UC San Diego
UC San Diego Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

Achieving Representation Through Racial Minority Interest Groups (RMIG) in the United States: Lobbying Activity in Legislative Politics

Permalink

Author

Do, Nhat-Dang

Publication Date

2022

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SAN DIEGO

Achieving Representation Through Racial Minority Interest Groups (RMIG) in the United States: Lobbying Activity in Legislative Politics

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in

Political Science

by

Nhat-Dang Do

Committee in charge:

　　　Professor Marisa Abrajano, Co-Chair
　　　Professor Thaddeus Kousser, Co-Chair
　　　Professor Dan Butler
　　　Professor Yến Lê Espiritu
　　　Professor LaGina Gause

2022

The dissertation of Nhat-Dang Do is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically.

University of California San Diego

2022

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother and father, Huong Huynh and David Do, along with my sisters (Chi, Katelyn, Nghi and Christine) whose support, sacrifices, and love made this all possible.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of my dissertation is due to the generous support and guidance from many people. As the first person in his family to pursue a Ph.D., I needed all the help I could get. I would not have been able to succeed without my amazing community of mentors and friends!

I am incredibly grateful to my dissertation committee for their dedication to my success as a scholar and person. Marisa Abrajano and Thad Kousser were magnificent Co-Chairs of my committee. Their advice and guidance has been tremendously influential and helpful. Marisa's guidance and emotional support have helped me through many tough decisions. She consistently had been a rock to lean on. Her views and insights on racial politics have consistently been my work's bedrock. I cannot thank her enough. Thad's expertise and mentorship brought out the best in me when it comes to thinking about the institutional role of politics. His connections in state politics opened doors for opportunities to conduct fieldwork. LaGina Gause's advice and push for me to focus on developing my theory have been invaluable. Her advice on success as an academic continues to guide me. Dan Butler's unique ability to provide clarity and insight into my arguments has made my work stronger. Professor Yến Lê Espiritu's consistent reminder to place racial theory at the center of my work and to focus on the strategic role of race proved to be invaluable. My super-team of a committee has made all the difference!

The folks in the newly formed Race and Ethnic Politics Lab have been the cornerstone of my academic work and are a tremendous source of support. They bring excellent scholarly perspectives and joy to my academic career! Alison Boehmer, Bianca Freeman, Laura Uribe, Devin Wright, Agustin Markarian, Marianna Garcia, Alex Zhao, and Gabe De Roche have been wonderful colleagues and friends. Thank you for listening to my crazy ideas, showing up to my impromptu talks, and providing brilliant advice and insight. I am forever grateful to you all.

My friends and colleagues in the department have been key in making this dissertation possible. Thomas Flaherty and Mike Duda, who have been with me since the first day of graduate school, are at the forefront of this group. Their humor and friendship have helped me through the stresses of classes, qualifying exams and the prospectus defense. I thank them for their time

Above all, my parents and sisters (to whom I dedicate my work) have been the greatest of supporters. My parents took the risk of moving our family from Vietnam to the United States in search of brighter futures for their children. I have watched as they have struggled to provide and give us everything we need to succeed. Their story is not that different from the many immigrants who come to this country. However, they are the main inspiration for my research. I wanted to find ways to support folks like my parents and ease their burden. These experiences have shaped my research agenda as I try to understand how folks of color and those on the margins of society, like my family, could influence policy. My dissertation research is a representative culmination of these experiences as it melds my passion for diversity, equity, and inclusion by working to understand how racial minorities get represented in American politics. Finally, my sisters have always rooted for me to succeed. In particular, I owe so much gratitude to my older sister Katelyn Do, who has "held down the fort" and has been the rock for the family. She unselfishly paused her graduate aspirations so that her younger brother could have the space and breathing room to pursue his PhD. This dissertation and degree is for both of us!

2015	Bachelor of Arts in Political Science - Public Policy and History of the Near East, *magna cum laude* and Highest Departmental Honors, University of California San Diego
2018	Master of Arts in Political Science, University of California San Diego
2018—2020	Instructor, Department of Political Science, University of California San Diego
2021	Fellow, Edward Alexander Bouchet Graduate Honor Society
2021	Fellow, UC President's Dissertation Fellowship
2022	Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science, University of California San Diego
2022—	Assistant Professor of Political Science and Public Policy/Law, Trinity College

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Achieving Representation Through Racial Minority Interest Groups (RMIG) in the United States: Lobbying Activity in Legislative Politics

by

Nhat-Dang Do

Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

University of California San Diego, 2022

Professor Marisa Abrajano, Co-Chair
Professor Thaddeus Kousser, Co-Chair

Racial minority interest groups, or what I refer to as *RMIGs*, are at the heart of Black, Latinx, and Asian political and social movements as channels to both secure resources and foster mobilization. These groups, which include the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), are organizations that lobby to influence policy for and on behalf of racial minorities. They act as mechanisms to unify individuals, provide insider access, and voice the grievances of historically marginalized groups. However, many scholars contend that the American lobbying system is biased towards and dominated by wealthy, elite interests. Relative to these traditional interest groups, RMIGs represent members with fewer financial resources to

contribute to organizational lobbying efforts and are on the periphery of political power. From this perspective, RMIGs should have little or no influence on policymaking. Is this empirically the case? Are RMIGs excellent representatives of the folks they purport to represent?

I theorize that we cannot clearly understand RMIGs through the predominant explanations grounded in traditional interest group behavior. Instead, distinguishing advocacy groups along racial lines is essential. Doing so offers a sharper understanding of lobbying and representation because of the powerful impact of race and its longstanding salience in American politics. My conceptualization of RMIGs places race at the center of group goals, resources, and strategic actions, leading to behaviors and reactions distinctive from traditional lobbying. Using these ideas as a starting point and an original data set of over 250,000 California committee bill analyses from 1997 to 2018, I argue that the behavior of RMIGs is distinct and separate from other organized interests. I show that RMIGs are reliable representatives and successful modes for effectively representing marginalized racial minorities.

In Chapter 4, I find that RMIGs lobby on issues that affect their disadvantaged constituencies at higher rates when compared with the advantaged-subgroups in their racial group. Chapter 5 shows that RMIGs are just as active as a large segment of interest group organizations and that they participate in large and diverse coalitions more often than non-RMIGs. This chapter also shows that RMIGs tend to pass the bills they support at the same rates as their counterparts and kill bills at higher rates than non-RMIGs.These findings suggest a strategy of informational lobbying that centers on building large and diverse coalitions, which leverages the electoral fears of legislators to vote in line with RMIG preferences.

The last empirical chapter (Chapter 6) examines how influential RMIGs are in the legislative arena by showing that bills with large and diverse coalitions are more likely to pass out of the legislature. This finding explains how RMIGs can succeed in a system dominated by wealthy interests. Finally, I find that RMIG endorsements of bills and candidates influence the political choices of respondents. Together, I find that Lobbying through RMIGs is a pragmatic route for racial minorities to express political influence.

Chapter 1

Introduction

From 2004 to 2015, Asian Health Services and a coalition of organizations periodically met at California's Capitol Building in Sacramento to advocate for a relatively obscure but essential issue for a marginalized segment of the population. Rising concerns for the deteriorating health of nail salon workers led many health and racial minority organizations to advocate for policies that limited the use of beauty products containing very toxic ingredients. The push for this policy began with a worker at Asian Health Services, a community health center that primarily serves Asian immigrants in the Oakland area. In 2004, an Asian Health Services worker named Julia Liou noticed that many Asian immigrant women employed at nail salons had many health issues. This realization was the initial impetus for legislative action to protect the health of nail salon workers. The first version of the policy sought to ban two toxic chemicals from personal care products, primarily those related to nail care, that were determined to cause serious illness to workers. This policy is significant to Asian Americans, who make up a large part of the nail salon industry. According to a UCLA study, 76% of nail salon workers are Asian. More than half of this industry's overall workforce is Vietnamese, and almost 80% are foreign-born (UCLA Labor Center and California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative 2008).

Introduced in 2004, AB 2012 never made it out of the Assembly Health Committee after being opposed by dozens of major manufacturers like Unilever and Procter Gamble. According to Liou, who led the lobbying charge, the bill died not because of the policy's quality or goals but

from intense lobbying pressures from powerful and well-funded interest groups. Liou notes that pro-chemical lobbyists passed out free make-up kits to legislative staffers. Intense lobbying from these firms caused nine committee members to abstain during the vote. The committee votes split along party lines, where Republican members voted "No" and most Democrats voted "Yes" to pass the bill to the floor. Surprisingly, nine Democrats abstained. Of those who abstained, five received campaign contributions from the organizations that sent in letters of opposition to the bill. All Republican members who voted "No" received donations from at least one of the organizations that opposed the bill. The case of AB 2012 indicates how big-money organizations can exert more substantial pressure on legislators than a loose collection of public advocacy and racial minority organizations, like the Breast Cancer Fund and the Asian Communities for Reproductive Health. It illustrates the disadvantages that Schattschneider (1960) and Olson (1965) observed in the lobbying efforts of broad public and minority organizations. The pluralist pressure system where many different constituencies and groups can express their interests to lawmakers are dominated by wealthy and powerful interest groups. AB 2012's failure is an illustrative example of the "strong upper-class accent" of the lobbying pressure system.

With the failure of AB 2012, Asian Health Services and their partners reassessed their lobbying plans. Liou and her collaborator, Anuja Mendiratta, formed the California Healthy Salon Collaborative (CHSC) in 2005 to focus primarily on advocating for the health and safety of women in the nail industry. In addition, they began to formulate other policy changes to improve the working conditions of nail salon workers. In a study, Quach et al. (2008) found that a sizeable proportion of nail salon workers in Alameda, CA, reported health problems after working in the industry, particularly associated with exposure to chemicals in nail products. Using this research, CHSC and Asian Health Services started to work on what eventually became AB 2125, the Healthy Nail Salon Recognition Program. The bill's aim was the same as before: to limit the exposure to toxic chemicals from beauty products. However, rather than attempting to ban chemicals, the bill incentivized nail-salon owners to stop using these chemicals. AB 2125 (2015) was an attempt to bring an already successful local program, started in San Francisco, to the state

level. The language and intent of the bill were presented to Assemblymember David Chiu (D) of eastern San Francisco, who sponsored it and worked to drive support for its passage.

Then in 2015, several organizations again descended on Sacramento with a singular goal: to pass AB 2125. Representatives from various advocacy groups met with legislators and staff on the necessity of providing a program to incentivize salons to discontinue the use of beauty supplies with toxic ingredients. The bill would establish a certifying process for nail salons that stop using certain chemicals deemed toxic and adopt "healthier" practices. Such salons could proudly display a "Healthy Salon" sticker, like a USDA-approved organic sticker on agricultural products. Spearheaded by the California Healthy Salon Collaborative and Asian Health Services, these organizations sent in letters of support, showed up to committee hearings, and provided statements to the news media.

Several state and local organizations rallied to support AB 2125. According to the legislative bill analyses produced by the legislative committees, many organizations from diverse interests and backgrounds chose to support the bill. A chunk of the organizations represented specific ethnic Asian groups, like Vietnamese Americans or Cambodian Americans. Most groups were pan-Asian organizations like Asian-Americans Advancing Justice and Asian Women Advocates. At the same time, organizations that signaled their support for this bill were not explicitly Asian interest groups. Labor, environmental, health, Latinx, and Black advocacy organizations all sent in letters of support and engaged in lobbying efforts on behalf of the bill. Sixty-three different organizations signaled their support to the legislature, compared to about eighty-three in support of AB 2012. Though their coalition was smaller than before, it was more diverse. Only four types of organizations supported AB 2012 compared to ten types of organizations that helped AB 2125. Liou placed a strong emphasis on their strategy of gathering a large number of diverse organizations into a lobbying coalition (Mease 2018).

The legislative effort to make nail salons safer for workers exemplifies how weak and marginalized interests can gain political influence in the United States. Such revelation is surprising since most of the political science literature suggests that vulnerable groups are

generally unable to influence policy effectively. Racial minorities face many obstacles to political participation. They often lack the time, civic abilities, information, and money that allows them to be part of civic life (Verba et al. 1993). Lack of political participation has significant consequences for these groups' representation in policymaking. Legislators have few incentives to respond to these groups who are not likely to support or punish them during elections (Strolovitch and Forrest 2010; Gause 2022). This lack of electoral incentive create an environment where most policies passed by legislators tend to reflect the interests of the wealthy and politically connected (Bartels 2016; Gilens and Page 2014).

The fact that policies supported by racial minorities do pass and policies they oppose do die, sometimes in the face of tremendous opposition, points to how legislators respond to the interests of politically disadvantaged groups. How do such victories occur? I argue that groups specializing in the advocacy of racial minorities, or to whom I refer as *racial minority interest groups* (RMIGs), work as an intervening force to overcome the structural barriers that racial minorities face in the policy process. These advocates work to enhance the representation of racial minorities.

My dissertation engages the topics of representation, racial politics, lobbying, and political influence by analyzing the role of RMIGs in representation. Building on a rich body of literature on interest group lobbying, racial minority politics, and social movements, I develop and demonstrate empirical support for a theory that explains how RMIGs are a different class of interest groups. The theory also explains how they behave in very distinct ways to gain influence on behalf of their respective racial groups. In the following chapters, I lay out a framework for the study of RMIGs and evaluate their ability to act as representatives for racial minorities. My theory's central premise is that RMIGs' transition from social movement organizations to formal participants in institutional lobbying allowed them to practice their unique strengths to build large and diverse coalitions more easily. Adopting this strategy provides them an advantage in informational lobbying or gaining influence through providing salient information that helps overcome their resource deficiencies and win policy battles.

1.1 The Role of Racial Minority Interest Groups (RMIG) in Representation

The success of AB 2125 is an excellent example of how racial minority interest groups (RMIGs) work to improve the lives of their constituents. However, these groups often must face powerful, well-resourced interests like the chemical manufacturers who opposed Asian Health Services' and CHSC's first attempt at regulating toxic chemicals in nail salons.

RMIGs have been historically significant for excluded racial and ethnic minorities in the United States. Organizations like the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) have worked tirelessly to advocate for the rights and interests of racial minority groups. These groups act as an important channel for the creation, expression, and representation of the interests of racialized groups in American politics. They work to bring attention to the social, political, and economic marginalization of racial minorities (Kim 2003; Strolovitch 2007; Hero and Preuhs 2013). In doing so, these advocacy groups enhance traditional representation by focusing on and magnifying the voices of racial minority groups.

Since the 1890s, racial minority interest groups like the National Association of Colored Women (NACW) have engaged in racial justice advocacy. Over time, these organizations grew in number but remained relatively weak compared to other interest groups. Pluralist theorists like David Truman (1951) and Robert Dahl (1967) argued that many different types of organizations would form to represent diverse sets of constituencies in the policy-making process, especially when it has direct consequences for their prosperity and comfort. However, the ability of racial minority interest groups to thrive prior to the 1960s were limited by a prolonged process of economic exclusion, social banishment, and systematic violence (Strolovitch and Forrest 2010). As a result, the interest group sphere in American Politics seems to reproduce unequal representation rather than serve as a mechanism for all types of groups to engage in influencing their representatives. As E.E. Schattshneider (1960) succinctly states, "The flaw in the pluralist

heaven is that the heavenly chorus sings with a strong upper-class accent." He argues that almost 90 percent of citizens had no access to this pressure system and that interest group lobbying raised barriers to political access instead of lowering it. It is also important to note that the class biases that Schattschneider identified and demonstrated are also *racial* in nature. The business and professional organizations that dominated the pressure system represented white, wealthy men—corporate executives and business owners (Forrest and Strolovitch 2017).

