box or a single nod of approval in a public opinion poll. However, when interacting with political elites, such as members of Congress or organized interests, presidents recognize that some actors are more influential than others, and thus focus their representational activities on obtaining the cooperation or assent of these influential actors. In the case of organized interests, my results indicate that, while presidents give preference to copartisan interests, they also emphasize interests' resource endowments when deciding with whom to engage. This finding bears similarity to that of Beckmann (2010), who demonstrates that presidents' coalition-building efforts in Congress focus on

communicating with congressional leaders of both parties rather than only on copartisan leaders. While copartisan leaders are more responsive to presidents' entreaties, non-copartisan leaders hold important institutional powers and sway over their members, and presidents often communicate with them to bargain over or demobilize opposition to presidents' proposals (see also Beckmann 2008; Beckmann, Chaturvedi, and Garcia 2017). Future studies of presidential representation should explore how presidents consider characteristics other than copartisanship, such as political clout, when deciding to which persons and groups to provide representation.

The theory presented in this paper posits that presidents' engagement with organized interests is not an end in itself, but is a mechanism by which presidents seek to obtain organized interests' cooperation with or assent to their aims. Future research should explore the downstream consequences of presidents' engagement with organized interests. For presidents, this means examining whether organized interests with whom they engage subsequently provide resources in furtherance of presidents' goals. While some resources of interest, such as organized interests' lobbying of members of Congress on presidents' behalf, are likely difficult to observe, others more feeasibly lend themselves to empirical observation. For example, because presidents' value organized interests' grassroots lobbying to bolster public support for their initiatives, one might investigate whether interests with whom presidents engage are more likely to issue public statements in support of presidential actions (Cohen 2012; Kumar and Grossman 1984). Differently, for organized interests, researchers might focus on the political and policy resources that interests value and that presidents can provide them. For instance, just as presidents can channel federal grants to electorally important constituencies (Kriner and Reeves 2015a), they might also direct grants towards organized interests with whom they engage. Again, presidents might incentivize organized interests with whom they engage through appointing preferred candidates to bureaucratic or judicial positions. Further, presidents might bring attention to the interests with which they engage, which bolsters their political clout and helps them perform institutional maintenance, particularly if they depend on members' continued support.

The inconsistencies in results for my analyses of presidents' provision of access to the full White House and to the four EOP agencies for which the Trump administration releases visitor logs

also welcomes further research. As described earlier, one important difference between these four agencies and the White House Office, which accounts for the majority of the staff in the White House proper, is that these four agencies have larger proportions of career civil servants; whereas nearly all officials in the White House Office serve at the pleasure of the president, over 80% of the personnel in these four agencies for each of the quarters in my analysis are career civil servants. While career civil servants are susceptible to presidents' political influence (Moe 1985), they entertain other motivations that extend beyond the life of any given administration, such as career advancement and designing and implementing good public policy (Carpenter 2001; Gailmard and Patty 2007; Lewis 2008). My null finding for partisanship when focusing on the four EOP agencies may reflect this difference in personnel distribution between the White House Office and other EOP agencies. Whereas staffers in the White House office are heavily motivated to help their president build a supportive coalition by providing access to copartisan interests and are subject to their president's favor for future employment, civil servants in these EOP agencies have longer time horizons and different sets of incentives that dilute the political considerations of the sitting president in deciding to which organized interests to provide access. Future research should consider which elements of the Executive Office of the President participate in coalition-building initiatives and, more broadly, how bureaucratic structures limit executives' ability to provide preferential access and treatment to copartisans.

# References

Austen-Smith, David, and John R Wright. 1994. "Counteractive Lobbying." *American Journal of Political Science* 38(1): 25–44.

Baumgartner, Frank R, Jeffrey M Berry, Marie Hojnacki, Beth L Leech, and David C Kimball. 2009. *Lobbying and Policy Change: Who Wins, Who Loses, and Why.* University of Chicago Press.

Beckmann, Matthew N. 2008. "The President's Playbook: White House Strategies for Lobbying Congress." *Journal of Politics* 70(2): 407–419.

Beckmann, Matthew N. 2010. *Pushing the Agenda: Presidential Leadership in US Lawmaking, 1953–2004.* Cambridge University Press.

Beckmann, Matthew N, Neilan S Chaturvedi, and Jennifer Rosa Garcia. 2017. "Targeting the Treatment: The Strategy Behind Lyndon Johnson's Lobbying." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 42(2): 211–234.

Bentley, A Fisher. 1908. *The Process of Government: A Study of Social Pressures.* University of Chicago Press.

Berry, Christopher R, Barry C Burden, and William G Howell. 2010. "The President and the Distribution of Federal Spending." *American Political Science Review* 104(4): 783–799.

Bond, Jon R, and Richard Fleisher. 1990. *The President in the Legislative Arena.* University of Chicago Press.

Bonica, Adam. 2013. "Ideology and Interests in the Political Marketplace." *American Journal of Political Science* 57(2): 294–311.

Bürkner, Paul-Christian. 2017. "brms: An R Package for Bayesian Multilevel Models Using Stan." *Journal of Statistical Software* 80(1): 1–28.

Carpenter, Bob, Andrew Gelman, Matthew D Hoffman, Daniel Lee, Ben Goodrich, Michael Betancourt, Marcus Brubaker, Jiqiang Guo, Peter Li, and Allen Riddell. 2017. "Stan: A Probabilistic Programming Language." *Journal of Statistical Software* 76(1): 1–32.

Carpenter, Daniel P. 2001. *The Forging of Bureaucratic Autonomy: Reputations, Networks, and Policy Innovation in Executive Agencies, 1862-1928.* Princeton University Press.

Christenson, Dino P, Douglas L Kriner, and Andrew Reeves. 2016. "All the President's Senators: Presidential Copartisans and the Allocation of Federal Grants." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* .

Cohen, Jeffrey E. 1995. "Presidential Rhetoric and the Public Agenda." *American Journal of Political Science* pp. 87–107.

Cohen, Jeffrey E. 2012. "Interest Groups and Presidential Approval." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 42(3): 431–454.

Cox, Gary W, and Mathew D McCubbins. 1986. "Electoral Politics as a Redistributive Game." *Journal of Politics* 48(2): 370–389.

Cronin, Thomas E. 1980. *The State of the Presidency.* Little, Brown.

Dark, Taylor E. 2018. "Partisan Polarization and Political Access: Labor Unions and the Presidency." *Interest Groups & Advocacy* 7(2): 126–149.

De Figueiredo, John M, and Brian Kelleher Richter. 2014. "Advancing the Empirical Research on Lobbying." *Annual Review of Political Science* 17: 163–185.

Druckman, James N, and Lawrence R Jacobs. 2015. *Who Governs?: Presidents, Public Opinion, and Manipulation.* University of Chicago Press.

Dynes, Adam M, and Gregory A Huber. 2015. "Partisanship and the Allocation of Federal Spending: Do Same-Party Legislators or Voters Benefit from Shared Party Affiliation with the President and House Majority?" *American Political Science Review* 109(1): 172–186.

Edwards, George C. 2000. "Building Coalitions." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 30(1): 47–78.

Edwards, George C, and B Dan Wood. 1999. "Who Influences Whom? The President, Congress, and the Media." *American Political Science Review* 93(2): 327–344.

Epstein, Lee, and Jack Knight. 2013. "Reconsidering Judicial Preferences." *Annual Review of Political Science* 16: 11–31.

Eshbaugh-Soha, Matthew, and Brandon Rottinghaus. 2013. "Presidential Position Taking and the Puzzle of Representation." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 43(1): 1–15.

Gailmard, Sean, and John W Patty. 2007. "Slackers and Zealots: Civil Service, Policy Discretion, and Bureaucratic Expertise." *American Journal of Political Science* 51(4): 873–889.

Galvin, Daniel J. 2009. *Presidential Party Building: Dwight D. Eisenhower to George W. Bush: Dwight D. Eisenhower to George W. Bush.* Princeton University Press.

Gelman, Andrew, and Jennifer Hill. 2006. *Data Analysis Using Regression and Multilevel/Hierarchical Models.* Cambridge University Press.

Gilens, Martin, and Benjamin I Page. 2014. "Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens." *Perspectives on Politics* 12(3): 564–581.

Griffin, John, and Brian Newman. 2016. "The Presidency and Political Equality." *Congress & the Presidency* 43(3): 352–376.

Groseclose, Tim, and James M Snyder. 1996. "Buying Supermajorities." *American Political Science Review* 90(2): 303–315.

Haeder, Simon F, and Susan Webb Yackee. 2015. "Influence and the Administrative Process: Lobbying the US President's Office of Management and Budget." *American Political Science Review* 109(3): 507–522.

Hall, Richard L, and Alan V Deardorff. 2006. "Lobbying as Legislative Subsidy." *American Political Science Review* 100(1): 69–84.

Hall, Richard L, and Frank W Wayman. 1990. "Buying Time: Moneyed Interests and the Mobilization of Bias in Congressional Committees." *American Political Science Review* 84(3): 797–820.

Hoffman, Matthew D, and Andrew Gelman. 2014. "The No-U-Turn Sampler: Adaptively Setting Path Lengths in Hamiltonian Monte Carlo." *Journal of Machine Learning Research* 15(1): 1593–1623.