By the 1960s, these entrenched biases towards upper-class, privileged white males were challenged by the surprising rise of advocacy organizations in the United States. The number of formal organizations representing historically marginalized groups exploded due to the foment of the civil rights movement, the rise of racial consciousness, and other social justice movements that arose from the 1950s through the 1980s. There are currently around 200 organizations devoted to advocating for racial minority groups in national politics (Strolovitch 2007). The number of state-based organizations is unknown but may reflect national numbers. Regardless of this rise, racial minority interest groups (RMIGs) remain a small portion of the broader interest group universe, making up about 1% of national organizations involved in lobbying (Strolovitch 2007). They face more than 17,000 national organizations that represent powerful and wealthy constituencies.

Like other interest groups, RMIGs act as mechanisms to unify individuals to a common cause and provide an opportunity to voice concerns and grievances (Scholzman, Verba, and Brady 2012). In addition, they attempt to provide insider access to groups that have historically been on the margins of power and politics by offering them an institutionalized source of representation in addition to electoral mobilization. Still, little work exists to understand how RMIGs function and strategies to achieve their policy goals successfully.

From the perspective of the interest group lobbying literature, I argue that applying race to the study of lobbying provides unique and understudied insights into how "new interests"—those that have come to new prominence in the last forty years—are integrated into the American political system. Studying RMIGs' roles in representation and lobbying fills in the gap within

the literature that fails to account for the rise of racial and ethnic groups and how these uniquely situated groups can assert influence in a competitive and crowded political arena (Walton, Miller and McCormick II 1995). At the same time, little work has examined the institutional perspective within the existing research on race and politics in the United States. The general dominance of mass behavior research in the race and politics literature has often crowded out other dimensions and areas of politics, like that of interest groups in the state legislative arena or the courts (Hero, Preuhs and Meeks 2019). My theory aims to provide a starting point for evaluating how lobbying operates for racial groups in the U.S. and understanding interest groups' role in their representation in American democracy.

1.2   What We Know About Racial Minority Interest Groups (RMIGs) and Lobbying

Numerous studies show that the U.S. racial hierarchy and group positioning shape political behavior and outcomes (Dawson 1994; Hutchings and Valentino 2004; Kim 2003). Similarly, evidence suggest structural disadvantages based on racial identity in American politics (Gilens 1996; Masuoka and Junn 2013). Strolovitch (2007) and Drutman (2015) show that RMIGs are vastly under-resourced compared to corporate, business, and professional organizations. They also have less presence in centers of power. RMIGs have less than one to two percent of the overall number of lobbyists in Washington D.C., while more than half of lobbyists represent business and professional groups (Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012). Disparities in resources and presence among RMIGs, combined with lower electoral participation rates among their constituents, intuitively translate into disparities in policy influence. There is a clear consensus in the current literature that RMIGs are at a disadvantage in the lobbying universe. Can RMIGs solve the exceptionally high hurdles to collective action related to lobbying? How do under-resourced racial minority interest groups compete against influential, wealthy organizations? The specific study of racial groups in the lobbying universe is still rare and under-researched though there is a

solid push to study the institutional perspective of racial politics.

A critical strain of the literature also indicates that organizations advocating for marginalized communities suffer from a bias towards elite interests (Kollman 1998; Berry 1999; Skocpol 2003; Strolovitch 2007). Organizational concerns, such as maintaining membership and funding, push advocacy organizations to shift their priorities to those of the elite segments of their groups. As RMIGs transition into formal organizations, are they susceptible to biases towards elite interests that dilute their ability to represent the interests of their purported constituents wholly? Do they do an excellent job of representing the interests of the marginalized folks in their respective racial groups? Furthermore, do they play an influential role in politics? This dissertation attempts to address multiple segments of the literature regarding political participation, the nature of democratic representation, and the transformation of social movement organizations into institutionalized lobbying organizations. My dissertation is the first to clearly articulate RMIGs' differences compared to other traditional interest groups, like businesses or professional groups, and provide a detailed analysis of their lobbying behavior.

Interest Group Coalitions

Scholars of interest group lobbying have provided valuable insights into the use of collaborative strategies in lobbying, particularly the formation of policy coalitions (Baumgartner et al. 2009; Loomis 1983; Salisbury 1990; Hojnacki 1997; Mahoney 2007). On the other hand, investigations into whether these coalitions effectively influence policy are still limited. Studies have focused on how the characteristics and resources of coalitional partnerships matter for influence. For example, Baumgartner et al. (2009) showed how a coalition with more resources than an opposing coalition is more likely to achieve policy success. Reaching a coherent consensus on issues and details between coalition partners also plays a role in policy success (Nelson and Yackee 2012). More importantly, Phinney (2018:3) notes that: "because the *diversity* of a coalition rather than the overall level of resources acts as a coalition's critical mechanism of influence, the theory explains how groups that advocate on behalf of low-income

populations exert pressure in policymaking despite their limited resources." There are other essential strategies for resource-poor groups to adopt to influence legislation. The creation of diverse coalitions may be a viable option.

Most work within the interest group lobbying literature focus on the individuality of interest groups rather than on coalitions. Many studies hone in on interest groups as independent actors in the legislative process. Numerous studies show how individual groups work independently to lobby for their preferred policy goals. In contrast, others focus on how independent groups' campaign contributions or specific lobbying tactics affect votes (Smith 1995). This approach to interest groups belies the general conception of interest group lobbying as autonomous and independent. Interest groups are vying for attention from policymakers; hence there is a need to carve out unique identities and specified expertise. They would prefer to enhance their autonomy and distinct brand. Still, as the evidence shows, coalitional lobbying is becoming more and more prevalent (Hojnacki 1997; Whitford 2003). Going it alone has become much harder, even for wealthy interest groups. The question of how groups form coalitions and whether some can do it better than others also becomes important since this can differentiate between success and failure.

I build on these existing works to argue that RMIGs' primary mode of lobbying is through informational lobbying and that they, as less well-financed groups, depend on the strategy of coalition building. Like Phinney (2018), I focus on strategy rather than financial resources to help explain how RMIGs function and why they can be successful in lobbying given severe barriers. My work focuses on the ubiquity of race and its effects in shaping the development and strengths of RMIGs.

1.3   Main Argument

I contend that RMIGs occupy a separate category from other lobbying organizations. I define RMIGs as organizations that take part in political activity to influence legislative behavior

for the benefit or on behalf of a racial group. In carving out and creating a separate space for groups who explicitly and narrowly focus on racial minority advocacy, I recognize that the experiences of RMIGs are wholly unique and that their path through social movements created a consciousness rooted in social struggles which emphasized solidarity and commonality (Hero 1992; Lê Espiritu 1992; Dawson 1994; Smith 1996). Separating these advocacy groups by race is essential and offers a sharper understanding of lobbying because of the deterministic nature of race and its saliency in American politics. One's racial identity in the United States, as many scholars highlight, continues to shape political behavior and outcomes (Omi and Winant 1994; Kim 2003; Tarman and Sears 2005; Lee 2008; García-Bedolla and Michelson 2012; Masuoka and Junn 2013; Lê Espiritu 1992).

As such, my conceptualization of RMIGs places race at the center of group goals, resources, and strategic actions, leading to behaviors and reactions distinctive from traditional lobbying or advocacy organizations. I argue that due to these differences, RMIGs employ unique strategies of creating large and diverse coalitions to overcome lobbying barriers and successfully influence legislators. Unlike other organizations, RMIGs are incentivized to build these grand coalitions rather than adopt a strategy of "going-it-alone". Since legitimacy, or the belief that these organizations are the rightful representatives of their respective constituents, is vital to sending credible signals to legislators and potential coalitional allies, RMIGs are motivated to be sensitive to all segments of their constituencies. Unlike other organizations that are found to suffer from biases towards the elite or wealthy parts of their constituency, RMIGs are generally reliable representatives of the disadvantaged segments of their group (Strolovitch 2007). The imperative to be recognized as the legitimate voices of their racial groups makes RMIG much more sensitive to the concerns of the most vulnerable in their racial groups. I find that all three major types of RMIGs spend most of their lobbying efforts on the issues that are important to their disadvantaged members, like women of color or those who are poor.

I show that contrary to the classic perception that vulnerable or disadvantaged groups are almost always shut out of the pressure system in American politics, the nature of racial minority

10

representation in legislative lobbying is more optimistic than one might previously expect. They are also very reliable representatives of their members and suffer little to no bias towards the elite parts of their group. As a real-world policy implication, lobbying is a pragmatic and valuable route for racial minority groups to effectively participate in politics in addition to traditional voter mobilization and the usage of the court systems. This dissertation is one of the first to analyze how marginalized racial minority groups work through the institutional process of lobbying to achieve policy gains for their members, emphasizing critical questions about how race impacts their strategies and behaviors. In addition to understanding the dynamics of RMIG lobbying, my data provide a clearer understanding of RMIGs' activity in legislative politics, including whom they ally with and whether they are reliable sources of representation for racial minorities.

1.4   Plan of Dissertation

This dissertation has three empirical chapters that formulate hypotheses about racial minority interest groups (RMIG) and test them using novel datasets on lobbying activities in California and surveys. My project breaks ground on a new and exciting strain of racial minority representation, particularly on the *institutional* routes for marginalized racial minorities to exert influence. It is in dialogue with a large body of empirical and theoretical work concerning interest group lobbying, racial minority politics, social movements, and representation in American politics. The following chapters examine the role of RMIGs in achieving representation by offering a theoretical framework for how race shapes their behavior (Chapter 2), showing first that RMIGs are reliable representatives (Chapter 4), then detailing RMIGs' lobbying activity and behavioral proclivities (Chapter 5), and finally testing whether RMIGs are influential in politics (Chapter 6).

In Chapter 2, I expand on my definition of racial minority interest groups (RMIG) and introduce a theory on their lobbying strategies. First, I discuss the role of RMIGs as representatives of their racial groups and elaborate on the dissertation's theoretical framework.

Next, I explain my study design, introduce my analytical framework, and explore my data in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 demonstrates that RMIGs lobby on issues that matter to the marginalized, disadvantaged segments of their constituency more than the elite parts of their groups. Leveraging a new and large dataset of California bill analyses that capture the lobbying positions of RMIGs, I show that RMIGs are not siloed into niche policy areas but lobby broadly on diverse policy topics. Moreover, despite the disadvantages in their resources, RMIGs do not abandon the most vulnerable of their racial communities. Together, these findings make it clear that RMIGs are reliable and robust modes of representation for racial minorities.

I delve more closely into the lobbying behavior, strategies, and ability of RMIGs to influence politics in Chapters 5 and 6. In testing whether RMIGs are empirically shut out of the lobbying universe, I show that they are as active as a range of classic interest group organizations like unions, environmental groups, and other group types by simply categorizing and counting their lobbying signals. Moreover, I find that RMIGs generally participate in much larger and more diverse coalitions than non-RMIGs, revealing a potentially successful strategy for influencing policy. Chapter 6 attempts to assess how successful RMIGs are in their lobbying activity and whether they hold political sway among racial minorities. It explores RMIGs' ability to influence policy and politics, showing that RMIGs can pass more bills when they create large and diverse coalitions. I use a survey experiment from the 2020 Comparative Election Survey (CES) to show that RMIG endorsements strongly influence voter choice, particularly racial minorities. These findings suggest a more nuanced and optimistic view of racial minority representation in lobbying. The last chapter concludes the dissertation with a discussion on the dynamics of conflict and cooperation among RMIGs, and how lobbying is a pragmatic route for racial minority representation –one that should be invested in and cultivated.

Chapter 2

Theory of Racial Minority Interest Group Lobbying

I theorize and argue that we cannot clearly understand RMIGs through the classical literature on traditional interest groups because of their origins, rooted in the civil rights and racial justice movements of the 1960s, and their trajectory as organizations wholly dedicated to advocacy in racialized domains. In fleshing out the theory, I primarily focus on the difference between RMIGs and public advocacy organizations who work in similar issue areas as RMIGs. To separate RMIGs from traditional public advocacy organizations that also represent marginalized groups, I offer critical distinctions between the two. First, RMIGs seek a collective good that selectively and materially benefits their membership and whose goals are targeted towards and always affect racial groups. On the other hand, public advocacy groups pursue purely collective goods that could incidentally benefit racial groups. In seeking benefits for racial minorities, RMIGs are also evaluated along racial lines by legislators and the public in ways that tend to hurt more than help (Hero 1998; Henry and Sears 2002; Perez 2016). The public is also more inclined to support and sympathetic to public interest groups' goals than businesses since their mission aims to improve the general welfare and is civically spirited instead of self-serving (Berry 1977; Berry and Wilcox 2015). I postulate that this is very different for RMIGs, whose actions are viewed through a racialized lens that can often incite opposition or backlash among the public (Hughey, 2014; Abrajano and Hajnal 2015; Gause 2022). The sense of linked-fate,

or connectedness to shared racial identity that transcends class and informs behavior, is more prevalent among racial minorities and those representing them (Dawson 1994). RMIGs, in comparison to general public advocacy organizations, have a stronger sense of linked-fate across racial groups and within their ranks. For example, the fight to repeal California's Proposition 187, a law that prevented undocumented immigrants from accessing state resources, was supported by a large swath of Asian and Black RMIGs even though they were arguably much less affected than members of the Latinx community. Table 2.1 summarizes the significant differences and similarities between RMIGs and public advocacy organizations. I ground the comparison in Table 2.1 by offering the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) as the model for RMIGs and Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) as the typical public advocacy organization.

Table 2.1. Main Theoretical Differences and Similarities Between RMIGs & Public Advocacy Organizations

RMIGs - Ex: NAACP	Public Advocacy Organizations - Ex: MADD
Seeks collective good that selectively benefits and targeted to affect racial groups	Pursue purely collective goods (Berry 1977)
Strong sense of linked fate Dawson (1994)	Strength of linked fate uncertain or varies
Subjected to racial bias	Not subjected to racial bias
Transitioned primarily from organized SMOs	Most transitioned from organized SMOs
Reliant on motivated members	Reliant on motivated members
Limited resources	Limited resources

Unlike their public advocacy colleagues, RMIGs are evaluated by the public, policy-makers, and other groups through implicit racial bias and stereotypes (Dovidio and Gaertner 2004; White 2007; Mendelberg 2008). The racial bias that RMIGs face may be a source of strength. It demands that RMIGs engage in a strategy of cooperation, coalition-building, and staying connected to their support base. The focus on "people power" rather than financial

or other forms of political power (Lê Espiritu 1992) shaped RMIGs' strategies and produced different conditions under which they can have policy success. Knowing that they are subjected to severe disadvantages, RMIGs lean into their strengths in mobilizing their base and building broad coalitions. As they incorporate into the political system, I argue that RMIGs hold different strategic advantages and barriers. The transition from protest politics to legislative politics allowed RMIGs to practice the collaborative and coalition-building skills they developed. As a result, RMIGs built winning coalitions and tapped into a more profound sense of connectedness between groups to a greater extent than other types of organizations. For example, in analyzing the push for passing the 1982 Voting Rights Act, Pinderhughes (1995) noted how organizations, like the Mexican-American Legal Defense Fund, used the "formal strategies of the civil rights movement or the analogy of racial discrimination to legitimize their claim for favorable federal legislation". The transition and experience of RMIGs from the civil rights movement and their trajectory as organizations deeply rooted in these movements have shaped their behavior as lobbying organizations.

RMIGs, however, do share several similarities with public advocacy groups. Both RMIGs and public advocacy organizations have fewer resources, fewer organizational tools, less staff, and rely less heavily on professional lobbyists than firms, industries, and professional organizations (Strolovitch 2007; Forrest and Strolovitch 2012). RMIGs and public advocacy groups generally lobby on behalf of underrepresented and marginalized communities, like the poor or minorities, who tend to be less politically active, resource-poor, and thus are of less concern to legislators. In terms of advantages, public advocacy organizations and RMIGs generally have strongly motivated members. RMIGs and public advocacy organizations also employ similar strategies to achieve governmental responsiveness. Like public advocacy organizations, RMIGs directly lobby legislators, build cooperative coalitions, engage in the court systems, and provide information to the relevant policymakers. Again, the key difference between public advocacy groups and RMIGs is that the latter explicitly seek a government action that will selectively benefit their members and constituents. RMIGs narrowly lobby to improve the lives of racial minorities.