Hojnacki, Marie, Kathleen M Marchetti, Frank R Baumgartner, Jeffrey M Berry, David C Kimball, and Beth L Leech. 2015. "Assessing Business Advantage in Washington Lobbying." *Interest Groups & Advocacy* 4(3): 205–224.

Holyoke, Thomas. 2004. "By Invitation Only: Controlling Interest Group Access to the Oval Office." *American Review of Politics* 25(3): 221–240.

Howell, William G. 2003. *Power Without Persuasion: The Politics of Direct Presidential Action.* Princeton University Press.

Howell, William G, and Terry M Moe. 2016. *Relic: How Our Constitution Undermines Effective Government–and Why We Need a More Powerful Presidency.* Basic Books.

Kalla, Joshua L, and David E Broockman. 2016. "Campaign Contributions Facilitate Access to Congressional Officials: A Randomized Field Experiment." *American Journal of Political Science* 60(3): 545–558.

Kane, John V. 2016. "Control, Accountability, and Constraints: Rethinking Perceptions of Presidential Responsibility for the Economy." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 46(2): 335–364.

Kernell, Samuel. 2006. *Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership.* CQ Press.

Kriner, Douglas L, and Andrew Reeves. 2015*a*. *The Particularistic President: Executive Branch Politics and Political Inequality.* Cambridge University Press.

Kriner, Douglas L, and Andrew Reeves. 2015*b*. "Presidential Particularism and Divide-the-Dollar Politics." *American Political Science Review* 109(1): 155–171.

Kumar, Martha Joynt, and Michael Baruch Grossman. 1984. "The Presidency and Interest Groups." In *The Presidency and the Political System*, ed. Michael Nelson. Congressional Quarterly pp. 282–312.

Levine, Bertram J. 2009. *The Art of Lobbying: Building Trust and Selling Policy.* CQ Press.

Lewis, David E. 2008. *The Politics of Presidential Appointments: Political Control and Bureaucratic Performance.* Princeton University Press.

Light, Paul. 1999. *The President's Agenda: Domestic Policy Choice from Kennedy to Clinton.* JHU Press.

Loomis, Burdett A. 2009. "Connecting Interest Groups to the Presidency." In *The Oxford Handbook of the American Presidency*, ed. George C. Edwards, and William G. Howell. Oxford University Press chapter 18, pp. 403–426.

Lowande, Kenneth S, Jeffery A Jenkins, and Andrew J Clarke. 2018. "Presidential Particularism and US Trade Politics." *Political Science Research and Methods* 6(2): 265–281.

Lowi, Theodore J. 1986. *The Personal President: Power Invested, Promise Unfulfilled.* Cornell University Press.

Mayhew, David R. 1974. *Congress: The Electoral Connection.* Yale University Press.

McKay, Amy. 2008. "A Simple Way of Estimating Interest Group Ideology." *Public Choice* 136(1-2): 69–86.

Miler, Kristina C. 2010. *Constituency Representation in Congress: The View from Capitol Hill.* Cambridge University Press.

Miller, David R, and Andrew J Reeves. 2017. "Attitudes toward Delegation to Presidential Commissions." *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 47(3): 495–516.

Moe, Terry M. 1985. "The Politicized Presidency." In *The New Direction in American Politics*, ed. John E Chubb, and Paul E Peterson. Brookings Institution pp. 235–271.

Moe, Terry M, and William G Howell. 1999. "The Presidential Power of Unilateral Action." *Journal of Law, Economics, and Organization* 15(1): 132–179.

Nemacheck, Christine L. 2008. *Strategic Selection: Presidential Nomination of Supreme Court Justices from Herbert Hoover through George W. Bush.* University of Virginia Press.

Neustadt, Richard E. 1991. *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan.* Simon and Schuster.

Olson, Mancur. 1965. *The Logic of Collective Action.* Harvard University Press.

Peterson, Mark A. 1992. "The Presidency and Organized Interests: White House Patterns of Interest Group Liaison." *American Political Science Review* 86(3): 612–625.

Pika, Joseph A. 1999. "Interest Groups: A Doubly Dynamic Relationship." In *Presidential Policymaking: An End-of-Century Assessment*, ed. Steven A. Shull. M.E. Sharpe pp. 59–78.

Quirk, Paul J, and Bruce F Nesmith. 2005. "Who Serves Special Interests? The President, Congress, and Interest Groups." In *The Interest Group Connection*, ed. Paul S. Herrnson, Ronald G. Shaiko, and Clyde Wilcox. CQ Press.

Rogowski, Jon C. 2016. "Presidential Influence in an Era of Congressional Dominance." *American Political Science Review* 110(2): 325–341.

Salisbury, Robert H, and Kenneth A Shepsle. 1981. "US Congressman as Enterprise." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 6(4): 559–576.

Schattschneider, Elmer Eric. 1960. *The Semisovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy in America.* Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Schlozman, Kay Lehman, and John T Tierney. 1986. *Organized Interests and American Democracy.* Harper & Row.

Schlozman, Kay Lehman, Sidney Verba, and Henry E Brady. 2012. *The Unheavenly Chorus: Unequal Political Voice and the Broken Promise of American Democracy.* Princeton University Press.

Seligman, Lester G, and Cary Raymond Covington. 1989. *The Coalitional Presidency.* Dorsey Press.

Shaiko, Ronald G. 1998. "Interest Group Mobilization from the White House and the Hill." In *Interest Group Politics*, ed. Allan J Cigler, and Burdett A Loomis. CQ Press.

Tenpas, Kathryn Dunn. 2005. "Lobbying the President and the Bureaucracy." In *The Interest Group Connection*, ed. Paul S. Herrnson, Ronald G. Shaiko, and Clyde Wilcox. CQ Press.

Tripathi, Micky, Stephen Ansolabehere, and James M Snyder. 2002. "Are PAC Contributions and Lobbying Linked? New Evidence from the 1995 Lobby Disclosure Act." *Business and Politics* 4(2): 131–155.

Truman, David B. 1971. *The Governmental Process.* 2nd ed. Alfred A. Knopf.

Uslander, Eric M. 1998. "Lobbying the President and the Bureaucracy." In *The Interest Group Connection*, ed. Paul S. Herrnson, Ronald G. Shaiko, and Clyde Wilcox. Chatham House.

Wechsler, Herbert. 1954. "The Political Safeguards of Federalism: The Role of the States in the Composition and Selection of the National Government." *Columbia Law Review* 54(4): 543–560.

Wilson, Woodrow. 1961. *Constitutional Government in the United States.* Columbia University Press.

Wood, B Dan. 2009. *The Myth of Presidential Representation.* Cambridge University Press.

Wright, John R. 1990. "Contributions, Lobbying, and Committee Voting in the US House of Representatives." *American Political Science Review* 84(2): 417–438.

You, Hye Young. n.d. "Foreign Lobbying in the US Congress: Evidence from Free Trade Agreements.".

# Supplemental Information

The Supplemental Information contains descriptions of the original interviews and survey I draw on in the main paper, as well as summaries of the models used to generate the figures in the main paper and additional models to demonstrate the robustness of the results across different specifications.

## Table of Contents

# List of Tables

# List of Figures

# Contextual Information from Interviews and a Survey

Because interactions between presidents and organized interests have received scant attention in previous studies, our knowledge of basic facts, such as what these interactions look like, what determines whether they occur, and why presidents and organized interests participate in them, is limited. In light of these limitations, I supplement my work with two additional first-hand data sources that contextualize presidents' engagements with organized interests. In this section, I explain how I conducted these interviews and the survey and present the summary results from the relevant survey questions.

## Interviews Description

I interviewed former White House officials and organized interest representatives to better understand how and why presidents' engagement with organized interests occurs. Between May 2018 and September 2019, I conducted 15 semi-structured interviews with 15 individuals, seven of whom previously worked in the Clinton, Obama, or Trump administrations, and nearly all of whom worked in lobbying or policy advocacy at the time of the interviews. The interviews lasted for between 30 to 60 minutes. Most were conducted in-person in the Washington, DC area, though a few were conducted via phone due to scheduling conflicts. Interviewees agreed to speak "on background," such that I anonymize the information they provided.

In trying to arrange interviews, I strove to speak with individuals who have different perspectives on the relationships between presidents and organized interests. The seven former White House officials I interviewed had experience in a wide array of offices, including the Domestic Policy Council, the National Security Council, the Office of Public Engagement, the Office of Legislative Affairs, the Office of the Press Secretary. My interviewees specialized in a diverse cross-section of policy areas, such as chemical manufacturing, education, the environment, healthcare, reproductive rights, telecommunications, and transportation.

## Survey Description

I conducted a survey with a sample of organized interest representatives to collect information about their experiences with and perspectives on interacting with the Obama White House. This survey, fielded in late 2018, asked questions about the Obama White House, but not, the Clinton or Trump White Houses, for two reasons. First, because the Clinton administration had ended nearly 18 years prior to the fielding of the survey, I feared that most respondents would not have been working for their current employers or clients or would not clearly recall their experiences from that time. Second, because the visitor logs data for the Trump administration only covered four agencies in the Executive Office of the President, respondents' answers about engagement with the Trump White House would not appropriately map onto my quantitative analysis. Because the Obama presidency was still fresh in respondents' minds and because my visitor logs data from that period covers the full White House complex, I focused my questions on that time period.