As Berry (1977) points out in his definition, public interest groups seek a collective good, the achievement of which will not selectively and materially benefit the membership or activists in the organization. RMIGs also hold the advantage of representing very *visible* constituencies. Legislators can more easily and credibly see the potential electoral threats to their districts by examining the racial composition of their districts. It is much more difficult to ascertain other interest group constituencies' potential direct electoral power.

Building on the classic social movement literature on resource mobilization, I contend that RMIGs' growth and impact are shaped by the types and levels of resources available to them at their formation—most of which occurred during the civil rights movement and other outsider movements—and have been built into their organization (McAdam 1996; McCarthy and Zald 1977). To illustrate, the NAACP flourished during the southern civil rights movement partly because it cooperated with many different "solidarity" associations, like Black churches, colleges, and other racial groups (McAdam 1982). Smith (1996) notes that the NAACP, after the civil rights movement and as a full RMIG, continued to rely on a coalition of labor, Latinx, and public advocacy organizations. This evolution and coalition-building strategy suggest a continuation of tactics and the drawing of resources that served them well as a social movement organization.

Using this idea as a starting point, I argue that the behavior of RMIGs is distinct and separate. First, RMIGs' strategies are focused on strategic informational signaling rather than exerting pressure through money. Second, RMIGs are incentivized to build large and diverse coalitions since a large and diverse coalition more clearly and credibly communicates the potential electoral reward or punishment to a legislator. [1] In this way, legitimacy and the ability to cooperate become premium to RMIGs. Legislators must believe that RMIGs are legitimate representatives of their constituents. RMIGs are thus motivated to act as reliable representatives.

---

[1]Chapter 5 expands on why RMIGs are incentivized to build large and diverse coalitions. Since RMIGs depend on informational signaling rather than money to gain influence, they must be able to send credible signals to legislators. Credible signals require legitimacy, which is gained through complete attention to all aspects of their group's interests, including those who are marginalized. Later chapters focus on how large and diverse coalitions influence legislators' electoral concerns.

They do their best to meet the needs of all members of their group, including those who are disadvantaged, to cultivate legitimacy.

2.1   Natural and Strategic Inclination toward Cooperative Lobbying

A key strength of RMIGs is a natural inclination towards cooperation and the ability to create coalitions more easily. In addition, the historical development of RMIGs has allowed them to practice coalition building and a strategy of working with others. Still, there is surprisingly little analysis of the conditions under which racial and ethnic minority groups might cooperate and work with other groups to seek government responsiveness to their policy needs.

Most works on racial minority cooperation and conflict have focused on local politics, mass public opinion held by minority groups, and perceptions of commonality between racial groups. Most of these works focused on Black-Latinx relations. These analyses often find some degree of conflict between racial minority groups. The general pattern that emerges is that these relations are particularly evident where issues or policies are perceived to benefit one group at the cost of the other (Telles et al. 2011; Nelson and Lavariega Monforti 2005). Similar findings by Mollenkopf (2005) and Sonenshein (1993) show that Blacks and Latinxs conflict over "interest-based" politics in "zero-sum" circumstances. However, other literature shows that cooperation seems to occur at the elite-level. For example, Browning, Marshall, and Tabb (2003) show cooperation among racial minority city council members. They show that Black, Latinx, and Asian council members generally work together to pass progressive ordinances.

More recent work suggests an absence of conflict among Blacks and Latinxs at the national level (Hero and Preuhs 2013). Black and Latinx conflict seems to be shaped by independence and cooperation, and that conflict would only emerge in "zero-sum" situations that necessarily require a winner and a loser. In more recent work, Hero, Preuhs and Meeks (2018) show that RMIGs rarely conflict in the legal arena. There are few instances of competing *amicus*

curiae filings between organizations representing the three largest racial groups. They find that the emergence of Asian-American organizations in the advocacy arena increased coalitional activity among Black and Latinx groups.

I would expect to see similar patterns among RMIGs in the lobbying universe at the state level. Like Hero, Preuhs and Meeks (2018), I expect greater instances of cooperation than conflict amongst RMIGs. RMIGs should be more attuned to coalitional activity and better at building large, diverse groups than their non-RMIG counterparts. Given the competitiveness of lobbying in the legislative process, where stakes are high, the advantages of working in coalitions are higher than any perceived costs to cooperation. The institutional demands of lobbying favor strategies of "log-rolling" that build trust. RMIGs recognize the advantages of representing visible constituencies. Legislators can quickly tell the number of Black, Latinx, and Asian constituents in their district (more so than union members, firm workers, or other interest group constituents). By signaling their support to legislators, they are, in essence, tapping into the electoral concerns of legislators. RMIGs lend their support signals to each other strategically: offering support for issues that might not benefit them to have such actions reciprocated later in policy battles that matter to them. The strategic benefits of collaborating and cooperating is strong and often works to overcome any potential conflict.

RMIGs, in particular, are better at engaging in these strategies because they have natural allies. Histories of shared discrimination and struggles for representation have created a sense of commonality among RMIGs. Kaufmann (2003) shows that individual Blacks and Latinxs cooperate more when they have a higher recognition of common disadvantages relative to Whites. Hero and Pruehs (2013) show that the social context of inter-group elite relations (at the RMIG level) in the broader national arena facilitates more robust recognition of shared disadvantages among Blacks and Latinxs relative to Whites. This sense of commonality, I argue, makes RMIGs more predisposed to working together. Beyond commonality, RMIGs still have an over-arching incentive to build coalitions in a resource-driven lobbying environment. McCarthy and Zald (1977) put forward the notion that resources are critical to the success of social movements.

Organizations pushing for social change are strategic in maximizing their resources to reach their goals. RMIGs are pushed to coalesce in coalitions in order to exert influence better. The strategy of coalition-building is particularly significant to marginalized groups because their constituencies comprise small portions of the general public. However, their numbers enormously increase when they work with others.

In essence, the unique character of RMIGs and their practice of coalition-making during their formative social movement years make them predisposed to cooperation which is reinforced by the strategic advantage of coalition-building, granted by the fact that they represent visible constituencies. Moreover, this sense of mutual trust is strengthened over time as they engage in cooperative lobbying and log-rolling.

2.2   Influence Through Diversity and Numbers

RMIGs use their ability to more easily build coalitions across groups to create large and diverse coalitions because it increases their lobbying capabilities and reduces informational uncertainty. Large and diverse coalitions allow RMIGs to gain policy influence because it better communicates to legislators the potential consequences of their policy choices. Similar to Phinney (2018), I refer to the *diversity* of a coalition as the coalescing of groups from multiple domains—governmental, public interest, business, and more. I build on Phinney's (2018) theory of diverse coalitions by including the *size* of the lobbying coalition, or the number of groups on the same side of a policy issue, as being as crucial as its diversity. Coalitional size also communicates credibility, expands lobbying capabilities, and addresses legislative uncertainty in the same ways as diversity does. My theory predicts that success in passing or killing bills would increase for RMIGs in more diverse and larger coalitions than those in less diverse and smaller coalitions. I expect RMIGs also to be able to build much more diverse and far larger coalitions than their non-RMIG counterparts due to their unique strength in winning allies to their cause.

First, RMIGs are more likely to depend on informational lobbying rather than exerting

influence through campaign contributions or other tactics that heavily depend on financial resources. RMIGs lobby under severe constraints. They have fewer resources than most interest groups—the vast majority of RMIGs are less organized and less funded than other interest group types. For example, RMIG lobbying expenditure is minimal compared to firm and industry interest groups (Stolovitch 2007). These constraints lead RMIGs to adopt informational signaling as their primary form of lobbying. Theories on informational signaling posit that groups gain influence through strategic information provision. Signaling their positions on policies helps to communicate crucial electoral information about potential voter backlash. Technical policy expertise exercised through position papers, in-person meetings, and testimonies assists in elucidating the impact of a policy. Informational theories on interest group influence hypothesize that interest groups can gain influence in the legislative process by reducing the uncertainty of legislators (Goldstein 1999; Kollman 1998; Hall and Deardorff 2006).

Conversely, a significant segment of the interest group lobbying literature focuses primarily on interest groups' **monetary contributions** in exercising influence rather than their ability to **deliver or withhold votes** (Bauer, Pool, and Dexter 1972; Potters and Van Winden, 1992; Austen-Smith and Wright, 1992; Austen-Smith, 1995; Wright, 1996). Due to the increase in activity from political action committees (PACs) in campaigns, and available data and resources on the topic, much scholarly attention focus on the influence of campaign contributions by interest groups. Conventional arguments on the influence of money from interest groups argue a quid pro quo agreement between candidates and contributors. Nevertheless, there have been conflicting results within the literature. Some scholars like Chappell (1981, 1982), Wright (1985), and Grenzke (1989) find that interest group campaign contributions seem to be unrelated to the voting behavior of legislators. On the other hand, Durden, Shogren, and Silberman (1991), Stratmann (1991), Fleisher (1993), and many others report links between legislator behavior and interest group contributions. It seems empirical evidence is unclear whether interest group money influences legislator behavior. However, more apparent is that money buys better "access" (Gopoian 1984; Herndon 1982; Langbein 1986; Milbrath 1963; Powell and Grimmer 2016).

Money can give firms and other well-financed interests an upper hand in the legislative "pressure system".

On the other hand, monetary contributions are not the only way interest groups can influence policymaking. I argue that interest groups gain influence by working together and building effective coalitions to send credible informational signals to legislators. Many scholars observe that interest groups routinely engage in strategic coalition-building and that building coalitions tend to be a successful strategy for winning policy concessions (Hula 1999; Strolovitch 2007; Phinney 2018). In particular, Phinney (2018) argues that building **diverse** coalitions is very important for organizations that lack resources. To illustrate, organizations representing the poor can compensate for their lack of financial strength by collaborating with diverse groups. Essentially, a lobbying coalition gains influence through its diversity or the level of differences in the interests that each group within the coalition represents. Phinney's (2018) theory of diverse coalitions emphasizes that diverse actors in a coalition bring together a range of information and lobbying tactics. The pooling of informational resources allows a diverse coalition to meet the individual needs of legislators and so allows the coalition to influence the policy process. More importantly, the costs associated with creating a diverse coalition send a stronger signal of credibility on the possible outcome of legislators' policy choices. Legislators will trust the information from diverse coalitions more than coalitions with homogeneous interests.

My theory argues that RMIGs gain influence in similar ways. RMIGs' lobbying power is derived from their ability to build diverse coalitions and from their ability to project strength through numbers. In other words, RMIGs are effective when they show legislators that numerous types of organizations support their views. The power of this signal is also conditional on the racial demographic spread of each legislator's district. RMIG's informational signal is influential when the number of their racial group members is substantial in a legislative district. RMIGs have the advantage of a **visible constituency**, where legislators can quickly ascertain the electoral threat of a RMIG by examining the demographic make-up of their district. Previous work has shown that legislators know pretty clearly and precisely the racial make-up of their districts and

21

are sensitive to the potential electoral impacts of these groups, mainly if these groups constitute a large part of their constituency (Butler and Dynes 2020). In addition, RMIGs have an incentive to build large coalitions because no racial group makes up the majority of constituents in every legislative district. They must make up for this lack in numbers by cobbling together a coalition of other racial minority interest groups and other types of interest groups. I suggest that the costs of building these coalitions decrease over time through repeated interactions. Incentives to build larger and larger coalitions increase each year as the effect of diverse coalitional signals decreases due to their costs dropping over time. I expect that RMIGs will need to build larger and more diverse coalitions to maximize this strategy. Diverse and large coalitions work with two logical mechanisms that leverage legislators' electoral fears and informational uncertainty.

2.2.1   Diversity Mechanisms

Lobbying coalitions play an important role as information providers in the legislative process. These coalitions signal legislators about the distribution of support and opposition to a policy change, reducing legislators' uncertainty regarding the consequences of their votes. However, not all types of interest group coalitions effectively reduce legislative uncertainty. Like Phinney (2018), I argue that *diverse* lobbying coalitions reduce more uncertainty than coalitions that are of a single type of interest. Different types of groups that unite in lobbying for a policy promote credibility, increasing their influence among legislators. The diversity of a lobbying coalition works to influence legislators through two main mechanisms: 1) heterogeneous signaling and 2) costly signaling. High diversity signals to legislators that heterogeneous preferences are united in a single position on a bill and that these groups are willing to pay a high cost to collaborate.

Heterogeneous Signaling:

Legislators get different information on the consequences of their potential vote choices from a diverse coalition. The information is multi-faceted and comes from groups engaged in

different spaces and partisan affiliations. These heterogeneous signals reduce legislators' uncertainty about their vote choice. In essence, the diversity of these signals makes them more credible. For example, AB 2012 (2004) was supported by a coalition of only four types of organizations: racial minority groups, women's rights groups, labor unions, and health organizations. It eventually failed. AB 2125 (2015), on the other hand, had **ten** different types of organizations: business groups, women's rights, racial minority groups, women's rights organizations, governmental entities, occupational advocacy groups, unions, health organizations, environmental groups, and professional groups. AB 2125 is now state law. Organizers emphasized that having different groups support their bill was one of the main reasons it passed. Diversity is important not because of the types of information gained from different groups, but because of the strong signal it conveys to legislators. It makes the coalition's claims more credible, leading legislators to be more sympathetic to their positions. If the diversity of signals matters to legislators, one would expect RMIGs to engage in more diverse coalitions consistently. Groups should draw attention to their diversity. Phinney (2018) examined the signals sent by diverse coalitions operating in the social policy domain to members of Congress. She finds that they prioritize their diversity and the heterogeneity of interests that they represent. One would expect similar findings in RMIGs' lobbying tactics with legislators and that RMIGs build larger and more diverse coalitions than non-RMIGs.

Costly Signaling:

Creating diverse organizations is more costly than working individually; organizations incur costs when collaborating. Costly signaling enhances the credibility of RMIGs among legislators. Established scholarship proposes that interest group information is more trustworthy and credible when groups engage in costly activities, like building a diverse coalition (Ainsworth 1993). Costs associated with diverse coalitions come from coordinating activities, negotiating agreements, and hosting coalitional activities like hosting rallies. Moreover, there is a reputational cost to working with diverse groups. It may be more credible when a very liberal organization

and a very conservative organization work together, but that may hurt them later. It may dilute or harm the organization's identity in the eyes of its supporters and constituents. The coordination and reputational costs show legislators that these policies matter intensely to the group. They are willing to incur these costs to get this policy passed. Legislators are informed of the commitment of these groups, making what these groups say more credible to the legislators. I acknowledge the difficulty in measuring costs incurred by RMIGs when creating a diverse coalition. Like other works, I assume that there are high costs associated with working in diverse groups (Olson 1965; Stigler 1975). I also assume that it is very costly for ideologically disparate groups to join a coalition. On the other hand, I theorize that such costs of building these diverse coalitions are less for RMIGs. Creating coalitions requires the expenditure of resources. However, due to the socio-historical development and their unique traits, RMIGs can bear these costs more easily and willingly. Though costs are lower for RMIGs, qualitative interviews and observations show that the perception of the costliness of building diverse coalitions is not necessarily diminished among legislators. There is no evidence, to my knowledge, that legislators discount the diverse coalitions of RMIGs. This edge makes the creation of diverse coalitions a valuable tactic since the perception of the costliness of building coalitions still matters to legislators.

2.2.2 Size Mechanisms

The effectiveness of RMIG lobbying also depends on racial/ethnic group size and the size or number of groups in their coalition. Whether a legislator chooses to vote for a bill depends on the potential ability of an interest group to threaten their electoral support. The larger a coalition, the more potential constituents could be mobilized or de-mobilized during elections. Unlike other interest groups, legislators know precisely how many members and potential members of the RMIGs are in their district through the US Census (Butler and Dynes 2020). RMIGs' signaling in support of a bill is a dependable heuristic for legislators as they calculate the political consequences of their vote choice. A legislator representing a district with a substantial Black population, for example, will be more inclined to support a bill that a Black RMIG supports.