### Sampling Procedure

The sample for this survey consisted of all persons listed as points of contact for lobbyists or organizations employing lobbyists who filed Lobbying Disclosure Act (LDA) reports between the first quarter of 2017 and the third quarter of 2018. While these points of contact can be persons who

are not formally recognized as lobbyists under the LDA, nearly two-thirds of points of contact are LDA lobbyists, and those individuals who are not LDA lobbyists often perform government relations or policy advocacy functions and are familiar with their employers' interactions with policymakers. For each unique individual, I selected his or her most recent appearance on a report so as to obtain the most up-to-date contact and employment information. In cases where the same individual was identified as the point of contact for more than one client in a given quarter, I randomly sampled one report on which that individual appeared as the point of contact. To minimize email bounces and improve response rates, the email addresses provided in the selected reports were screened to check for appropriate formatting and to identify duplicates. Some organizations, such as large lobbying firms, provided the same generic email address for all of their filings, such that many individuals were tied to the same generic email address; when such generic email addresses were identified, every effort was made to obtain a unique email address for that individual (searching the organization website, LinkedIn, other social media platforms, etc.). After de-duplicating the list of individuals and screening email addresses, the final sample consisted of 5,938 individuals.

Initial invitations to complete the survey were sent to all 5,938 individuals on November 15, 2018, and reminder emails were sent to all individuals who had not yet completed the survey on November 29, 2018 and December 13, 2018. Data collection ceased on December 31, 2018. Excluding the points of contact whose email addresses were identified as invalid when invitations were sent, the overall response rate for individuals who completed the demographic and background module of the survey, which asked general questions about their experience working for their current client, is 11.7% ($\frac{639}{5459}$). The response rate for individuals who worked for their current client during the Obama administration and reached the module of the survey which asked about their client's interactions with the Obama White House is 8.1% ($\frac{442}{5459}$).[1]

The first question in the module focusing on the Obama administration asked respondents how frequently their current client interacted with the White House during that period in an average year in three ways: 1) by phone, email, or mail; 2) through in-person meetings at the White House; and 3) through in-person meetings outside of the White House. Respondents' answers for the second part of the question—the frequency with which their client had in-person meetings at the White House—determined what additional questions they were provided. If respondents indicated that their client "Never" had in-person meetings at the White House, they were asked three questions about not having meetings with the Obama White House. Other respondents indicating that their client had at least one in-person meeting at the White House (i.e., "Fewer than 5 times") were asked seven questions about the meetings their client had with the Obama White House. Of the 433 respondents who answered that question, 167 (38.6%) reported that their client never had in-person meetings with the Obama White House, and 266 (61.%) indicated that their client had at least one in-person meeting.

### Evaluating Concerns about Response Bias

While this survey allows me to collect information from a large number of organized interest representatives, it is important to consider that the self-reports I solicit, like all survey responses, are susceptible to response bias, or the possibility that respondents' responses deviate from their realized experiences (see Miller n.d.). For example, in this particular case, we might be concerned

---

[1]105 respondents who progressed through the survey far enough to reach this module indicated in the demographic and background module that they did not start working for their current client until 2017. Therefore, they were not shown any of the questions in this module.

that respondents are vulnerable to desirability bias, where they answer the survey questions so as to make themselves and their clients appear more politically influential than they are; this bias could manifest through respondents over-reporting the frequency of their contacts with the White House or the degree to which they benefitted from their relationship with the White House.

While it is difficult to determine the extent of this bias in the survey responses, I am able to get a sense of this bias by comparing respondents' self-reports of the frequency of their clients' in-person meetings at the White House with my observational measure of the frequency of their clients' in-person meetings at the White House. If the bias present for this question is minimal, then we can assume that the bias in responses to other questions are also minimal. Of the 434 responses to that question, I am able to match 406 to organized interests in my observational data.[2] In order to compare my quarterly measures of access across 7 years and the survey respondents' report of the frequency with which their client attending meetings at the White House, I recode both data sources. For my observational data, I code an organized interest as "1" if my data contains any instances of them having White House access at any time and "0" otherwise. For the survey data, I code an organized interest as a "1" if the respondent reports that their client attended an in-person meeting at the White House at least once (i.e., "Fewer than 5 times") and "0" otherwise. With this coding scheme, 288 of the 406 observations (70.9%) match, such that both my observational data and the survey self-reports indicate that the organized interest did or did not have in-person meetings at the White House. Of the remaining 118 observations, in 94 of the cases (23.2%) the survey self-report indicates that the client did not have in-person meetings at the White House but my observational data detects an instance of access, and in the remaining 24 cases (5.9%) the self-report indicates that the client had in-person meetings at the White House but my observational data does not detect any instances of access. These results should reassure us that response bias is minimal; in addition to matching reports of access in both data sources in the vast majority of cases (70.9%), most of the mismatches are of the opposite character as would be expected if desirability bias is present, as mismatches arose more frequently when organized interest representatives reported that their client did not have in-person meetings at the White House than when they reported that they did.

**Descriptive Sample Characteristics**

It is difficult to assess the "representativeness" of my survey respondents to the points of contact in the sampling frame because scant information is available regarding the points of contact and the clients for which they work. Four pieces of information about the points of contact and their clients can be gleaned from their LDA filings and the Center for Responsive Politics (CRP), which cleans and aggregates the LDA filings: the client's quarterly lobbying expenditures with that point of contact's employer (i.e. the client's own expenditures if the point of contact is employed directly, or the client's expenditures with a given firm if the point of contact is a contract employee); whether the filer is the client or a lobbying firm contracted by a client; the client's sector coding, as assigned by CRP; and whether the point of contact is a registered lobbyist under the LDA.[3]

---

[2]Observations which do not match occur because the organized interest did not file LDA reports prior to 2017. These organized interests were likely active during the Obama administration, but did not meet the thresholds for filing LDA reports.

[3]The first three of these pieces of information are easily observable from CRP's aggregated LDA filings, but the fourth can only be determined by comparing the names of the points of contact provided on each LDA filing with the names of the registered lobbyists listed on the same LDA filing. To determine whether the point of contact listed is

Table SI.1 compares the distribution of these four characteristics in both the full sampling frame and the subset of 639 respondents who answered at least one of the questions I report here. These comparisons reveal some differences for each of the four characteristics that are substantively small but are statistically distinguishable at the $p < 0.05$ level using difference in means and $\chi^2$ tests (where applicable). Thus, while the sample of respondents differs from the sampling frame, it contains a sizeable number of respondents with each unique level of these characteristics.

Table SI.2 provides information on the descriptive characteristics of the respondents. This descriptive information was collected as part of the survey, and thus only provides information about respondents. The high proportions of respondents who report education levels of "post-graduate degree" (67.8%), income levels of "$200,000 or more" (57.4%), and experience levels of "more than 20 years" (41.8%) suggest that most survey respondents are themselves political elites who play a substantive role in lobbying, rather than low-level employees who may respond to emails but lack significant lobbying experience.

---

an registered lobbyist, I used approximate matching techniques to compare the name of the point of contact on each LDA filing to the names of all of the registered lobbyists also appearing on the filing, and visually inspected the best match for each LDA form to determine if the point of contact was also listed as a registered lobbyist.

Table SI.1: Comparison of Respondents with Sampling Frame

| Characteristic | % of Respondents (N) | % of Sampling Frame (N) |
|---|---|---|
| Lobbyist Employer | | |
| Client | 61.2% (391) | 53.4% (2914) |
| Firm | 38.8% (248) | 46.6% (2545) |
| Lobbying Expenditures | | |
| First Quartile | 26.4% (169) | 25% (1365) |
| Second Quartile | 30.4% (194) | 25% (1365) |
| Third Quartile | 23.4% (150) | 25% (1365) |
| Fourth Quartile | 19.7% (126) | 25% (1364) |
| CRP Category | | |
| Agribusiness | 4.7% (30) | 4.2% (228) |
| Communications and Electronics | 4.1% (26) | 6.6% (360) |
| Construction | 1.6% (10) | 2.1% (112) |
| Defense | 1.9% (12) | 2.1% (117) |
| Energy and Natural Resources | 6.9% (44) | 8.1% (444) |
| Finance, Insurance and Real Estate | 7.7% (49) | 9.6% (526) |
| Health | 18.6% (119) | 18.5% (1011) |
| Ideological and Single-Issue | 12.8% (82) | 9.2% (500) |
| Labor | 1.9% (12) | 2.1% (116) |
| Lawyers and Lobbyists | 1.6% (10) | 1.2% (66) |
| Misc Business | 11.3% (72) | 11.8% (645) |
| Other | 5.9% (38) | 6.2% (339) |
| Transportation | 6.6% (42) | 6.1% (332) |
| Unknown | 14.6% (93) | 12.1% (663) |
| Registered Lobbyist | | |
| Yes | 74.7% (478) | 62.4% (3409) |
| No | 25.3% (161) | 37.6% (2050) |

Table SI.2: Descriptive Statistics of Sample

| Characteristic | % of Respondents (N) |
|---|---|
| Gender | |
| Female | 27.9% (178) |
| Male | 71.8% (459) |
| NA | 0.3% (2) |
| Age | |
| 18-29 | 3.8% (24) |
| 30-49 | 38.3% (245) |
| 50-64 | 35.5% (227) |
| 65 or over | 22.2% (142) |
| NA | 0.2% (2) |
| Education | |
| Some college, no 4-year degree | 2.0% (13) |
| College graduate | 30.0% (192) |
| Post-graduate degree | 67.8% (433) |
| NA | 0.2% (1) |
| Race/Ethnicity | |
| Asian | 1.4% (9) |
| Black | 3.3% (21) |
| Hispanic | 2.0% (13) |
| White | 90.0% (575) |
| Other | 2.0% (13) |
| NA | 1.3% (8) |
| Income | |
| Less than $25,000 | 0.3% (2) |
| $25,000-$50,000 | 0.6% (4) |
| $50,000-$75,000 | 3.4% (22) |
| $75,000-$100,000 | 6.4% (41) |
| $100,000-$200,000 | 27.1% (173) |
| $200,000 or more | 57.4% (367) |
| NA | 4.7% (30) |
| Ideology | |
| Very liberal | 13.8% (88) |
| Somewhat liberal | 21.6% (138) |
| Slightly liberal | 14.7% (94) |
| Neither liberal nor conservative | 16.7% (107) |
| Slightly conservative | 14.4% (92) |
| Somewhat conservative | 13.3% (85) |
| Very conservative | 4.5% (29) |
| NA | 0.9% (6) |
| Party Identification | |
| Strong Democrat | 36.9% (236) |
| Democrat | 8.0% (51) |

| Characteristic | % of Respondents (N) |
|---|---|
| Lean Democrat | 8.1% (52) |
| Independent | 11.1% (71) |
| Lean Republican | 7.4% (47) |
| Republican | 10.8% (69) |
| Strong Republican | 13.6% (87) |
| Other | 2.3% (15) |
| NA | 1.7% (11) |
| Lobbying Experience | |
| Less than 5 years | 10.5% (67) |
| 5-10 years | 17.1% (109) |
| 11-15 years | 17.4% (111) |
| 16-20 years | 13.0% (83) |
| More than 20 years | 41.8% (267) |
| NA | 0.3% (2) |
| Past Government Experience | |
| Member of Congress | 4.7% (30) |
| Congressional staffer | 42.7% (273) |
| Presidential appointee | 8.1% (52) |
| EOP staffer | 4.7% (30) |
| Civil servant | 13.0% (83) |
| Other | 14.6% (93) |
| No experience | 34.1% (218) |
| Current Role with Client | |
| Lobbyist | 58.4% (373) |
| Executive officer responsible for lobbying | 30.0% (192) |
| Executive officer not responsible for lobbying | 4.1% (26) |
| Other | 7.4% (47) |
| NA | 0.2% (1) |

## Table SI.3: Self-Reported Importance of Venues

| Venue | Not at all important | Slightly important | Somewhat important | Very important | Extremely important |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Federal bureaucracy | 1.0% (6) | 3.2% (20) | 12.5% (79) | 30.0% (189) | 53.4% (337) |
| Congress | 0.3% (2) | 1.4% (9) | 5.8% (37) | 28.3% (180) | 64.2% (408) |
| White House | 14.4% (91) | 16.6% (105) | 31.2% (197) | 24.1% (152) | 13.6% (86) |

This question was presented to all respondents.

## Table SI.4: Self-Reported Contacts with Obama White House

| Type of Contact | Never | Fewer than 5 times | 5 to 10 times | 11 to 15 times | 16 to 20 times | More than 20 times |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mail, phone, or email | 28.9% (128) | 30.9% (137) | 16.0% (71) | 7.0% (31) | 5.0% (22) | 12.2% (54) |
| In-person at White House complex | 38.5% (167) | 40.8% (177) | 11.3% (49) | 3.2% (14) | 1.8% (8) | 4.4% (19) |
| In-person off of White House complex | 39.2% (170) | 39.4% (171) | 12.0% (52) | 3.2% (14) | 1.2% (5) | 5.1% (22) |

Respondents were asked how frequently their organized interest had contacts with the Obama White House in a given year in each of the specified forms. This question was presented to all respondents who advanced to this module and who started working for their current client in 2016 or earlier.

## Table SI.5: Types of Officials Attending White House Meetings

| Type of Official | % of Respondents (N) |
|---|---|
| Registered lobbyists | 76.4% (204) |
| Executives responsible for lobbying | 71.2% (190) |
| Non-lobbyist government affairs employees | 19.1% (51) |
| Other | 12.0% (32) |

Respondents were asked to indicate which of the listed types of officials with their organized interest attended meetings at the Obama White House. Respondents could select as many options as were applicable. This question was presented to all respondents who indicated that their client had in-person meetings at the Obama White House at least "Fewer than 5 times" in an average year.

## Table SI.6: Types of Officials Attending White House Meetings

| Response Option | % of Respondents (N) |
|---|---|
| Always the organization | 23.3% (58) |
| Usually the organization, sometimes the White House | 23.3% (58) |
| Sometimes the organization, sometimes the White House | 33.3% (25) |
| Usually the White House, sometimes the organization | 10.0% (25) |
| Always the White House | 10.0% (25) |

Respondents were asked to indicate whether their in-person meetings at the White House were more often initiated by their organized interest or by the Obama White House. This question was presented to all respondents who indicated that their client had in-person meetings at the Obama White House at least "Fewer than 5 times" in an average year.

## Table SI.7: Frequency of White House Invitations Accepted and Meeting Requests Fulfilled

| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Usually | Always |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Invitations accepted | 2.0% (5) | 0.0% (0) | 2.9% (7) | 23.0% (56) | 72.1% (176) |
| Requests fulfilled | 2.1% (5) | 9.3% (22) | 32.1% (76) | 43.0% (102) | 13.5% (32) |

Respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they accepted invitations to the White House when offered and how frequently the White House granted them meetings when they requested them. This question was presented to all respondents who indicated that their client had in-person meetings at the Obama White House at least "Fewer than 5 times" in an average year.

Table SI.8: Organized Interests' Objectives in White House Meetings

| Response Option | % of Respondents (N) |
| --- | --- |
| Persuade the White House to act on an issue | 62.2% (166) |
| Provide the White House with policy/political information | 64.4% (172) |
| Coordinate political strategy with the White House | 12.7% (34) |
| Advocating for a casework request | 3.0% (8) |
| Other | 6.4% (17) |

Respondents were asked to indicate which of the listed objectives they had when attending meetings at the White House. Respondents could select all objectives that applied. This question was presented to all respondents who indicated that their client had in-person meetings at the Obama White House at least "Fewer than 5 times" in an average year.

Table SI.9: White House's Objectives in Meetings with Organized Interests

| Response Option | % of Respondents (N) |
| --- | --- |
| Persuade the group to support a White House policy | 3.0% (8) |
| Seek policy/political information from the organization | 16.5% (44) |
| Coordinate political strategy with the organization | 9.4% (25) |
| Work with the organization to lobby Congress | 40.4% (108) |
| Work with the organization to lobby the public | 59.9% (160) |
| Other | 10.9% (29) |

Respondents were asked to indicate which of the listed objectives they believed the White House had when hosting them at White House meetings. Respondents could select all objectives that applied. This question was presented to all respondents who indicated that their client had in-person meetings at the Obama White House at least "Fewer than 5 times" in an average year.

Table SI.10: Frequency of Invitation Turned Down and Meeting Requests Denied

| | No | Yes | Not sure |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Invitations turned down | 81.5% (123) | 6.0% (9) | 12.6% (19) |
| Requests denied | 90.1% (136) | 0.1% (1) | 9.3% (14) |

Respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they turned down invitations to the White House when offered and how frequently the White House denied them meetings when they requested them. This question was presented to all respondents who indicated that their client "Never" had in-person meetings at the Obama White House at least.

# Empirical Analyses

This section contains summaries of the models used to generate the figures in the main paper, as well as additional models to demonstrate the robustness of the results when using different specifications, more permissive tolerance thresholds for the matching of lobbyists' names, and indicators of access quality rather than treating all instances of access equally. Parameter estimates for key covariates of interest are largely consistent across these alternative models.