As a result, they are more susceptible to the lobbying influence à la electoral threat or support through lobbying (Leighley 2001).

Legislators are rationally motivated to make vote choices based on the implications of such choices on their electoral support. The problem for legislators is the "noise" surrounding these decisions——they are uncertain about the political consequences of their vote choice (Sloof-Winden 2000). Legislators must sift through the many different signals and information they receive to make a rational decision that conforms to their interests. The interest group lobbying literature has pointed out that interest groups try to convince legislators that their positions are beneficial to them. They provide money, legislative support, and information (Peltzman 1976; Ainsworth 1993; Austen-Smith 1993). Still, uncertainty abounds.

Compared to traditional interest groups (firms, unions, and others), RMIGs cannot compete in the same way due to resource and organizational constraints. One potential advantage for RMIGs, though, is the fact that they have a visible constituency. Legislators know with almost absolute certainty about the racial make-up of their district due to census data, district constituency servicing, and home-style politicking. Conversely, they might not be so sure about the group size of other interest groups. A visible constituency can be advantageous for RMIGs since they can communicate their strength to legislators. Suppose that a legislator represents a district with a markedly large number of the RMIG's potential or actual membership. In that case, it is rational for them to take their claims seriously and vote in line with them. I predict that RMIGs are more likely to build large, oversized coalitions than traditional interest groups. Given the constraints they face, large coalitions can help RMIGs pool resources, communicate the gravity and importance of their issues, and act as a heuristic for legislators when deciding on an issue.

Large Coalitions Allow for the Pooling of More Resources:

Large coalitions allow small, under-powered RMIGs to share resources and information. For instance, evidence shows that racial minorities often need to cobble together broad-based

support because of their marginalized position. They overcome the resource disparity between them and other more powerful groups by partnering with many different organizations.

In the same way that the diversity within coalitions gives access to different resources, the size of a coalition also affects its ability to pool resources. Groups possess a variety of resources, expertise, and abilities. These resources relate to their policy specialization, organizational structure, and staff (Strolovitch 2009; Phinney 2018). A coalition of one or two groups is less effective than a large coalition, especially if the groups do not have the financial resources to "go-it-alone". RMIGs reflect the classic tactics used in racial minority mobilization efforts to emphasize strength in numbers (Leighley 2000; Lê Espiritu 1992).

Large Coalitions Credibly and Easily Communicate Importance:

Large coalitions communicate the importance of an issue. Size matters for electorally-minded legislators because it affects their calculations of the benefits and costs of taking a position on the issue (Leighley 2000). This idea builds on the logic of signaling under conditions of legislative uncertainty and information (Epstein 1999; Gilligan and Krehbiel 1989). I theorize that the size of a coalition works in the same way as heterogenous signaling. It provides credible cues to legislators about the policy issue under consideration and the political landscape concerning its viability. For example, if an individual racial group does not have a substantial number spread across many districts, they can cobble together various racial and specialized interest groups. They have to convince a majority of legislators, not just one legislator in one district. The winning coalition must consist of many different group types. They need to get broad-based support to form influential political majorities (Van Dyke and McCammon 2010). At the same time, a large coalition confers upon the policy position a sense of importance.

Large coalitions provide an easy way for legislators to calculate risks in an uncertain policy environment. Legislators face uncertainty over their future electoral prospects (Fenno 1978; Arnold 1990). Assessing the consequences of their policy actions concerning their electoral goals requires determining their constituents' potential response to their policy choices. It is a

complicated and complex task to first evaluate the preferences of their constituents on a policy matter and then calculate the likelihood of whether they will punish or reward based on the outcome of this particular policy decision. Another critical uncertainty lies in the quality of the proposed policy and its ability to move through the convoluted legislative process successfully. Legislators may be hesitant to take a position on a highly controversial or divisive issue. Large coalitions serve as an indicator of the policy's salience and direction. Suppose over 200 groups took an oppositional position to a policy compared with ten groups who support it. In that case, opposing the bill will likely satisfy the legislator's constituents. Furthermore, this clarifies the political landscape for the legislator. Passing the bill will probably be very difficult.

2.3   Theory in Action: The Case of AB 2012 and AB 2125

In their seminal work, Omni and Winant (1994) assert that racial formation is the socio-historical creation of racial meanings shaped by racial arrangements formed from institutions, policies, and power. As a result, race is a social construct that is flexible and politically contested. Racial identities are formed, fought over, and refined in conflicts over "racial projects"—from institutionalized census definitions and southern segregation laws to the 1960s civil rights movements. One's racial identity is shaped and formed through these historical processes, which play an enduring role in American social ordering and politics. Building on the Racial Formation Theory, Kim (2000) offered a new theoretical paradigm of racial power. Similar to Omni and Winant's understanding of racial categories, racial power forms through systematic processes of unintentional and intentional domination. This racial power produces a racial ordering that shapes group conflict and interaction. In other words, systematic acts of "racial valorization" and "civic ostracism" by the dominant White group reinforce a hierarchy of all races where Whites remain at the top, Latinxs and Asians occupy the middle, and Blacks at the bottom. Expanding on Kim's work and drawing from national survey data, Masuoka and Junn (2013) empirically show evidence that supports the existence of a racial hierarchy in the U.S. and that the positioning

of each group influences their attitudes towards immigration policies. These hierarchies function as filters–or prisms–to shape the attitudes of each racial group.

Given this power differential situated in racialized positions, I would expect the status of Asian Americans to impact the political success of the organizations working to pass AB 2012 (2004) and AB 2125 (2016), the policies aimed at mainly protecting Asian women in the nail salon industry, discussed in the introduction. Asian Americans are still viewed as foreign and unassimilable even when they are valorized as paragons of hard work and the model minority. Thus, they are civically ostracized (Kim 1999). This positioning of Asian Americans, coupled with a history of depressed voting and limited engagement in political/civic activities, culminates in less than adequate representation of Asian Americans' interests and concerns (Wong et al. 2011). Only about 49% of eligible Asian citizens voted in the 2016 election, compared to 65% of eligible Whites. This number dramatically increased by 10% in 2020 but still significantly lagged behind the 71% turnout of eligible White voters (Fabina 2021; Fabina and Scherer 2022). Asians only made up 3.6% of all voters in 2016 (Krongstad and Lopez 2017). Similar trends hold in California elections (Baldassare et al. 2020). As scholars noted, Asian Americans continue to fight for representation through the election of Asian American legislators and the formation of organizations that lobby for their interests. However, their small numbers among the voting population, divergent political attitudes, and limited political participation have weakened their ability to achieve adequate representation. We see similar trends and forces among Blacks and Latinxs (Kongstad and Lopez 2017; Grose 2011; Rouse 2013). Again, the puzzle is evident: RMIGs are successful in the legislative process, given all the barriers they face.

Both AB 2012 (2004) and AB 2125 (2015) were policies designed to limit nail-salon workers' exposure to toxic chemicals in beauty supplies. The first worked to ban two of these toxic chemicals in California, while the second aimed at incentivizing salons to discontinue their use. A significant difference between AB 2012 and AB 2125 was that the organizations supporting AB 2125 sought to explicitly **diversify** and **expand** their coalition of support. Secondly, those leading the lobbying efforts of AB 2125 chose to ally with a range of racial minority groups

28

to signal to legislators that this issue matters to many different members of their constituents. Finally, AB 2125 supporters strategically took a different policy route to reach their goals —one that was hard for their opponents to oppose. While powerful chemical manufacturing companies formally and informally opposed both bills, AB 2125 passed and AB 2012 failed. The differences between lobbying approaches seem to have led to these outcomes. Though AB 2125 took a different policy route, they still faced significant pushback from chemical producers who construed the policy change as another attack on them.

In addition, the choice of Asian Health Services and other RMIGs to pursue this type of policy is also very puzzling. Why would they devote such time and effort to a policy that affects the most disadvantaged segments of their constituency? Nail salon workers, again, are primarily Asian women working at meager wages who generally have less education and are less likely to be politically active (UCLA Labor Center and the California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative 2018). Conventional wisdom would suggest that RMIGs use their resources to lobby for issues that would effectively support their organizational management through financial and political support. In our two cases, a coalition of Asian RMIGs devoted over ten years of time and effort to pursue this policy win for this marginalized segment. Is it rational to do so? My theory suggests that it is rational because focusing on the disadvantaged segments of the constituency and being familiar with the struggles of their entire constituency rather than just the elite parts allow RMIGs to cultivate strong *credibility*. The need for credibility, in turn, allows them to exert more influence in their lobbying signals. The pursuit of a policy for healthy nail salons is indicative of this strategy. Leaders of the Asian RMIGs involved in this lobbying effort consistently expressed the necessity for close contact with their constituency's peripheral parts. They see it as a way to cultivate strength that works to support their interests over the long term.

2.4 Conclusion

Taken all together, my theory on racial minority interest groups offers several notable contributions to the existing research. It is one of the first to systematically and comprehensively conceptualize the definition of a "racial minority interest group" and how such groups differ from the general category of public interest groups. RMIGs' unique role in racial/ethnic domains and historical birth from social movements provide them with distinct motivations and constraints. It also shapes their strength toward cooperative behavior and coalition-building.

Compared to traditional interest groups (firms, unions, and others), RMIGs cannot compete in the same way due to resource and organizational constraints. Instead, they turn to their unique ability to form large, diverse coalitions rooted in the socio-historical character of RMIGs to build trust and work with natural allies and their trait of being a visible constituency to influence legislators. This ability is what makes RMIGs qualitatively different from traditional lobbying organizations. The centrality of race in U.S. politics has created a group consciousness and commonality that RMIGs can build on with each other and similarly situated organizations. Like Dawson's (1994; 2001) theory of linked-fate, I contend that there is a sense of rational belief that RMIGs' group interests are intertwined with each other and potential allies. The nature of the racialized constraints on their advocacy work reinforces the sense of linked fate between the organizations and those they represent. Thus, this connection along racial lines is more profound than other dimensions, beyond socio-economic status or other salient identities like gender or sexuality, between RMIGs and their respective racial groups.

RMIGs use this unique strength to more easily form lobbying coalitions with each other and like-minded groups to pursue a strategy that emphasizes the creation of large and diverse coalitions, which maximizes their ability to influence policy (Phinney 2018). Strength lies in bringing in disparate interests since coalitional diversity increases the coalition's informational signaling credibility. In similar ways, RMIGs' lobbying power derives from their ability to project strength through numbers. Large coalitions help dispel legislative uncertainty, acting as

heuristics to the potential electoral consequences of engaging with the policy. In other words, RMIGs are effective when they show legislators that numerous different types of organizations support their views.

My theory provides several insights into the role of RMIGs in providing representation for marginalized communities. First, I claim that race's centrality and high salience in American politics produce strong linked-fate or perceptions of shared interest that connects RMIGs to the needs and interests of their racial constituencies. Incentives to maintain credibility and show legislators that they are the legitimate voices further push RMIGs to be grounded to their constituents. From this theoretical starting point, I would expect RMIGs to be very reliable representatives of their racial groups and not biased towards the elite segments of their groups. RMIGs will be just as active in their advocacy on issues that matter to the disadvantaged-segments of their constituency in comparison to the interests of the advantaged-segments. This hypothesis engages with robust literature on the nature of representation among advocacy organizations. Previous research has shown that the work of advocacy organizations representing marginalized communities is biased in ways that fail to represent the interests of the disadvantaged. Rather than being equal representatives of their group, these internal biases lead to disproportionately higher levels of attention to the privileged members within their groups. Are organizations that expressly and explicitly represent racial groups also subject to such biases? I would expect the opposite.

The second important insight derived from my theory relates to the lobbying behavior of RMIGs. Due to their innate ability to better build coalitions and strong incentives, I would expect RMIGs to engage in the creation of much more diverse and larger lobbying coalitions than their interest group counterparts. This strategy maximizes their ability to send credible signals that mitigate legislators' uncertainties and increase their influence. I would also suspect this strategy to be an effective way to win policy victories. Though they have fewer resources and are fewer in number, I predict RMIG lobbying to be robust and on par with the lobbying activities of traditional interest groups. RMIGs are not shut out of the lobbying system but are

31

likely to advocate and succeed at their policy goals at similar rates to their more prosperous non-racial counterparts.

Finally, I would expect RMIG signals to be influential in politics. Assume that RMIGs can maintain a responsive relationship with their racial constituents and engage in an effective strategy of large and diverse coalition to lobby legislators. In such circumstances, they can command some influence over the political decisions of their racial groups and reach their policy goals at similar rates to non-RMIGs. I push against the classic perception that RMIGs have little to no influence in politics. Their marginalized position and lack of access to resources do not significantly limit their ability to produce political results. As part of my theory, I postulate that RMIGs' success is dependent on communicating their legitimacy as representatives of their racial groups. Playing into the electoral fears of legislators and the visibility of racial groups in electoral districts, RMIGs can persuade legislators to act in their interests. This is only effective if racial minority voters respond to RMIGs. I hypothesize that this is the case, and RMIGs' informational signals of endorsement do sway the electoral choice of racial minority voters.

The following chapters introduce my empirical strategy and attempt to test the RMIG behavior hypotheses derived from this theory and outlined above. Specifically, Chapter 3 details a novel dataset that captures the lobbying activities of RMIGs and other interest groups in California over twenty years. Next, I test the notion that RMIGs are reliable representatives of their respective racial groups and, unlike other advocacy groups, do not overwhelmingly pursue the interests of the affluent, elite segments of their group at the expense of their disadvantaged communities. I then show that RMIGs are much more likely to create large and diverse coalitions, surprisingly win policy victories at comparable rates to non-RMIGs, and exert influence in the political decisions of racial minority voters.

Chapter 3

Data and Research Design of RMIG Lobbying

In the previous chapter, I developed a theory that sets racial minority interest groups (RMIGs) as distinct categories of interest groups with different constraints and strengths. I identify the lobbying behavior of RMIGs and the mechanisms of their strategies to influence policy. This chapter elaborates on my study's methodological approach, outlines its context and framework, and introduces a new and unique dataset. This new dataset enables me to answer my key questions and test my hypotheses. In addition, it can address a plethora of interesting questions related to representation and interest group lobbying.

3.1   Research Design

To examine the empirical support for my theory, I employ a mixed-methods approach using observational and survey data. First, to examine the reliability of RMIGs in representing the disadvantaged segments of their constituencies, I created an original dataset using public records of legislative activity in California. This data came in the form of bill analyses produced by the legislative committees in the California Senate and Assembly from 1997 to 2018. A unique feature of these committee analyses is the inclusion of interest group positions on the policy proposal along with information concerning the nature of the bill and its proposed changes. This information allows me to map each interest group reliably and determine whether they supported

or opposed every bill introduced to the California legislature in these 20 years. Furthermore, I can classify the bill topics using the bill title and assigned committee. Finally, I assess whether RMIGs respond to their disadvantaged-subgroup by counting the number of times they have signaled support or opposition to bills classified as disadvantaged-subgroup issues compared to those classified as advantaged-subgroup or elite issues. I draw on Strolovitch's (2007) typology of issue types and calculate the test statistic for the difference in means to show that RMIGs are much more active in issues of the disadvantaged than the elite parts of their groups (see Figure 4.1).

Since the California Bill Analyses data, described briefly above, records the activity of any group that sends a letter to register their position on a bill, I can precisely calculate the coalition diversity and size of the two sides on a bill. For this study, I define a lobbying coalition as two or more groups being on the same side of an issue. Like others, I conceptualize a coalition as a partnership between interest groups to reach a common goal (Phinney 2018). A coalition is defined by its policy goal, in this case, of whether to stop or pass a bill. Accordingly, I measure coalitions as a set of groups who signaled the same position. I then calculate the diversity of each bill's supporting and opposing coalitions. I can distinguish whether RMIGs are, on average, in coalitions that are larger and more diverse.

Combining my lobbying data with roll call votes and bill outcomes allow me to determine the success of RMIG lobbying. Simply calculating the success and failure rates of RMIG goals can provide a sense of RMIG influence in policy-making. Success is determined by whether RMIGs' and other interest group types' supported bills become law and whether their opposed bills fail. Furthermore, I can test the mechanisms of diversity and size of a coalition on influence by modeling their effects on the political outcomes of the bill. My final empirical strategy rests on survey experiments conducted in the CES that tests the endorsement signals of RMIGs on hypothetical candidate choices and survey questions in the CMPS on racial minority response to RMIG information. [1]

---

[1]The CES and CMPS are nationally representative samples. I include multiple survey instruments concerning

Despite clear advantages in my datasets, including their depth and breadth of information, I recognize particular challenges to generalizability. Among these challenges is that I draw my data primarily from the California legislature. Are my findings particular to this state and its unique nature? I argue that my theory on racial minority interest groups can be applied to different state contexts for several reasons, regardless of political context.

First, I argue that California reflects or represents the future of states across America regarding its diversity, the types of groups that routinely lobby in its politics, and the policy issues they confront. States are facing a rapid increase in the number of people of color in their respective populations. The 2020 census highlights that the population growth of racial minorities occurred not only in urban centers but also in coastal suburbs, manufacturing towns, and Midwestern farming counties.[2] The interplay of RMIGs in a very diverse state like California could conceivably play out in similar contexts and states across the country. In addition, as the population size of racial minorities increases, RMIGs can potentially increase in both their presence and activity.

Due to its size and wealth, lobbying efforts in California come from a plethora of not only local organizations but also national ones. Major businesses like Monsanto, recognizable professional groups like the American Medical Association, unions with a national presence like the Teamsters, and brand-name advocacy organizations like the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) are found in the corridors of the California legislatures and consistently weigh in on its legislative activities (Rosenthal 2000; Michael 2002). California is also responding to and dealing with essential policies debated at the national level and in other states. Issues such as climate change and police reform, for example, are being debated and legislated in California just as it is in states like Wisconsin, Texas, and Florida. In these ways, the lobbying strategies and behavior of RMIGs found in California should correspond to the strategies and behavior of RMIGs in other states.

RMIG influence on electoral behavior on each survey.

[2] US Census Bureau. 2021."2020 Census Illuminates Racial and Ethnic Composition of the Country".

Secondly, race and its implications for racial minorities extend beyond state lines. The same barriers faced by RMIGs in California are present in other states. American history and a large body of political science show that race continues to profoundly affect political behavior and outcomes (Lee 2008; Hutchings and Valentino 2004; Omi and Winant 2015; Alexander 2012; Pérez 2013). The disparities in political participation, financial resources, educational attainment, health outcomes, and other factors are present in California, just as they are present in states across the country (Oser et al. 2013; Dalton 2008; Krogstad and Lopez 2017; Flannagan and Levin 2010; Williams et al. 2010). RMIGs who represent these marginalized communities, as theorized, would face the same problems related to lobbying in a system where political status and financial resources dominate. I contend that the mechanisms relating to race and lobbying would still be at play. The incentives to engage in large and diverse coalitions still would matter regardless of the specific context of the state. Legislators' uncertainty and the role of informational signaling to influence policy by dispelling these uncertainties apply in different legislatures across the United States (Austen-Smith 1992; Baumgartner et al. 2009; LaPira and Thomas 2017). The idea that large and diverse coalitions work to lower the information uncertainty of legislators effectively should then be as generalizable to different state contexts as well. RMIGs' sense of linked-fate, the high visibility of racial minorities in legislators' districts, and the need to maintain legitimacy are valid in red or blue states.

I recognize that there are limitations to using data from a single state. Though California shares similar features, especially in lobbying, there are crucial differences in its political system from other states. For the last ten years, the Democratic Party has dominated California in its electorate and government. This significant partisan difference may affect the lobbying abilities of interest groups. It may be conceivable that Democrats are more likely to be sensitive to issues related to racial minorities. Hence any findings of RMIG success may be attributed to the dominance of Democrats in the legislature. California also has a system of direct democracy, where individuals and groups may propose laws directly to the electorate and bypass the legislature altogether. This route may appeal to groups, especially since it would overcome the onerous

36

legislative process. As a result, the lobbying activity I capture may be undercounting the actual legislative influence.

California's state legislature is also highly professionalized, where legislators work full-time with a team of staffers to support their work. In such circumstances, California legislators reflect the U.S. Congress. In particular, the professionalization of state legislatures increases their resources and supports careerism. Professionalization limits the ability of interest groups to influence policy (Ozymy 2010; Ozymy and Rey 2011). The opposite can be true for semi-professional or part-time legislators who have fewer resources and depend more on interest group lobbyists. Any influence from RMIGs or lobbying influence should be much greater in legislatures that are not professionalized or full-time. However, California also has term limits leading to more turnover among its members. In such situations, members become more dependent on lobbyists due to their lack of institutional memory and experience. Scholars have found that term limits cause political influence to shift toward the executive branch and interest groups (Moncrief and Thompson 2021; Kousser 2005).

In pushing back against these limitations, I argue that there is no clear preference for racial minorities even when a progressive liberal party dominates California's legislature. Though Democrats have held both houses of the legislature and the governor's seat, we have yet to witness massive progress in the issues that have been on the agenda of racial minorities. The major issues that have been addressed, in fact, required substantial effort and mobilization on the part of RMIGs and their allies (Hero, Preuhs and Meeks 2019). Take, for example, the push for police reform. Though successful initially, policies that limited police violence and created lasting changes seemed to have been derailed across the United States. This lack of major police reform occurs even in California, where Democrats hold a super-majority and whose legislators have often expressed support for this issue. Recent attempts to give citizens access to more police personnel records, curtail tear gas and rubber bullets, and create a strong citizen's oversight commission were all defeated.[3] These attempts were all vehemently opposed by powerful and

---

[3] See SB 776 (Skinner) - 2020, AB 48 (Gonzalez) - 2021, AB 731 (Bradford) - 2020.

well-resourced police associations and unions. There is evidence that the lack of substantive change to policing may be due to the immense political and financial pressure brought to bear by police unions and their professional groups.[4] Even in a supposedly sympathetic legislature, RMIGs and their respective racial minority groups still face significant barriers.

California's initiative system may be a way to bypass the legislature, but it is far from being easier. Significant research has shown that the initiative process has very high implementation costs (Cronin 1989; Bowen 2011; Fishkin et al. 2015). The costs of signature-gathering, campaigning, and getting on the ballot are exceptionally high. It effectively shuts out most interest groups, except those who are well-financed. Even for the most wealthy interest groups, the high costs and uncertainty of the initiative process make it a strategy of last resort. It is not unreasonable to expect that the lobbying observed in the data is reflective of all the activities that groups engage in to influence policy. I briefly describe the data used to test my theory in the following sections with these considerations in mind.

3.2 Data: California Bill Analyses from the State Legislature, 1997-2018

Most studies on lobbying in American politics rely primarily on data made available by the Lobbying Disclosure Act (LDA) of 1995 (Baumgartner and Leech 2001; LaPira and Thomas 2017; Bertrand, Bombardini and Trebbi 2014; Vidal, Mirko and Fons-Rosen 2012; Furnas, Heaney and LaPira 2019). The LDA data begin with lobbying reports filed in 1998 and continually accrue. Though a clear and valuable source of data, they are often incomplete. LDA reports rarely contain clear information on the lobbying activities of these organizations. More importantly, it does not record organizations' position on a bill, limiting researchers' ability to assess groups' influence over legislative outcomes (Kim 2017; Kim and Kunisky 2021; Lorenz 2020). Such limitations of available data often stymie empirical studies of interest group

---

[4]Rosenhall, Laurel. 2020. " California lawmakers failed to enact sweeping police reforms. Here's Why". *Cal Matters*.

participation.

More recently, Lorenz(2020) introduced lobbying data compiled by a non-profit organization called MapLight. This dataset is unique in that it records instances of organizations taking a clear position on Congressional bills from 2005 to 2018 for about 16,000 organizations. Most of these positions come from public statements made by the organizations through their websites, open letters, press releases, and other publicly available sources. However, there are concerns related to selection bias in this dataset. For one, MapLight does not fully capture every instance of interest group activity, but only around twenty percent of bills were introduced during this period (Lorenz 2020). In addition, the MapLight data fails to randomly sample or select bills to research but depends on the salience of the bill. There is also a possibility that MapLight may not be able to locate positions for the bill adequately or might claim a position that is in error. As Lorenz (2020) states, "Either issue could introduce sample selection problems into MapLight's data collection process, hampering the data's potential for generating descriptive or causal inferences."

I address these concerns by compiling an original dataset of California bill analyses from 1997 to 2018. The data contains 310,033 bill analyses for 33,176 legislative bills proposed to the California Assembly and Senate. The data record every instance of a proposed bill. The data generating process relies on the formal rules of proposing legislation. Every bill proposed is assigned a number, keyed to a committee, and sent to be analyzed by committee staff. From its introduction to its final vote, staff members must create and update an analysis of the bill at every stage of the legislative process. The data drawn from these analyses are a comprehensive survey of all policy considered and how it has morphed through the legislative process.

These bill analyses contain information containing the topic of the bill, the author, description of the proposed change, date of submissions, and a listing of organizations that formally sent letters supporting or opposing the bill (see Figure 3.1). By law, the bill's title must substantively reflect its proposed changes. The bill's title gives researchers a clear idea of the topics of the proposed bills. Listings of organizations formally supporting or opposing a

proposed law provided by the bill analysis, in effect, record an official act of lobbying. When an organization sends a letter, they signal their approval or disapproval of a policy idea to the legislator. Legislators and their staff see these signals all through the legislative process. It is a clear indication of an attempt to lobby or sway the legislature. These listings allow researchers to map and track the types of policies that civic and private groups care about and provide a sense of their policy agendas. Using these listings, I identify and analyze the bills that RMIGs signaled their support and opposition on to provide a clear indication of the types of issues that these organizations care about and describe the lobbying trend of RMIGs.

For example, Figure 3.1 shows the top section of a bill analysis and its listing of registered support for AB 2125 (Chiu) produced by the Senate Committee on Business, Professions, and Economic Development in 2016. We can immediately discern relevant information pertaining to the bill, such as its author and subject. In this particular example, the bill focuses on healthy nail salons and pertains to establishing a recognition program. This proposal is the same bill discussed in the introduction. The summary further drives home the policy issue in the bill. The essential contribution to this dataset that sets it apart from other available lobbying data is listing registered positions from interest groups. Figure 3.1b shows the vast number of interest groups that submitted letters to the legislature expressing their support for the bill. A diverse range of organizations, including RMIGs, supports AB 2125. We can identify the group based on their names, as seen in the red and blue underlined names. I leverage this identification strategy in my analysis of RMIG lobbying in the following empirical chapters.

Bill No:	AB 2125	**Hearing Date:**	June 27, 2016
Author:	Chiu		
Version:	May 31, 2016		
Urgency:	No	**Fiscal:**	Yes
Consultant:	Sarah Mason		

Subject: Healthy Nail Salon Recognition Program

SUMMARY: Requires the California Department of Public Health (DPH) to develop and publish guidelines for local governments to implement local healthy nail salon recognition programs with specified criteria, including the use of less toxic nail polishes and polish removers and improved ventilation. Requires DPH to develop awareness campaigns and post specified information on its Internet Web site. Permits DPH to prioritize its outreach to counties with the greatest number of nail salons.

(a) Example of a bill analysis

Support: American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); Asian Americans Advancing Justice-LA; California Catholic Conference; California Communities United Institute; California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO; Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles; Community Coalition; Consumer Attorneys of California; Eric Garcetti, Mayor of the City of Los Angeles; Mike Feuer, Los Angeles City Attorney; Mujeres Unidas y Activas; United Farm Workers; San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission; Service Employees International Union (SEIU); Vision y Compromiso

(b) Example of list of groups registering support for a bill

Figure 3.1. A typical bill analysis in the California legislature

The creation of this dataset offers several significant contributions to the study of interest group lobbying. First, the thousands of observations detailing the lobbying positions of interest groups over many years and the plethora of information can answer many different types of questions concerning lobbying influence, interest group networks, representation, and more. For example, one can use the unique names of the interest groups, their positions on bills, and legislators sponsoring the bill to more precisely create ideal point measures that reflect the latent ideological leanings of interest groups (Crosson, Furnas, and Lorenz 2020). Second, I used

this data to compare, tabulate, and analyze RMIGs activity over 20 years for this dissertation. Leveraging this data allows me to observe RMIG lobbying proclivities and the coalitions they form in their activities.

3.3 Data Survey from the 2020 Cooperative Election Study (CES) and the Collaborative Multi-racial Post-Election Survey (CMPS)

To understand the role of RMIGs in the public's perception and their ability to influence political choice, I fielded a set of survey questions and survey experiments in two national surveys. I recognize that a part of RMIGs' ability to influence politics is the trust and legitimacy they glean from the public and their respective racial groups. Are RMIGs consistently in contact with the public and their racial minority constituents? These survey experiments allow me to see whether the public trusts RMIG signals. Furthermore, it is also essential to ascertain whether RMIGs' signals can influence the public's political choices. I test this through a series of survey experiments that seek to determine whether the public would respond more to a hypothetical candidate endorsed by a RMIG than one that did not receive a RMIG endorsement when all other candidate characteristics are highly similar. These two surveys help enhance the understanding of how RMIGs interact with their racial constituents and the general public.

The 2020 Cooperative Election Study (CES) is a nationally representative study with a sample of 61,000 American adults. It seeks to study Americans' perception of Congress, vote choices, electoral behavior, and experiences across the country (Ansolabehere et al. 2020). Interviews were conducted in two waves for the 2020 CES. The pre-election questionnaire was fielded prior to the US presidential elections, while the post-election wave was fielded after November 8. In addition, I fielded a survey experiment on voters' candidate choices concerning a RMIG endorsement.

I also fielded the same survey experiment described above in the 2020 Collaborative Multi-racial Post-election Survey (CMPS). The CMPS differs from the 2020 CES because it

over-samples different racial minorities. The CMPS is a national survey of non-voters and voters on various political issues over the internet. For the 2020 CMPS, 14,988 interviews were collected online in a respondent self-administered format after the 2020 presidential elections. The survey was available in a variety of languages.

In the 2020 CMPS, each major racial minority group (Latinx, Black, Asian) made up 27% of the survey's total respondents (Frasure et al. 2020). The total respondents in 2020 CES, on the other hand, were made up of only 11% Black respondents, 9% Latinx respondents, and 3% Asian respondents. Leveraging this over-sample of racial minority respondents, I fielded a battery of questions related to racial minorities' perception and interaction with RMIGs and a survey experiment. I ask racial minority respondents whether RMIGs influence their decisions and whether RMIGs act as a source of political information. I replicated the survey experiment design used in the 2020 CES. A more extensive set of racial minority respondents will allow me to more closely test whether racial minorities are more affected by the RMIG candidate endorsement than their White counterparts. However, due to constraints on questions submitted to the survey, the experiment was limited to only one conjoint question on the CMPS. This limitation resulted in mostly null results for this survey experiment. Hence, I primarily rely on the 2020 CES data to draw more reliable conclusions.

3.4   Conclusion

My research design, paired with multiple data sources, allows me to disentangle the role of RMIGs in providing representation through lobbying. The centerpiece of my analysis is my new twenty-year data of California bill analyses. It improves over other available datasets due to its plethora of information, particularly the lobbying positions of interest groups on all bills considered in the legislature. I leverage this distinct feature of the dataset to develop an identifications strategy to test a range of hypotheses related to RMIGs' lobbying behavior and their ability to represent the marginalized segments of their constituency reliably. Finally, I

fielded a set of questions related to RMIGs' ability to communicate and influence the public on matters related to elections and politics on two national surveys. Together, these data allow me to comprehensively look at how RMIGs behave and work to lobby on behalf of their racial constituents. The subsequent empirical chapters use these data to test the hypotheses derived from my theory on RMIG lobbying behavior.