# Models Presented in Main Paper

## Table SI.11: Main Paper Models

| | Clinton Full WH | Obama Full WH | Obama EOP | Trump EOP |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Intercept | $-1.53^*$ | $-2.94^*$ | $-4.06^*$ | $-4.09^*$ |
| | $[-2.12;\ -0.99]$ | $[-3.11;\ -2.77]$ | $[-4.22;\ -3.90]$ | $[-4.50;\ -3.67]$ |
| Any Visits_t-1 | $1.30^*$ | $0.81^*$ | | $0.53^*$ |
| | $[1.22;\ 1.38]$ | $[0.79;\ 0.83]$ | | $[0.45;\ 0.62]$ |
| log(Lobbying Expenditures)$_{t-1}$ | $0.06^*$ | $0.09^*$ | $0.10^*$ | $0.10^*$ |
| | $[0.05;\ 0.06]$ | $[0.09;\ 0.10]$ | $[0.09;\ 0.10]$ | $[0.09;\ 0.12]$ |
| Made Natl Contributions$_{t-1\ \text{to}\ t-4}$ | $-1.20^*$ | | | |
| | $[-1.81;\ -0.57]$ | | | |
| Made Natl Contributions$_{t-1\ \text{to}\ t-4}$: log(Contribution Amount$_{t-1\ \text{to}\ t-4}$) | $0.14^*$ | | | |
| | $[0.08;\ 0.19]$ | | | |
| Made Natl Contributions$_{t-1\ \text{to}\ t-8}$ | | $-1.04^*$ | $-0.52^*$ | $-1.49^*$ |
| | | $[-1.36;\ -0.72]$ | $[-0.86;\ -0.18]$ | $[-2.11;\ -0.88]$ |
| Made Natl Contributions$_{t-1\ \text{to}\ t-8}$: log(Contribution Amount$_{t-1\ \text{to}\ t-8}$) | | $0.12^*$ | $0.07^*$ | $0.17^*$ |
| | | $[0.10;\ 0.15]$ | $[0.04;\ 0.10]$ | $[0.12;\ 0.23]$ |
| Aligned with Neither Party | $-0.24^*$ | $-0.22^*$ | $-0.09$ | $0.19$ |
| | $[-0.45;\ -0.04]$ | $[-0.46;\ -0.00]$ | $[-0.31;\ 0.13]$ | $[-0.13;\ 0.51]$ |
| Aligned with Republicans | $-0.23^*$ | $-0.26^*$ | $-0.10$ | $0.12$ |
| | $[-0.39;\ -0.06]$ | $[-0.44;\ -0.09]$ | $[-0.27;\ 0.07]$ | $[-0.13;\ 0.37]$ |
| $\sigma_{organization}$ | 1.03 | 1.47 | 1.36 | 1.48 |
| $\sigma_{industry}$ | 0.21 | 0.28 | 0.27 | 0.36 |
| $\sigma_{timeperiod}$ | 0.55 | 0.19 | 0.12 | 0.38 |
| Num. obs. | 31673 | 306766 | 306766 | 57304 |

This table includes the model summaries for the four models used to generate the predicted probabilities in the main paper. The two left-most models use the full White House visitor logs for Clinton and Obama, while the two right-most models focus on visitor logs regarding the four Executive Office of the President agencies identified in the main paper. The cell entry for each covariate presents the posterior mean and 95% credible interval from the Bayesian multilevel logistic regression model indicated by the column heading. Coefficients denoted with * are those whose 95% credible intervals do not include zero. Models fitted with the R package `brms`, which fits the models using the NUTS (No-U-Turn Sampler) algorithm in Stan. Each model is fitted with 4 chains for 2000 iterations per chain (1000 iterations for warm-up, 1000 iterations for sampling). This table omits the following observation-level control variables: whether an organized interest employs lobbyists of its own and whether an organized interest indicates lobbying on each of 80 issues on its LDA filing in the previous time period.

# Consistency of Results Across Measurement of Access

Table SI.12: Clinton Full White House Model with Different Access Measures

| | $\leq$ 1 Edit | $\leq$ 2 Edits | $\leq$ 3 Edits |
|---|---|---|---|
| Intercept | $-1.27^*$ | $-1.00^*$ | $-1.38^*$ |
| | $[-1.81;\ -0.76]$ | $[-1.48;\ -0.45]$ | $[-2.16;\ -0.63]$ |
| Any Visits_t-1 | $1.25^*$ | $1.78^*$ | $2.35^*$ |
| | $[1.16;\ 1.33]$ | $[1.69;\ 1.87]$ | $[2.22;\ 2.48]$ |
| log(Lobbying Expenditures)$_{t-1}$ | $0.06^*$ | $0.05^*$ | $0.05^*$ |
| | $[0.05;\ 0.07]$ | $[0.04;\ 0.06]$ | $[0.04;\ 0.06]$ |
| Made Natl Contributions$_{t-1\ to\ t-4}$ | $-0.90^*$ | $-0.11$ | $0.60$ |
| | $[-1.53;\ -0.26]$ | $[-0.81;\ 0.60]$ | $[-0.42;\ 1.64]$ |
| Made Natl Contributions$_{t-1\ to\ t-4}$: | $0.11^*$ | $0.03$ | $-0.05$ |
| log(Contribution Amount$_{t-1\ to\ t-4}$) | $[0.05;\ 0.17]$ | $[-0.04;\ 0.10]$ | $[-0.15;\ 0.05]$ |
| Aligned with Neither Party | $-0.21$ | $-0.21$ | $-0.07$ |
| | $[-0.43;\ 0.00]$ | $[-0.42;\ 0.01]$ | $[-0.37;\ 0.23]$ |
| Aligned with Republicans | $-0.23^*$ | $-0.24^*$ | $-0.12$ |
| | $[-0.40;\ -0.07]$ | $[-0.42;\ -0.05]$ | $[-0.35;\ 0.12]$ |
| $\sigma_{organization}$ | $1.08$ | $1.05$ | $1.21$ |
| $\sigma_{industry}$ | $0.22$ | $0.23$ | $0.31$ |
| $\sigma_{timeperiod}$ | $0.48$ | $0.47$ | $0.70$ |
| Num. obs. | $31673$ | $31673$ | $31673$ |

The cell entry for each covariate presents the posterior mean and 95% credible interval from the Bayesian multilevel logistic regression model that uses as the outcome variable a binary indicator of access to the Clinton White House measured with the level of precision indicated by the column heading. These models are the analogues to the model presented in the main paper and summarized Table 1 Models fitted with the R package `brms`, which fits the models using the NUTS (No-U-Turn Sampler) algorithm in Stan. Each model is fitted with 4 chains for 2000 iterations per chain (1000 iterations for warm-up, 1000 iterations for sampling).

Table SI.13: Obama Full White House Model with Different Access Measures

| | ≤ 1 Edit | ≤ 2 Edits | ≤ 3 Edits |
|---|---|---|---|
| Intercept | −2.65* | −2.15* | −1.91* |
| | [−2.80; −2.49] | [−2.31; −1.99] | [−2.10; −1.72] |
| Any Visits_t-1 | 0.84* | 1.15* | 1.54* |
| | [0.81; 0.86] | [1.13; 1.18] | [1.51; 1.58] |
| log(Lobbying Expenditures)$_{t-1}$ | 0.09* | 0.09* | 0.09* |
| | [0.09; 0.10] | [0.09; 0.10] | [0.09; 0.10] |
| Made Natl Contributions$_{t-1 \text{ to } t-8}$ | −1.04* | −1.13* | −0.48 |
| | [−1.35; −0.73] | [−1.50; −0.77] | [−1.02; 0.09] |
| Made Natl Contributions$_{t-1 \text{ to } t-8}$: | 0.13* | 0.14* | 0.07* |
| log(Contribution Amount$_{t-1 \text{ to } t-8}$) | [0.10; 0.16] | [0.10; 0.17] | [0.02; 0.12] |
| Aligned with Neither Party | −0.19 | −0.11 | −0.19 |
| | [−0.41; 0.02] | [−0.32; 0.09] | [−0.44; 0.05] |
| Aligned with Republicans | −0.20* | −0.06 | −0.09 |
| | [−0.36; −0.04] | [−0.22; 0.09] | [−0.29; 0.11] |
| $\sigma_{organization}$ | 1.46 | 1.70 | 2.12 |
| $\sigma_{industry}$ | 0.26 | 0.23 | 0.28 |
| $\sigma_{timeperiod}$ | 0.21 | 0.24 | 0.26 |
| Num. obs. | 306766 | 306766 | 306766 |

The cell entry for each covariate presents the posterior mean and 95% credible interval from the Bayesian multilevel logistic regression model that uses as the outcome variable a binary indicator of access to the Obama White House measured with the level of precision indicated by the column heading. These models are the analogues to the model presented in the main paper and summarized Table 2 Models fitted with the R package `brms`, which fits the models using the NUTS (No-U-Turn Sampler) algorithm in Stan. Each model is fitted with 4 chains for 2000 iterations per chain (1000 iterations for warm-up, 1000 iterations for sampling).

[Insert tables with Obama EOP, and Trump EOP models at varying thresholds here.]

## Alternative Specifications with Count Outcome

Table SI.14: Main Paper Models with Count Outcomes

| | Clinton Full WH | Obama Full WH | Obama EOP | Trump EOP |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Intercept | $-0.77^*$ | $-2.31^*$ | $-3.79^*$ | $-3.82^*$ |
| | $[-1.21; \ -0.36]$ | $[-2.45; \ -2.16]$ | $[-3.94; \ -3.63]$ | $[-4.26; \ -3.38]$ |
| Any Visits_t-1 | $0.01^*$ | $0.07^*$ | | $0.01$ |
| | $[0.01; \ 0.01]$ | $[0.07; \ 0.08]$ | | $[-0.01; \ 0.02]$ |
| log(Lobbying Expenditures)$_{t-1}$ | $0.05^*$ | $0.08^*$ | $0.09^*$ | $0.10^*$ |
| | $[0.05; \ 0.06]$ | $[0.07; \ 0.08]$ | $[0.08; \ 0.09]$ | $[0.08; \ 0.11]$ |
| Made Natl Contributions$_{t-1 \text{ to } t-4}$ | $-1.25^*$ | | | |
| | $[-1.68; \ -0.80]$ | | | |
| Made Natl Contributions$_{t-1 \text{ to } t-4}$: | $0.15^*$ | | | |
| log(Contribution Amount$_{t-1 \text{ to } t-4}$) | $[0.10; \ 0.19]$ | | | |
| Made Natl Contributions$_{t-1 \text{ to } t-8}$ | | $-0.54^*$ | $-0.35^*$ | $-1.41^*$ |
| | | $[-0.74; \ -0.35]$ | $[-0.63; \ -0.08]$ | $[-1.96; \ -0.84]$ |
| Made Natl Contributions$_{t-1 \text{ to } t-8}$: | | $0.07^*$ | $0.05^*$ | $0.16^*$ |
| log(Contribution Amount$_{t-1 \text{ to } t-8}$) | | $[0.05; \ 0.09]$ | $[0.03; \ 0.08]$ | $[0.11; \ 0.21]$ |
| Aligned with Neither Party | $-0.21^*$ | $-0.27^*$ | $-0.13$ | $0.19$ |
| | $[-0.42; \ -0.00]$ | $[-0.47; \ -0.08]$ | $[-0.35; \ 0.11]$ | $[-0.12; \ 0.50]$ |
| Aligned with Republicans | $-0.20^*$ | $-0.30^*$ | $-0.12$ | $0.12$ |
| | $[-0.36; \ -0.03]$ | $[-0.46; \ -0.14]$ | $[-0.28; \ 0.06]$ | $[-0.11; \ 0.36]$ |
| $\sigma_{organization}$ | 1.38 | 1.48 | 1.42 | 1.57 |
| $\sigma_{industry}$ | 0.24 | 0.26 | 0.29 | 0.36 |
| $\sigma_{timeperiod}$ | 0.39 | 0.15 | 0.12 | 0.44 |
| Num. obs. | 31673 | 306766 | 306766 | 57304 |