Chapter 4

Racial Minority Interest Groups (RMIGs) as Reliable Representatives

4.1 Introduction

As products of the social movements of the 1960s, RMIGs, like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), have long contended against powerful, well-funded and established interest groups. These organizations work to ensure that the interests of marginalized racial and ethnic groups are heard and represented in policymaking (Hero, Preuhs, and Meeks, 2019; Strolovitch 2006). However, little work is available to understand how RMIGs function and their strategies to achieve their policy goals successfully. With the current movements for social justice and expansion of protections for socially and historically disadvantaged groups (Bonilla and Tillery 2019), I contend that contemporary RMIGs help foster change and are therefore essential in the policy process. RMIGs are responsible for translating the demand of protesters and racial minorities into concrete public policies. As RMIGs transitioned into more formal organizations with established connections and "insider" access to legislatures, questions naturally arise concerning whether these organizations are reliable representatives of those they purport to help. A reliable representative refers to organizations that can represent the most marginalized members of their subgroup as much as members of the majority and elites. Are RMIGs susceptible to the same bias reflected in other advocacy organizations and interest groups? How well do RMIGs

represent the marginalized folks in their racial groups?

To address these questions, I first theorize and argue that predominant explanations grounded in traditional interest group behavior cannot provide a clear understanding of RMIGs or their roles as institutional sources of representation. RMIGs' origins, rooted in the civil rights and racial justice movements beginning in the 1960s, and their transformation and trajectory differ dramatically from traditional interest groups (Lê Espiritu 1992; Smith 1996; Alaniz and Cornish 2008; Kim 2020). RMIGs are solely dedicated to advocacy in racialized domains, and to understand them, we must re-conceptualize lobbying along racial lines and center race in the empirical analysis. From the perspective of the interest group lobbying literature, I argue that applying race to the study of lobbying provides unique and understudied insights into how "new interests"—those that have come to new prominence in the last forty years—are integrated into the American political system. Studying RMIGs' roles in representation and lobbying fills in a gap within the lobbying literature that fails to account for racial groups' rise in lobbying and how these uniquely situated groups can assert influence in a competitive and crowded political arena (Walton, Miller & McCormick II 1995).

Furthermore, the general dominance of mass behavior research in the race and politics subfield has often crowded out other dimensions and areas of politics, like that of interest groups in the state legislative arena or the courts (Hero, Preuhs & Meeks 2019). My theory provides a starting point for evaluating how lobbying operates for racial groups in the U.S. and interest groups' role in their representation in American democracy.

In this chapter, I demonstrate that RMIGs are reliable representatives of the communities they claim to represent. Moreover, RMIGs are active in lobbying on topics that generally reflect the most salient issues of their constituents. Using text analysis and structural topic modeling, I show that RMIGs are not biased in their lobbying activities. They do not exclusively advocate on narrow issues that only benefit the advantaged-subgroups or economically well-off members. Instead, RMIGs are reliable representatives because they s possess a consistently diverse lobbying agenda and advocate on issues that matter to their disadvantaged-subgroup as much or more

than their advantaged-subgroup. In addition, they consistently lobby on issues that affect their marginalized members, like women or the poor, and often at high levels compared to the elites and majorities in their groups.

Overall, these findings offer a less pessimistic view of representation for marginalized communities. RMIGs possess a diverse issue agenda that includes substantial advocacy for intersectionally disadvantaged-subgroups within the racial group itself. Moreover, my results reveal how lobbying can serve as an effective form of representation for voters of color; it also broadens our definition of representation that goes beyond the confines of the ballot box to explore a critical dimension of the political process—that of lobbying. As a distinct type of interest group born from social movements and who primarily occupy racial spaces, RMIGs hold strategic incentives to build lobbying coalitions that push them to lobby on diverse issues and to be more attuned to the problems of intersectional biases. Relative to traditional interest groups, RMIGs possess fewer financial resources, presence, and political tools. Hence, RMIGS rely on informational lobbying and look to their strengths in fashioning large and diverse coalitions to overcome their handicaps in resources and political power. They must depend and build on their legitimacy to show legislators and collaborators that they are the authentic voices of their racial minority communities. This legitimacy allows them to send credible informational signals and strengthen their ability to build winning coalitions.

4.2 Assessing Biases Among Advocacy Organizations and RMIGs

Organizations that claim to represent marginalized communities, like RMIGs, are not bound to those they purport to represent in the same ways as elected officials. Elected officials are held accountable to their constituencies through elections, but this is not the case for RMIGs (Strolovitch 2007). Hence, advocacy organizations like RMIGs are not quickly obligated to respond to those they claim to represent, especially if they are not formal members or

financial supporters of these groups. RMIGs, without a more robust formal mechanism for accountability, claim to represent the interests of their racial group generally. For example, the RMIG, Asian Americans Advancing Justice, claims to "advance civil and human rights for Asian Americans"[1], while the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) states its commitment to "protect and defend the rights of all Latinxs living in the United States and the constitutional rights of all Americans".[2] It is, therefore, crucial to assess the biases they may have in their work as the representatives of their racial and ethnic groups in legislative lobbying.

Previous scholars note that advocacy organizations tend to skew towards middle-class interests within their organization or towards the interests of an advantaged subgroup. The mobilization of bias is also present among advocacy organizations representing marginalized groups. Schattschneider (1960) famously quipped, "The flaw in the pluralist heaven is that the heavenly chorus sings with a strong upper-class accent." Liberal groups generally shift their attention and priority mainly on issues that matter only to the middle-class, such as environmental issues, at the expense of the poor (Berry 1999; Skocpol 2003). Based on Downsian logic, these advocacy organizations cast aside the issues of a minority of their constituencies in favor of their median members' policy priorities. As Downs (1957) suggests, appealing to the "median" member to maximize support is a logical and effective strategy. Organizations will focus their resources on issues that matter to a wide range of their constituents and avoid issues that only affect a small number of their constituency (Kollman 1998; Kingdon 1995). Strategic concerns and organizational methods would also push advocacy organizations to be inclined towards narrow or niche policy areas to maintain their competitiveness (Browne 1990; Gray and Lowery 1996). From these perspectives, organizations have a strategic incentive to only advocate on specialized issues that matter to the median member of their constituencies.

In her foundational work *Affirmative Advocacy*, Strolovitch (2007) convincingly demon-

---

[1]Asian Americans Advancing Justice Mission Statement. Accessed January 4, 2020.
[2]Mexican-American Legal Defense Fund Mission Statement. Accessed January 4, 2020.

strates that marginalized groups are more likely to dedicate more significant resources and attention to issues that their advantaged-subgroups care about than the issues that matter to their disadvantaged-subgroups. Strolovitch (2007) also finds that although most groups are substantially less active in advocating for disadvantaged-subgroups, some advocacy organizations engage in affirmative advocacy or advocacy dedicated to representing issues that affect a minority subgroup within their constituency. Her theorization of the affirmative advocacy framework provides a set of principles that characterize organizations that can offer some measure of advocacy for their disadvantaged-subgroups. Organizations can engage in affirmative advocacy by creating rules that prioritize disadvantaged-subgroup issues on organizational agendas. They can also set internal processes that promote disadvantaged-subgroups in the organization's structure, ensure descriptive representation in their staff and board and create stronger ties with local organizers.

The literature offers ample evidence of the bias that persists in whom advocacy organizations purport to represent. Nevertheless, a critical barrier to assessing whether advocacy organizations and RMIGs, as an extension, are biased in their representation is the difficulty that scholars face in observing these organizations' lobbying and advocacy activities. Most work on interest group lobbying depends on reports from the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 (LDA) or similar lobbying disclosure reports from relevant state governments (LaPira and Thomas 2017; Furnas et al. 2019; Kim 2018). However, these data are self-reported and can be incomplete, especially on information related to the interest group's objectives and positions on the policies that they are lobbying on. Hence, gaining a clear sense on the legislative activity and advocacy of interest groups can be challenging.[3] Few works, except for Strolovitch (2007) and Phinney (2018), examine the role of organizations that represent marginalized communities since these organizations often lack the resources to pay for lobbyists or have in-house lobbyists that meet the definitions required for disclosure. They are often excluded from LDA reports and other disclosures, making it challenging to piece together their lobbying activities.

---

[3]Recently, Lorenz (2020) introduced lobbying data compiled by the nonprofit and nonpartisan organization MapLight. This dataset records instances of organizations taking a clear position on congressional bills from 2005 to 2018 for about 16,000 unique organizations.

To overcome these shortcomings, as discussed in Chapter 3, I compiled a novel and large dataset of California bill analyses to assess the observed positions of bills that racial minority interest groups (RMIGs) lobby. From 1997 to 2018, this dataset contains every bill considered in the California state legislature and records the official positions of organizations that lobby on the bill. By analyzing the types of bills that receive lobbying from RMIGs, I can evaluate whether RMIGs represent everyone in their groups and offer new insight into the advocacy agendas of Latinx, Black, and Asian RMIGs.

4.3 Hypotheses

Disparities in resources and presence among RMIGs, combined with lower electoral participation rates among their constituents, intuitively translate into disparities in policy influence (Strolovitch and Forrest, 2010; Strolovitch 2007). RMIGs seem to hold neither the ability to threaten electoral punishment nor reward compliance because the people they claim to represent have historically low rates of political participation and have fewer financial resources to support campaigns. However, we observe legislative successes for racial minorities and legislators are responsive to their needs under certain circumstances (Grose 2011; Swain 1993; Gause 2022). Such success alludes to a set of strategies that RMIGs use to overcome their financial weakness and utilize their strengths as a visible constituency with high human capital.

Organizations can exert influence in two ways: pressure through campaign contributions and money or pressure through information provision, especially about the possible electoral consequences of taking a position on a bill (Smith 1995; Powell and Grimmer 2016). A critical strain of the literature on lobbying focuses on interest groups' use of money to influence legislative behavior (Smith 1995). Conventional arguments on the influence of interest groups' campaign contributions argue that there is a quid pro quo agreement between candidates and contributors. Yet the evidence for this claim is mixed (Durden, Shogren, and Silberman 1991; Fellowes and Wolf 2004; Witko 2006; Chappell, 1981; Grenzke 1989; Wawro 2001; Ansolabehere, de

Figueiredo, and Snyder 2003; Baumgartner et. al 2009). More recently, scholars have shown that monetary contributions sit at the core of interest groups' strategies and that they use these contributions to buy access to legislators (Powell and Grimmer 2016; Kalla and Broockman 2016).

Interest groups can also provide information about the possible electoral consequences of taking a position on a bill (Ainsworth, 1993; Austen-Smith, 1993). Elected officials are uncertain about electoral and policy outcomes, and interest groups exploit this uncertainty by strategically providing information to try and influence legislators' behavior. Informational theory argues that providing information reduces uncertainty for legislators and allows interest groups to gain influence in the policy process (Austen-Smith and Wright 1992). As a result, they may create credible claims of electoral salience and exaggerate the effects of policy decisions. The key point here is that the claims must be credible. Claims of electoral salience, or potential mobilization against a legislator, will have little influence unless they are perceived as accurate or likely.

Due to their financial weakness and lack of resources, RMIGs will be more likely to engage in informational lobbying than through campaign contributions. I contend that they would turn towards their strengths as conduits and representatives of their racial groups and their ability to build coalitions more readily. Racial minorities are visible constituencies in that legislators can easily ascertain the potential electoral power of these groups by examining the demographic make-up of their district. Legislators know, with close to absolute certainty, about the racial make-up of their district due to census data, district constituency servicing, and home-style politicking (Butler and Dynes 2020). Conversely, they might not be so sure about the group size of other interest groups. This uncertainty can be advantageous for RMIGs since they can more easily communicate their relative threat or support strength to the legislator. Suppose that legislator represents a district with a substantial or markedly large amount of the RMIG's potential or actual membership. In that case, it is rational for them to take the RMIG's signaling on a bill seriously.

In these ways, I contend that RMIGs can serve as an effective mode of representation

for racial minorities. I postulate that RMIGs are reliable representatives of their racial/ethnic constituency and provide active advocacy on a range of issues rather than on a set of policies that matter only to their advantaged-subgroups since their ability to persuade is dependent on being credible and viewed as true voices or reliable representatives of their racial minority groups. Again, I define a "reliable representative" as an organization representing the disadvantaged members of their subgroup as much as those of the advantaged majority members (Strolovitch 2007). A reliable representative adopts a lobbying agenda that reflects the interests of all members' interests across social and economic groups. Thus, I expect RMIGs' advocacy agendas to be more inclusive than non-RMIGs.

For one, the strategic incentives for RMIGs place a premium on legitimacy and the ability to build coalitions with other groups. Advocating for a disadvantaged group show both insiders and outsiders that their organization advocates for the entire racial group and are genuine representative of the group (C. Cohen 1999; Kurtz 2002). There is a strategic gain from maintaining legitimacy because it strengthens RMIGs' credibility thereby enhancing their lobbying capabilities. Secondly, expanding lobbying to issues not limited to the elite or majority sections of their group allows RMIGs to appeal more to new members and potential collaborators. In expanding the issues, they also increase their ability to work in coalition with a diverse range of organizations, strengthening their lobbying positions and help maintains their survival (J. Wilson 1974). Hence, I would expect Hypothesis **H1**:

H1 RMIGs lobby on disadvantaged-subgroup issues as much as advantaged-subgroup issues and majority issues.

The structural barriers to lobbying for RMIGs encourage cooperation and coalition-building that also pushes RMIGs to expand their lobbying agendas to issues that benefit their respective marginalized subgroups and those belonging to different groups. As RMIGs compete in the lobbying arena, garnering support from other organizations would lead them to be active on various issues. For these reasons, I would expect Hypothesis (**H2**).

52

H2 RMIGs are active on a diverse range of issues, beyond their racial group's policy priorities.

Like Dawson's (1994; 2001) theory of linked-fate, I contend that RMIGs' group interests are intertwined with each other and potential, similarly-situated allies. Moreover, the racialized constraints on their advocacy work reinforce the sense of linked fate between the organizations and those they advocate for, as Dawson (1994) suggested. Thus, the racial connection is more profound than other dimensions, like socio-economic class or gender. To be sure, individual Blacks and Latinxs cooperate more when they have a higher recognition of common disadvantages than Whites (Kaufmann 2003). Moreover, the social context of inter-group elite relations (at the RMIG level) in the broader national arena facilitates stronger recognition of shared disadvantages among Blacks and Latinxs relative to Whites (Hero and Pruehs 2013). Beyond commonality, RMIGs have an overarching incentive to build coalitions in a resource-driven lobbying environment. Resources are critical to the success of social movements, and organizations pushing for social change are strategic in maximizing their resources to reach their goals (McCarthy and Zald 1977). RMIGs, at the elite group level, are pushed to coalesce in coalitions to exert influence better. The strategy of coalition-building is particularly significant to marginalized groups because their constituencies comprise small portions of the public, but their numbers increase tremendously when they work with others. The result of these strategies is RMIGs' involvement in issues beyond the interests of their advantaged-subgroups.

4.4   Research Design and Data

To test these two hypotheses, I used my California bill analyses from 1997 to 2018. These bill analyses, as described in Chapter 3, contain information regarding the topic of the bill, the author, a description of the proposed change, date of submissions, and a listing of organizations that formally sent in letters supporting or opposing the bill. The listings of organizations formally supporting or opposing a proposed law are a record of these groups' lobbying activities. When an organization sends a letter, it sends an informational signal of its approval or disapproval of a

policy. Legislators and their staff see these signals all through the legislative process. It is a clear indication of an attempt to lobby or sway legislators' vote choices. These listings also allow researchers to map and track the types of policies that interest civic and private groups.