This table includes the model summaries for the analogs of the four models used to generate the predicted probabilities in the main paper that use the count of White House visits an organized interest had in a given time period as the outcome measure. The two left-most models use the full White House visitor logs for Clinton and Obama, while the two right-most models focus on visitor logs regarding the four Executive Office of the President agencies identified in the main paper. The cell entry for each covariate presents the posterior mean and 95% credible interval from the Bayesian multilevel logistic regression model indicated by the column heading. Coefficients denoted with * are those whose 95% credible intervals do not include zero. Models fitted with the R package brms, which fits the models using the NUTS (No-U-Turn Sampler) algorithm in Stan. Each model is fitted with 4 chains for 2000 iterations per chain (1000 iterations for warm-up, 1000 iterations for sampling). This table omits the following observation-level control variables: whether an organized interest employs lobbyists of its own and whether an organized interest indicates lobbying on each of 80 issues on its LDA filing in the previous time period.

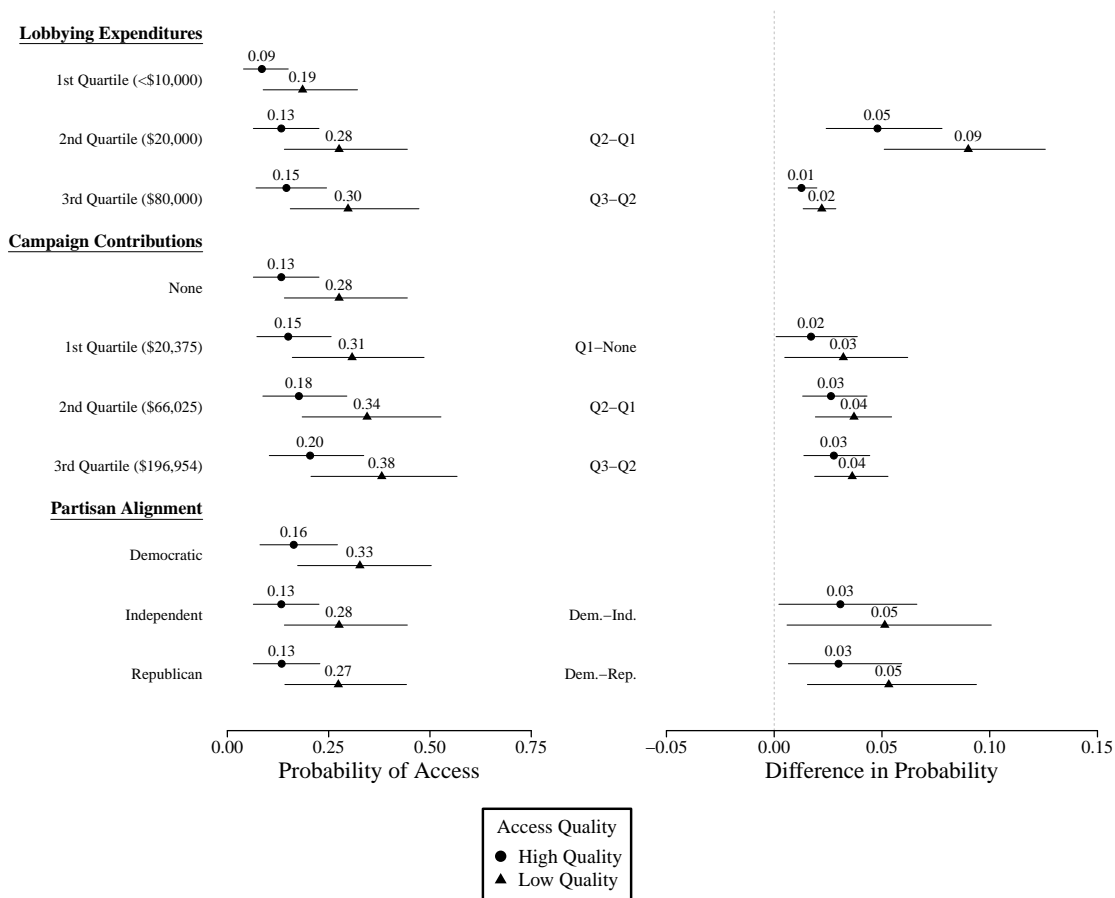## Alternative Specifications with Access Quality Outcome



Figure SI.1: **Effect of Organized Interests' Resources and Partisan Alignment on Probability of White House Access by Quality (Clinton)** In the left pane, points and lines represent the posterior means and 95% credible intervals of the predicted probabilities calculated with parameter estimates from the sampling iterations stored from the bivariate varying intercepts only model using data from the Clinton White House. Dots and triangles signify predicted probabilities of access to principals and staff members with salaries in the top quartile, and to all other White House officials, respectively. For each of the three types of organized interest characteristics specified in bold and underlined, I calculate predicted probabilities for each of the specified variable values for types of access while fixing other covariates values. In the right pane, I plot the differences in the distributions of predicted probabilities and their 95% credible intervals for pairs of predictions in the left pane, as specified by the labels on the left side of the right pane. For example, looking at the predicted probabilities of access across levels of lobbying expenditures, the six points in the left pane indicate the predicted probabilities of both types of access when lobbying expenditures are set to the first, second, and third quartile values, with campaign contributions fixed at None (the median value), partisan alignment fixed as Independent, and other variables fixed at their median values. In the right pane, the four topmost points indicate the differences in the predicted probabilities of access of both types when lobbying expenditures are set to their first and second quartile values, and their second and third quartile values, respectively. Taking the predictions associated with lobbying expenditures together, we observe that organized interests with higher levels of lobbying expenditures have a distinguishably higher probability of both types of White House access. Please note that some differences indicated in the right pane may not equal the differences between the corresponding values in the left pane due to rounding.

[Insert figure with Obama Full WH when available]

## Alternative Specifications with Bonica Ideology Measure

Table SI.15: Main Paper Models with CFscores

| | Clinton Full WH | Obama Full WH | Obama EOP | Trump EOP |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Intercept | −1.57* | −3.57* | −4.97* | −6.41* |
| | [−2.21; −0.91] | [−3.97; −3.18] | [−5.42; −4.54] | [−7.89; −4.98] |
| Any Visits_t-1 | 0.96* | 0.86* | 0.55* | 0.11 |
| | [0.65; 1.27] | [0.78; 0.93] | [0.48; 0.63] | [−0.12; 0.33] |
| log(Lobbying Expenditures)$_{t-1}$ | 0.12* | 0.20* | 0.25* | 0.33* |
| | [0.08; 0.16] | [0.18; 0.23] | [0.21; 0.28] | [0.23; 0.43] |
| Made Natl Contributions$_{t-1\ to\ t-4}$ | −1.19 | | | |
| | [−2.57; 0.08] | | | |
| Made Natl Contributions$_{t-1\ to\ t-4}$: | 0.11 | | | |
| log(Contribution Amount$_{t-1\ to\ t-4}$) | [−0.00; 0.23] | | | |
| Made Natl Contributions$_{t-1\ to\ t-8}$ | | −2.02* | −1.06* | −2.04* |
| | | [−2.60; −1.44] | [−1.65; −0.47] | [−3.62; −0.47] |
| Made Natl Contributions$_{t-1\ to\ t-8}$: | | 0.18* | 0.08* | 0.21* |
| log(Contribution Amount$_{t-1\ to\ t-8}$) | | [0.13; 0.23] | [0.03; 0.13] | [0.10; 0.32] |
| CFscore | −0.66* | −0.53* | −0.24* | 0.01 |
| | [−1.21; −0.14] | [−0.79; −0.27] | [−0.48; −0.01] | [−0.40; 0.40] |
| $\sigma_{organization}$ | 1.66 | 1.41 | 1.12 | 1.44 |
| $\sigma_{industry}$ | 0.71 | 0.49 | 0.39 | 0.55 |
| $\sigma_{timeperiod}$ | 0.37 | 0.22 | 0.18 | 0.50 |
| Num. obs. | 3697 | 27636 | 27636 | 5470 |