Using these listings, I identify and analyze the bills that received a support or opposition signal from a RMIG. Their position on a bill indicates the types of issues that these organizations care about and can be used to describe RMIGs' lobbying trends. RMIG signals were identified based on the name of the RMIG, and whether they were registered as in support or in opposition to a bill. A letter of support or opposition from a group explicitly identifying themselves as representatives of Latinx, Black, or Asian interests is recorded as a lobbying signal for this analysis. For example, the organization "Asian Health Services" explicitly advocates for the public health of Asian-Americans and clearly has the word "Asian" in their name. Therefore, they are recorded as an Asian RMIG. If they sent a letter supporting or opposing a bill, they would also be sending a lobbying signal. From 1997 to 2018, RMIGs supported 2530 bills and opposed 512 bills or roughly 5% of bills considered.

To assess the degree to which RMIGs represent their marginalized subgroups and test H1, I categorize and count the number of times they signaled support or opposition on issues identified by Strolovitch (2006; 2007) being important to marginalized subgroups for their racial group. I compare my findings against Strolovitch's (2006; 2007) policy typology that is based on intersectionality, with a particular focus on the categories of *disadvantaged-subgroup issues* and *advantaged-subgroup issues*. Within this policy typology are four categories that correspond to the types of issues that affect or matter to the organization's members. Figure 4.1 shows Strolovitch's (2006) conception of a four-part issue typology along two axes, one that relates to the political power of those affected by the policy issue and one that identifies whether they are a part of a sub-group or the majority. From this conception, I borrow Strolovitch's (2006) issue types: 1) Universal issues which are the issues that theoretically affect the population as a whole; 2) Majority issues or issues that affect the members relatively equally; 3) Disadvantaged-subgroup issues "which only affect a subgroup of an organization's members who are disadvantaged

economically, socially, or politically compared to the broader membership"; and 4) Advantaged-subgroup issues "which also affect a subgroup of an organization's members, but one that is relatively strong or advantaged compared to the broader membership" (Strolovitch 2006). From these categories, Strolovitch identifies the main *disadvantaged-subgroup issue* for each of the three RMIG types (Table 4.1). I used these issues to evaluate whether RMIGs are representative of their subgroups.

	Affects Subgroup	Affects Majority of Group
Low Power	Disadvantage Subgroup Issue	Majority Issue
High Power	Advantaged Subgroup Issue	
Power varies	Universal Issue	
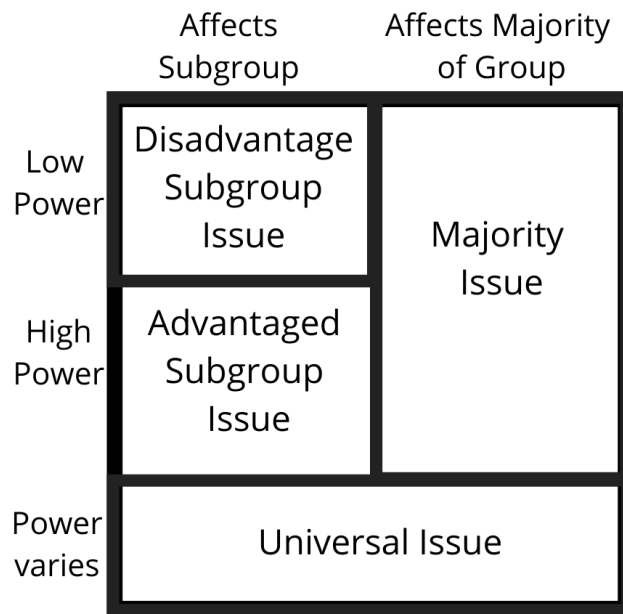
Figure 4.1. Strolovitch (2007) Policy Typology

Table 4.1. Specific Policy Issues Used in Survey of National Exonomic and Social Justice Organizations (SNESJO) Questions by Racial Organization Type and Issue Category (Strolovitch 2007

Organization Type	Majority Issue	Advantaged Subgroup Issue	Disadvantaged Subgroup Issue
Asian Pacific American	Hate crime	Affirmative action in government contracting	Violence against women
Black/ African American	Racial profiling	Affirmative action in higher education	Welfare
Latinx/Hispanic	Census undercount/ representation	Affirmative action in higher education	Welfare

Note: Policy issues assigned to each organization type are from Table 1 of Strolovitch (2006) and are based on their selection of issues according to their typology.

For example, Strolovitch (2006) identifies violence against women as a disadvantaged-subgroup issue for Asian/Pacific American organizations. I can use my data to count and compare the number of times Asian RMIGs have lobbied on disadvantaged-subgroup issues compared to their advantaged-subgroup issue of affirmative action in government contracting. If RMIGs are reliable representatives and represent marginalized subgroups, we ought to observe equal signaling activity on both disadvantaged- and advantaged-subgroup issues.

What bills are RMIGs interested in, and how active are they over time? As identified by the bill analyses, I test H2 by categorizing the topics that RMIGs lobby on and use machine learning to classify topics and model their relationship to each RMIG type. I map the types of policy domains that each primary RMIG type (Latinx, Black, Asian) have spent time supporting or opposing in the California legislative arena by using the information associated with each bill analysis and the name given to the bill. A clearer understanding of issues beyond broad topics could be achieved by analyzing the title of the bills. By law, the title of a bill must also identify

the subject matter of the measure and the code sections it will affect. I use the relevant coding guidelines of the Comparative Policy Agendas Project[4] to classify the overall types of bills that RMIGs have lobbied on based on the bills' digests and titles.[5] This topic coding system has been successfully used to code legislation at the federal level in the United States and other countries. Observations are coded based on the predominant substantive policy area and not on the target of the policy. This coding strategy provides a general understanding of the topics of interest for RMIGs.

I also use Structural Topic Models (STM) to machine classify a more specific subject theme for bills that RMIGs decide to lobby on.[6] I use the machine classifications from the STM to first validate my hand-coding classifications and to also provide greater detail of these various topics compared to the general hand-coding of the topics. For instance, I estimated fourteen to twenty topics using the structural topic model. Next, I examined the effect of receiving a support or opposition signal from a Latinx, Black, or Asian RMIG on the topic proportion of classified topics[7]. By doing so, I can discern the likelihood of each type of RMIG signaling a support or opposition stance on a particular topic compared to the other RMIGs.

4.5   Findings

4.5.1   RMIGs Advocate More on Disadvantaged-subgroup Issues

In support of H1, Figures 4.2 to 4.4 indicate that RMIGs are just as active if not more active on issues that matter to disadvantaged-subgroups than the majority or advantaged-subgroups. For each RMIG type, I find that the number of lobbying signals on disadvantaged-subgroup

---

[4]The Policy Agendas Project at the University of Texas at Austin, 2017. www.comparativeagendas.net. Accessed September 26, 2020.

[5]See U.S. Bills Dataset from the Policy Agendas Project. E. Scott Adler and John Wilkerson, Congressional Bills Project: (2020), NSF 00880066 and 00880061. The views expressed are those of the authors and not the National Science Foundation.

[6]Structural Topic Modeling (STM) is a form of topic modeling that employs metadata about the documents to improve the assignment of words to latent topics in a corpus of text. In other words, STM allows for a reliable unsupervised method of identifying the topics of bills that are of interest to RMIGs and modeling the relationship between these topics and whether they received a signal from one of the three major RMIGs.

[7]See Appendix C for a more precise description of the STM Model.

issues is as much or greater than the number of signaling on advantaged-subgroup issues. Note that roughly 2% to 9% of total support and opposition signals sent by RMIGs were directed to bills dealing with disadvantaged-subgroup issues. It also seems to be the case that Latinx RMIGs are most active on these issues, followed by Black RMIGs, then Asian RMIGs. Interestingly, issues that were determined to be in favor of advantaged-subgroups were less than 2% for all three RMIG types.

Moreover, the proportion of advocacy on disadvantaged-subgroup issues is significantly different from that on advantaged-subgroup.[8] Overall, these patterns suggest very little to no bias towards advantaged-subgroups, and that RMIGs are devoting substantial effort to lobbying on disadvantaged-subgroup issues. This finding supports the hypothesis that RMIGs lobby as much or more on issues that matter to their disadvantaged members (H1). In the case of Asian-American RMIGs, their disadvantaged-subgroup issue is violence against women, while its advantaged-subgroup issue is affirmative action in government contracting. For Asian-Americans, the majority issue is racial discrimination (see Table 4.1). I find that roughly 2% of all Asian-American RMIG signals of support and opposition are to bills that relate to domestic violence or violence against women. At the same time, about 0.6% dealt with state contracting for minority businesses. Roughly 2% of all bills dealt directly with issues of racial discrimination or hate crimes (Figure 4.2).

---

[8]Calculated t-test for difference in proportions are significant at the 0.01 level.

Figure 4.2. Percent of Asian RMIG Activity on Disadvantaged-Subgroup Issues vs. Advantaged-Subgroup Issues vs. Majority Issues

Disadvantaged-subgroup issues for Black people are those that deal with welfare, while the advantaged-subgroup issues pertain to affirmative action in higher education (Figure 4.3). The majority issue for Black RMIGs is racial profiling. Signals on the disadvantaged-subgroup issue of welfare make up 5% of total signals sent, compared with only 2% of signals on the advantaged-subgroup issue. Signals on the majority issue make up 4% of Black RMIGs' total signals. Like Black RMIGs, the disadvantaged-subgroup issue for Latinx RMIGs is welfare, while their advantaged-subgroup issue is affirmative action in education. The majority issue for them is the census undercount. Since the period of the data covers only two census counts, I also included issues that dealt with the underrepresentation of the Latinx community in state statistics and other similar issues. Latinx RMIGs focus a substantial amount of their signaling on the disadvantaged-subgroup issue, about 9% of total signals. They devote less than 1% of their signaling towards the advantaged-subgroup issue and even less towards issues about the majority issue of census undercount or underrepresentation (Figure 4.4).
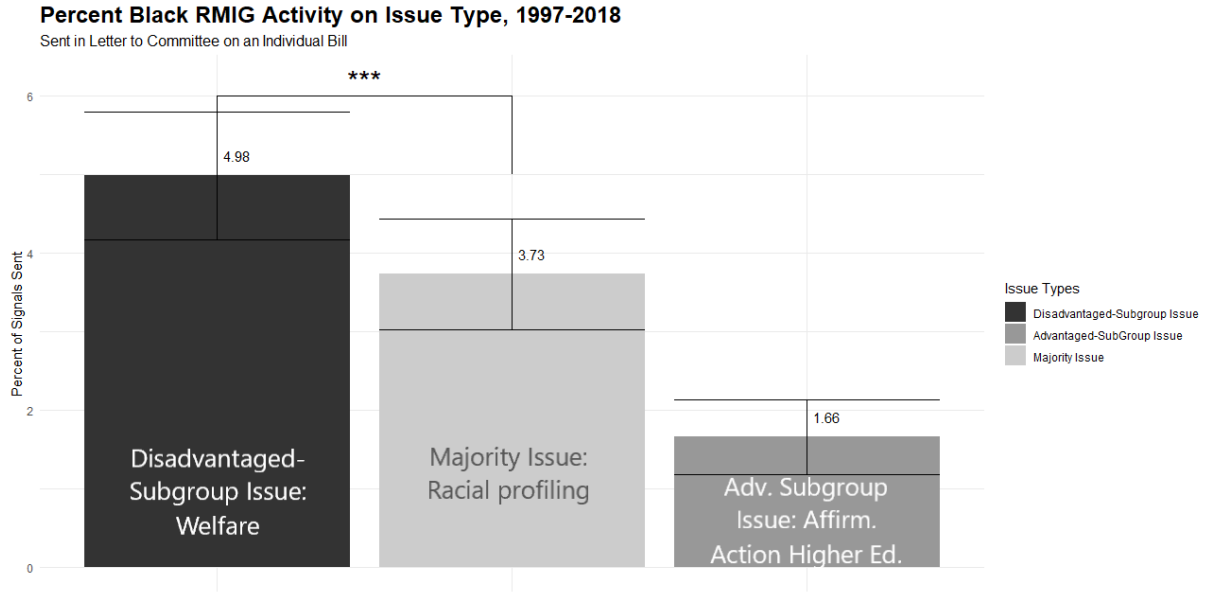
Figure 4.3. Percent of Black RMIG Activity on Disadvantaged-Subgroup Issues vs. Advantaged-Subgroup Issues vs. Majority Issues

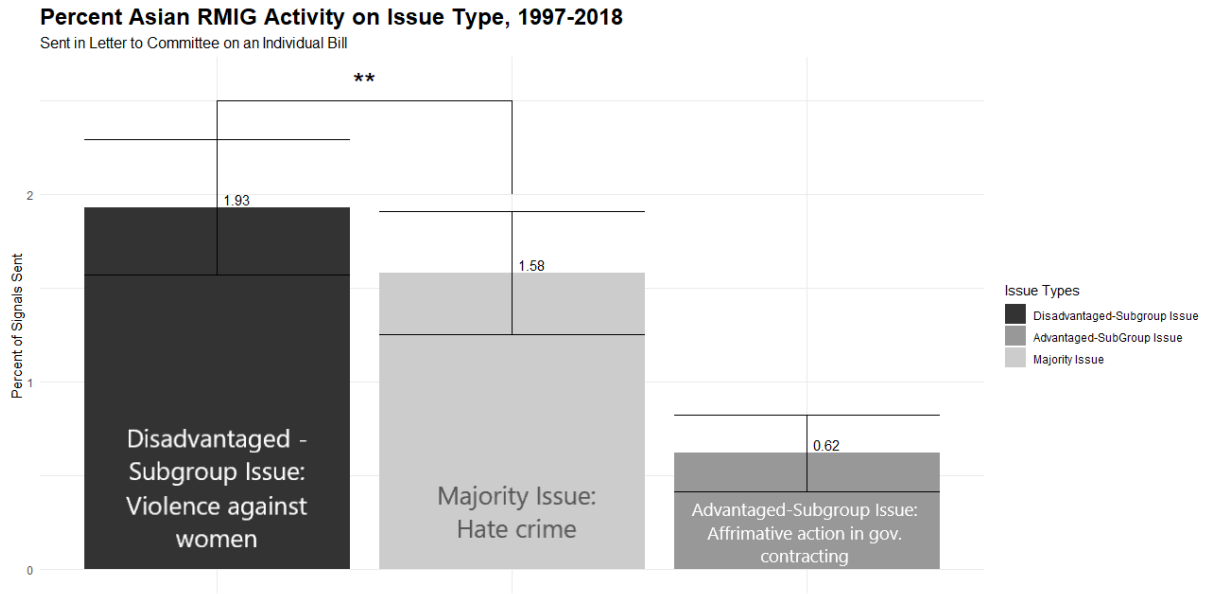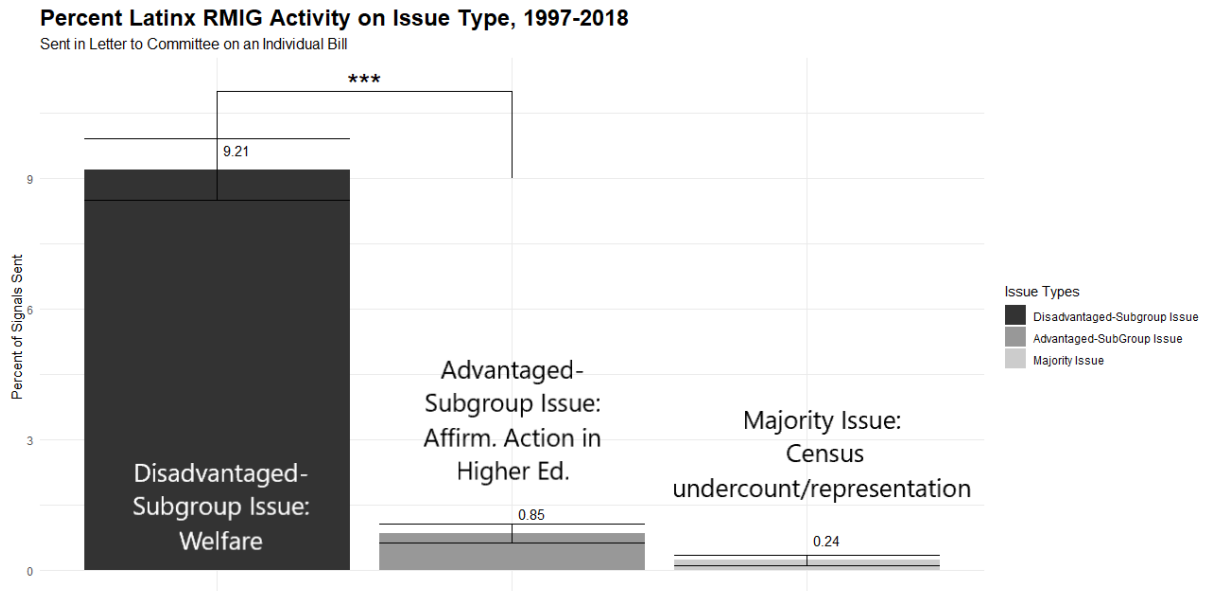**Figure 4.4.** Percent of Latinx RMIG Activity on Disadvantaged-Subgroup Issues vs. Advantaged-Subgroup Issues vs. Majority Issues

Though these counts are low, a cursory look at the general topics shows that most of their lobbying efforts focus on healthcare access, expanding educational access, reforming prison and law enforcement, and expanding welfare programs (Figure 4 and Figure 5). Such topics contain bills aimed at improving the lives of disadvantaged populations within their racial groups. A clear illustration of this is evidence of lobbying by RMIGs on LGBTQ+ issues. In this period, RMIGs from each racial group supported legislation that prevented discrimination based on sexual identity. There were also prolonged activities to support policies that expanded the rights of same-sex couples, revised school curricula to raise awareness about LGBTQ+ identities and teach tolerance, and expanded HIV testing. Such lobbying activities were far from one-offs; they occurred throughout this period. Altogether, the data reveal that RMIGs were highly active in supporting the interests of intersectionally marginalized folks in their group. Compared to the majority or the advantaged people in their groups, RMIGs devote more effort to the needs of the most vulnerable.