This table includes the model summaries for the analogs of the four models used to generate the predicted probabilities in the main paper that use Bonica's CFscores as measures of organized interest' ideology rather than the trichotomous indicator of industry partisanship. The two left-most models use the full White House visitor logs for Clinton and Obama, while the two right-most models focus on visitor logs regarding the four Executive Office of the President agencies identified in the main paper. The cell entry for each covariate presents the posterior mean and 95% credible interval from the Bayesian multilevel logistic regression model indicated by the column heading. Coefficients denoted with * are those whose 95% credible intervals do not include zero. Models fitted with the R package `brms`, which fits the models using the NUTS (No-U-Turn Sampler) algorithm in Stan. Each model is fitted with 4 chains for 2000 iterations per chain (1000 iterations for warm-up, 1000 iterations for sampling). This table omits the following observation-level control variables: whether an organized interest employs lobbyists of its own and whether an organized interest indicates lobbying on each of 80 issues on its LDA filing in the previous time period.
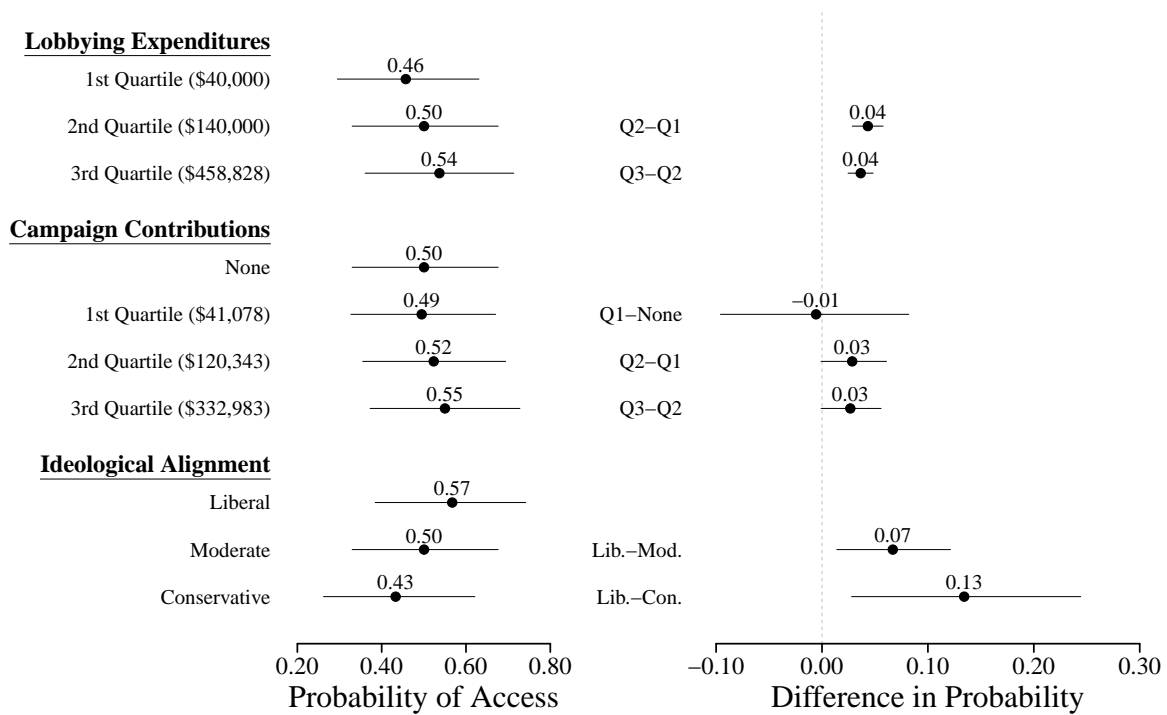
**Figure SI.2: Effect of Organized Interests' Resources and Ideological Alignment on Probability of White House Access (Clinton)** In the left pane, points and lines represent the posterior means and 95% credible intervals of the predicted probabilities calculated with parameter estimates from the sampling iterations stored from the model using data from the Clinton White House. For each of the three types of organized interest characteristics specified in bold and underlined, I calculate predicted probabilities for each of the specified variable values while fixing other covariates values. In the right pane, I plot the differences in the distributions of predicted probabilities and their 95% credible intervals for pairs of predictions in the left pane, as specified by the labels on the left side of the right pane. For example, looking at the predicted probabilities of access across levels of lobbying expenditures, the three points in the left pane indicate the predicted probabilities of access when lobbying expenditures are set to the first, second, and third quartile values, with campaign contributions fixed at None (the median value), ideological alignment fixed at median CFscore for observations in the model (i.e., Moderate), and other variables fixed at their median values. "Liberal" and "Conservative" ideology scores are set at the first and ninth deciles of the CFscores of observations in the model, respectively. In the right pane, the two topmost points indicate the differences in the predicted probabilities of access when lobbying expenditures are set to their first and second quartile values, and their second and third quartile values, respectively. Taking the predictions associated with lobbying expenditures together, we observe that organized interests with higher levels of lobbying expenditures have a distinguishably higher probability of White House access. Please note that some differences indicated in the right pane may not equal the differences between the corresponding values in the left pane due to rounding.
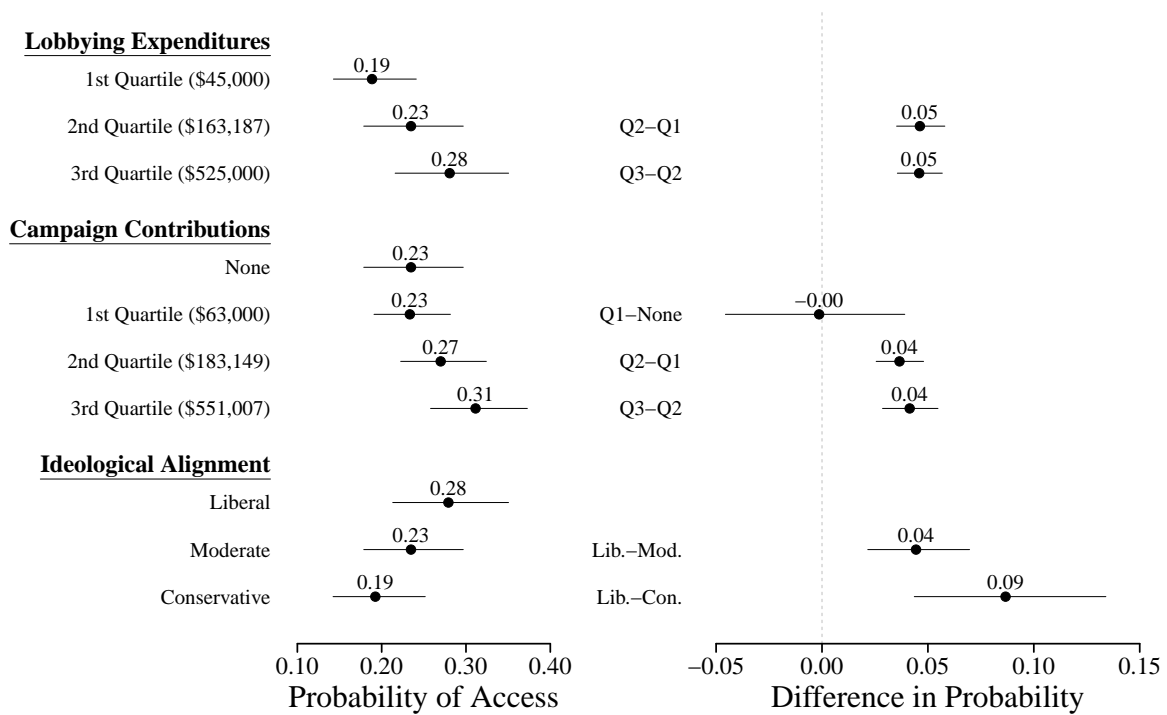
Figure SI.3: **Effect of Organized Interests' Resources and Ideological Alignment on Probability of White House Access (Obama)** In the left pane, points and lines represent the posterior means and 95% credible intervals of the predicted probabilities calculated with parameter estimates from the sampling iterations stored from the model using data from the Obama White House. For each of the three types of organized interest characteristics specified in bold and underlined, I calculate predicted probabilities for each of the specified variable values while fixing other covariates values. In the right pane, I plot the differences in the distributions of predicted probabilities and their 95% credible intervals for pairs of predictions in the left pane, as specified by the labels on the left side of the right pane. For example, looking at the predicted probabilities of access across levels of lobbying expenditures, the three points in the left pane indicate the predicted probabilities of access when lobbying expenditures are set to the first, second, and third quartile values, with campaign contributions fixed at None (the median value), ideological alignment fixed at median CFscore for observations in the model (i.e., Moderate), and other variables fixed at their median values. "Liberal" and "Conservative" ideology scores are set at the first and ninth deciles of the CFscores of observations in the model, respectively. In the right pane, the two topmost points indicate the differences in the predicted probabilities of access when lobbying expenditures are set to their first and second quartile values, and their second and third quartile values, respectively. Taking the predictions associated with lobbying expenditures together, we observe that organized interests with higher levels of lobbying expenditures have a distinguishably higher probability of White House access. Please note that some differences indicated in the right pane may not equal the differences between the corresponding values in the left pane due to rounding.
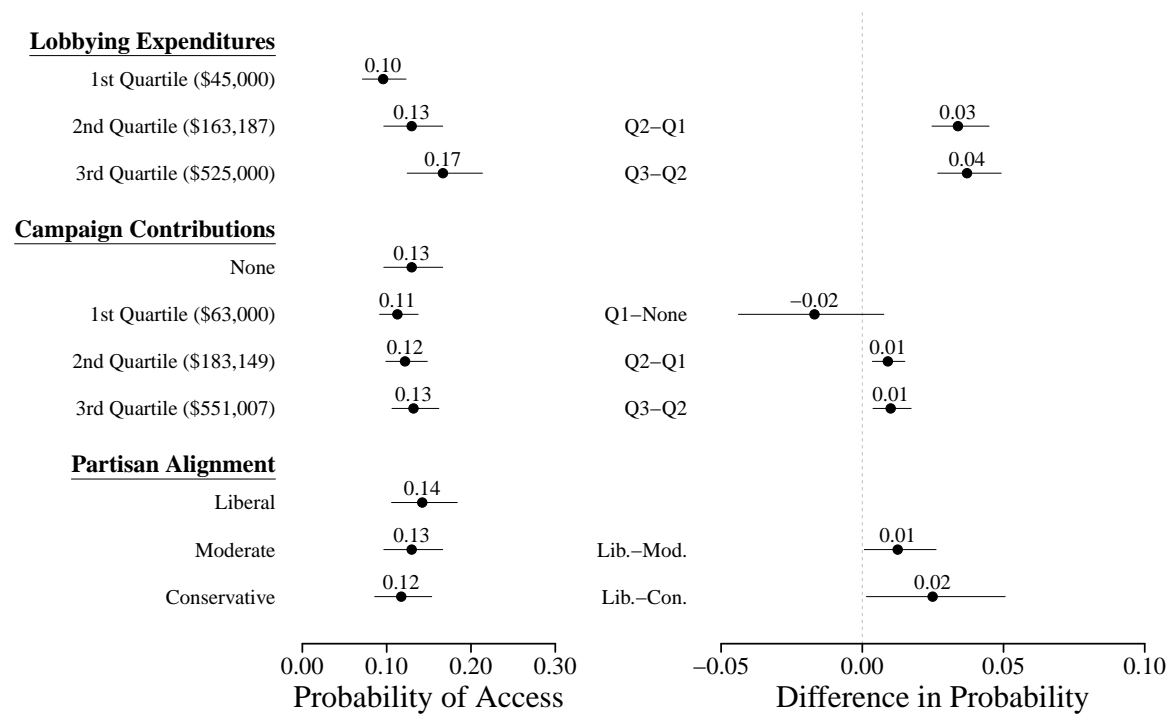
Figure SI.4: **Effect of Organized Interests' Resources and Ideological Alignment on Probability of Access to Four Executive Office of the President Agencies (Obama)** In the left pane, points and lines represent the posterior means and 95% credible intervals of the predicted probabilities calculated with parameter estimates from the sampling iterations stored from the model using data from the Obama White House for the four Executive Office of the President agencies listed in the text. For each of the three types of organized interest characteristics specified in bold and underlined, I calculate predicted probabilities for each of the specified variable values while fixing other covariates values. In the right pane, I plot the differences in the distributions of predicted probabilities and their 95% credible intervals for pairs of predictions in the left pane, as specified by the labels on the left side of the right pane. For example, looking at the predicted probabilities of access across levels of lobbying expenditures, the three points in the left pane indicate the predicted probabilities of access when lobbying expenditures are set to the first, second, and third quartile values, with campaign contributions fixed at None (the median value), ideological alignment fixed at median CFscore for observations in the model (i.e., Moderate), and other variables fixed at their median values. "Liberal" and "Conservative" ideology scores are set at the first and ninth deciles of the CFscores of observations in the model, respectively. In the right pane, the two topmost points indicate the differences in the predicted probabilities of access when lobbying expenditures are set to their first and second quartile values, and their second and third quartile values, respectively. Taking the predictions associated with lobbying expenditures together, we observe that organized interests with higher levels of lobbying expenditures have a distinguishably higher probability of White House access. Please note that some differences indicated in the right pane may not equal the differences between the corresponding values in the left pane due to rounding.

**Lobbying Expenditures**

1st Quartile ($60,000) — 0.10

2nd Quartile ($200,000) — 0.11 | Q2–Q1 — 0.01

3rd Quartile ($562,459) — 0.12 | Q3–Q2 — 0.01

**Campaign Contributions**

None — 0.11

1st Quartile ($85,375) — 0.17 | Q1–None — 0.06

2nd Quartile ($243,800) — 0.20 | Q2–Q1 — 0.03

3rd Quartile ($724,716) — 0.23 | Q3–Q2 — 0.03

**Partisan Alignment**

Liberal — 0.10

Moderate — 0.11 | Con.–Mod. — −0.01

Conservative — 0.11 | Con.–Lib. — 0.01

Probability of Access: 0.00 0.10 0.20 0.30 0.40

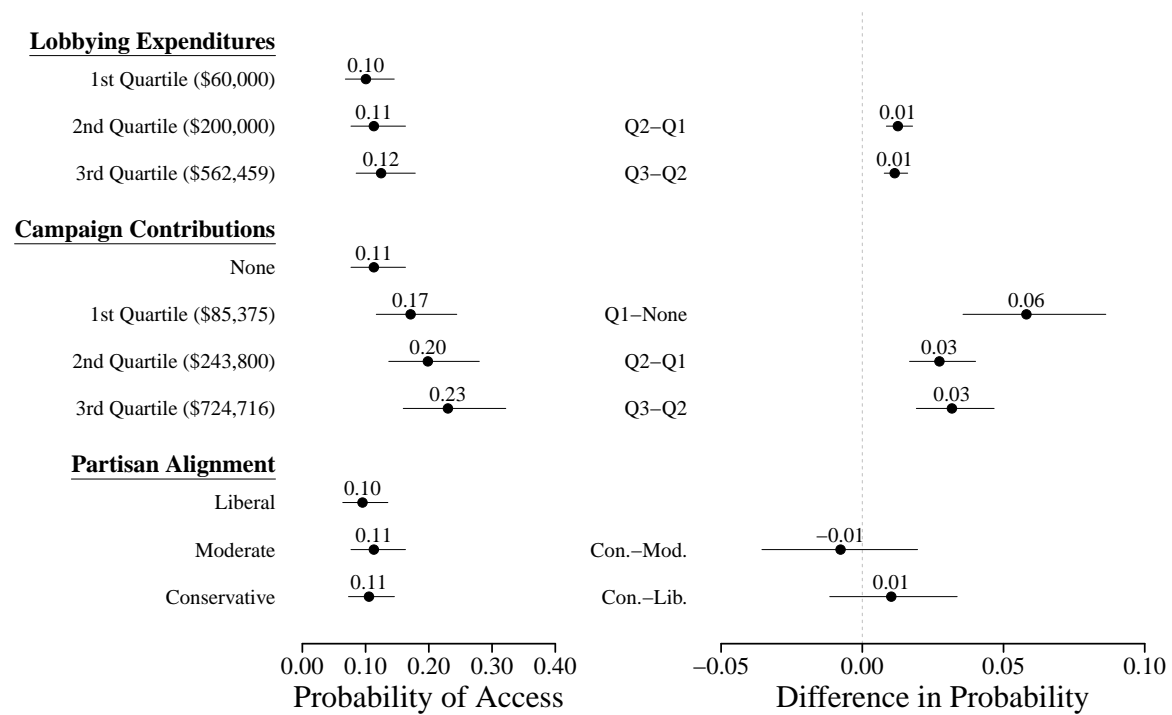Difference in Probability: −0.05 0.00 0.05 0.10

Figure SI.5: **Effect of Organized Interests' Resources and Ideological Alignment on Probability of Access to Four Executive Office of the President Agencies (Trump)** In the left pane, points and lines represent the posterior means and 95% credible intervals of the predicted probabilities calculated with parameter estimates from the sampling iterations stored from the model using data from the Trump White House for the four Executive Office of the President agencies listed in the text. For each of the three types of organized interest characteristics specified in bold and underlined, I calculate predicted probabilities for each of the specified variable values while fixing other covariates values. In the right pane, I plot the differences in the distributions of predicted probabilities and their 95% credible intervals for pairs of predictions in the left pane, as specified by the labels on the left side of the right pane. For example, looking at the predicted probabilities of access across levels of lobbying expenditures, the three points in the left pane indicate the predicted probabilities of access when lobbying expenditures are set to the first, second, and third quartile values, with campaign contributions fixed at None (the median value), ideological alignment fixed at median CFscore for observations in the model (i.e., Moderate), and other variables fixed at their median values. "Liberal" and "Conservative" ideology scores are set at the first and ninth deciles of the CFscores of observations in the model, respectively. In the right pane, the two topmost points indicate the differences in the predicted probabilities of access when lobbying expenditures are set to their first and second quartile values, and their second and third quartile values, respectively. Taking the predictions associated with lobbying expenditures together, we observe that organized interests with higher levels of lobbying expenditures have a distinguishably higher probability of White House access. Please note that some differences indicated in the right pane may not equal the differences between the corresponding values in the left pane due to rounding.

# References

Miller, David R. n.d. "On Whose Door to Knock? Organized Interests' Strategic Pursuit of Access to Members of Congress.".