4.5.2   RMIGs Lobby on a Diverse Range of Policy Issues

Figure 4.5 and Figure 4.6 show that RMIGs are active on a diverse range of issues, beyond their racial group's policy priorities. Counting the frequency of RMIG signals and their topics shows that the top five general topic areas that saw RMIGs signaling support are health, civil rights, law/crime, labor, and education. At the same time, they are also active across many different types of policy areas. In all, RMIG lobbying occurred in eighteen general topic areas: the environment, foreign trade, and government operations. A sizable amount of lobbying occurs in areas that might not be traditional policy areas of interest for racial minorities. For example, issues relating to the environment are among the top ten major topics. RMIGs went from signaling on no environmental bills in the early 2000s to thirteen in 2017.
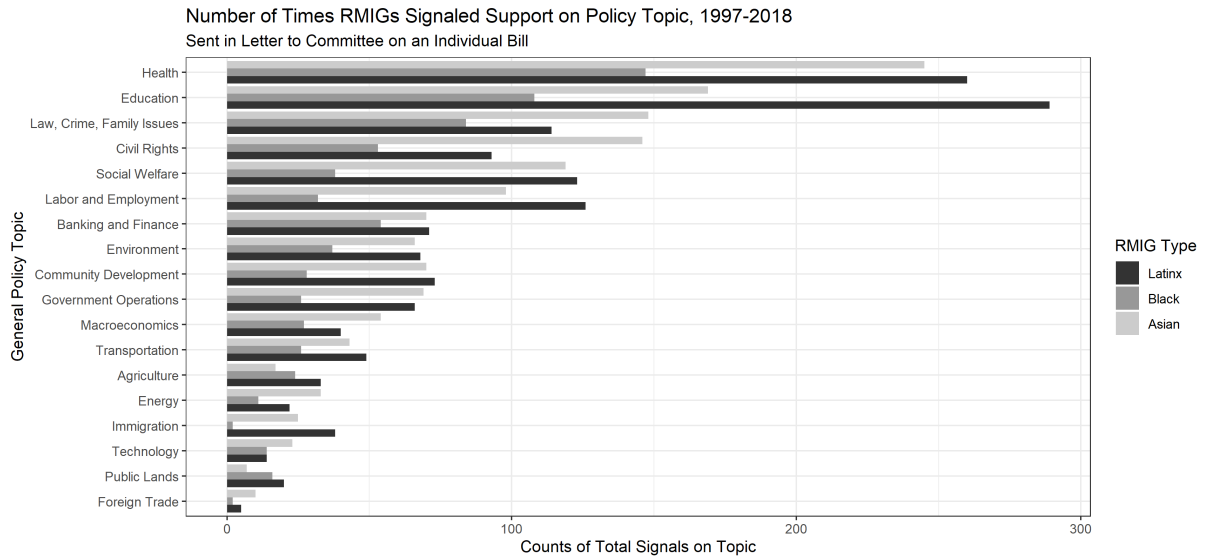
Figure 4.5. Frequency of RMIGs' signaling support on a general policy topic
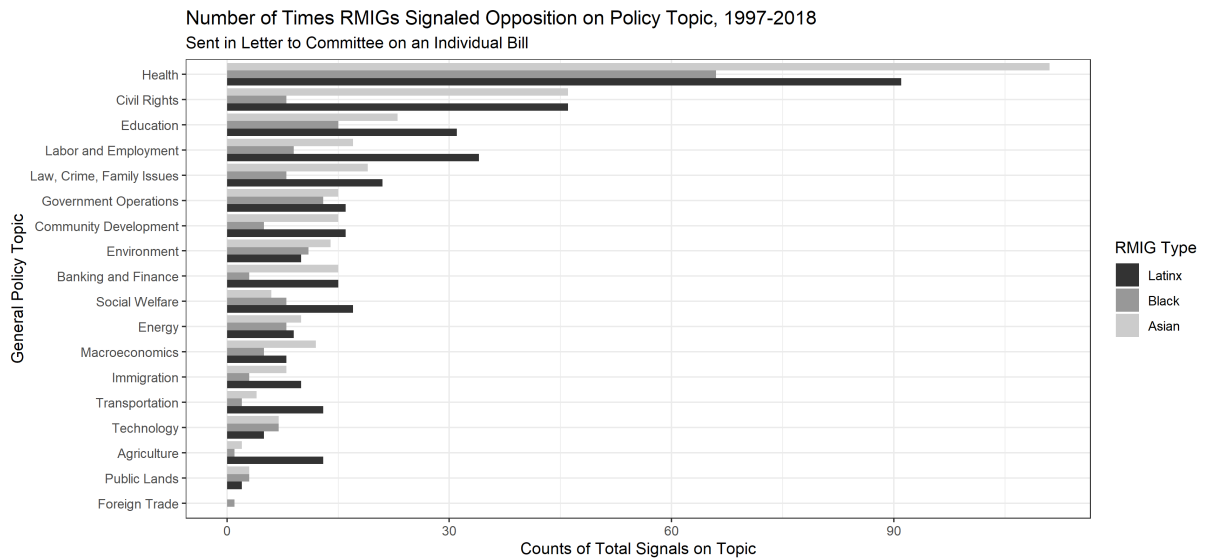
Figure 4.6. Frequency of RMIGs' signaling opposition on a general policy topic

Does the level of interest in these major topics differ across racial group lines? Each RMIG type has a varying frequency of lobbying signals on each topic. Latinx RMIGs are active in each of these main areas. They consistently make up the bulk of signals for these policy topics. Asian RMIGs also actively support policies but are most active on civil rights issues and law and crime topics. Black RMIGs mostly signal support on bills dealing with commerce

and business-related topics, the environment, health, and crime. This finding reflects previous polls on racial minorities' issue preferences (Hajnal et al. 2007). Health, education, civil rights, law/crime, and labor are policy topics that receive the most RMIG opposition signals. Issues on government operations and the environment also rank at the top of topics likely to receive an opposition letter from a RMIG. Asian RMIGs along with Latinx RMIGs are most active on civil rights issues, specifically those that deal with voter registration and voter ID requirements. Health insurance and expanded coverage seem to be a continual issue for all three RMIG types, along with concerns on legal and criminal policies. Such issues reflect previous findings on racial minority populations' national policy concerns. The 2016 Collaborative Multi-Racial Post-Election Survey (CMPS) reported that racial minorities' main policy priorities were healthcare, civil rights, wages, and education (Frasure et al. 2016).

A word-cloud of bill topics that RMIGs signaled support on from 1997 to 2018 shows that "health", "program", "services", "education" and "school" seem to be the main words used in the topic of bills that have a RMIG signal of support (Figure 4.7). It shows that bills dealing with issues relating to public services, healthcare, and education are at the top of RMIG agendas. Similar words also appear in topics opposed by RMIGs, but also include civil rights-related words like "voting", "elections", and "identification" and business-oriented words like "taxes", "labor", and "contracts" (Figure 4.8). Some of the bills advocated by RMIGs had titles like: "Health Insurance: Healthy Families Program", "Medi-Cal Contract drug list", "Housing", "Fair Employment and Housing", etc. On the other hand, RMIGs sent in letters of opposition to bills titled: "Elections: Voting Identification", "Citizenship Assistance: Immigrants", "Human Services", "Worker's Compensation", "Bid Preferences: Disabled Veterans", and similar topics. There are parallels across the bill topics that RMIGs advocate for and the bills they oppose. RMIGs have shared interests or general policy topics. These findings show that RMIGs are not tied or limited to narrow interests but are active in different policy areas, as predicted by H2.

Figure 4.7. Wordcloud of bill titles supported by all RMGs
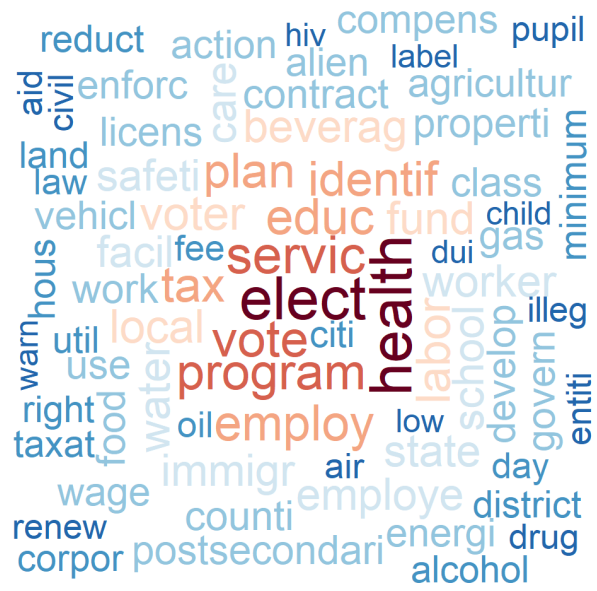
Figure 4.8. Wordcloud of bill titles opposed by all RMGs

4.5.3 RMIGs as Issue Owners

H2 posited that RMIGs lobby on diverse issues and are not limited to narrow interests. After validating my coding and identifying more specific topics within the corpus of bill topics with the structural topic model (STM), I show that the diversity of issues varies by RMIG type and reflects their priorities. Latinx, Black, and Asian RMIGs have distinct policy preferences within the policy topics they lobby on, indicating stable and coherent policy interests. The varying level of signals on major policy topics alludes to differences in the priorities of each RMIG type. Specific issues are more prominent among one type of RMIG compared to others. The STM models show that RMIGs mostly share signals on bills with topics on voting/civil rights, healthcare-related issues, welfare programs, labor laws, and public education policies. All three major types of RMIGs signaled opposition on bills with topics mainly relating to elections, particularly on the requirement of an ID when voting. This tracks with what we find in our hand-coded topics above (Figure 4 and 5). However, once we have modeled the topics based on prevalence of words and whether the document received a signal from a RMIG, we can use the classifications produced to analyze the relationship between the classified topic and the individual RMIG type. The topics likely to be associated with a Latinx, Black, or Asian RMIG are summarized in Table 4.2.

As Table 4.2 indicates, Latinx RMIGs are more likely to signal opposition to bills that are specifically related to access to college education, agricultural labor laws, minimum wage increases, and class size reduction policies compared to other Black or Asian RMIGs. There is a statistically significant and positive effect in receiving a signal of opposition from a Latinx RMIG on these four topics. The analysis also indicates that Latinx RMIGs are more inclined to signal opposition to voter ID laws, state services, state operations, and issues relating to services for undocumented workers. However, the effects are not statistically significant. Topics related to student financial aid for undocumented students, supporting bilingual education in schools, expanding welfare programs, and policies relating to racist school mascots have a significant

and robust relationship with a Latinx RMIG support signal. Latinx RMIGs are slightly more likely to signal support for healthcare coverage expansion, occupational safety regulations, green energy policies, and bills dealing with unfair hiring practices than Black or Asian RMIGs. In comparison to non-Latinx RMIGs, they are less associated with support signals for bills relating to state preferences for minority-owned business, and issues relating to student discipline.

Black RMIGs have a higher likelihood of signaling opposition to bills specifically related to taxation, government operations at the local level, and healthcare than non-Black RMIGs. Black RMIGs like the Black American Political Association of California consistently opposed attempts at increasing class sizes in public schools. Interestingly, there is a divide within RMIGs. To illustrate, the Black Chamber of Commerce and more business-oriented Black RMIGs, for example, act independently and sometimes against the interest of other Black, Asian, and Latinx RMIGs. For example, they consistently opposed health reforms on foods served in school even when other RMIGs supported such laws. The bills signaled by Black RMIGs are more related to business issues compared with non-Black RMIGs.

Table 4.2. Summary of Topics Most Likely to Receive a Signal by a RMIG Type

	Signal Support	Signal Opposition
Latinx RMIGs	School reforms & English learners*, Immigration issues & state assistance programs*, Public insurance program - expansions*, Affordable housing & development*, Healthcare coverage - expansion, Labor protections- wages & safety	Access to college education*, Agricultural labor laws*, Min. wage increase*, Class size reduction*, Voter registration & ID, State services, State operations & procedures, Public services & healthcare, Undocumented immigrants arrests, Undocumented workers licensing, Undocumented access to services
Black RMIGs	Public contracts & small businesses*, Voting & students' rights *, Insurance regulation & finance*, Environmental policies & emissions*, Student instruction, curriculum, attendance policies*, Immigration issues & state assistance programs Labor protections -wages & safety	Healthcare coverage*, State operations & procedures*, State taxation*, County law enforcement, Environmental justice, Access to college education, Local gov. land planning, State services, Employee safety, Water issues & quality, Class size reduction
Asian RMIGs	Voting & students' rights*, Symbolic acts, dedications*, Domestic violence issues, sentencing reforms*, College access, financial aid eligibility* Healthcare coverage expansion Affordable housing & development	Access to college education*, Voter registration & ID*, State taxation*, Property taxation, County law enforcement, Undocumented immigrants arrests, Healthcare coverage, Environmental justice issue, State services

Note: Topics are classified from the Structural Topic Model (STM), and topics associated with each RMIG type are computed from estimating the topic prevalence for each topic contrasted between each RMIG type. Topics with ∗ denote a statistically significant change in topic proportion at the 95% level.

The topics of state contracting preferences for minority businesses, student discipline reform, voting access, and transportation funding are strongly and significantly associated with a Black RMIG signal of support. Other topics that reform the use of racist mascots and expand state programs are also likely to receive a Black RMIG signal of support. Of the top 10 topics related to RMIGs, Black RMIGs are surprisingly less inclined to signal support for unfair or discriminatory hiring practices than Asian and Latinx RMIGs. They are also less inclined to signal support on bills relating to language access, like bilingual education or supporting those with limited English proficiency, compared to their Asian and Latinx counterparts. However, there are clear instances where they do signal with them.

Asian American RMIGs are most likely to signal opposition to education issues, voter registration laws, policing, and state services. According to the model, bills on access to college education, voter ID, and state tax laws are significantly related to receiving an Asian RMIG signal of opposition when controlling for other topics that received a Black or Latinx RMIG signal. Asian RMIGs are aggressively opposed to laws relating to voter identification, identifying undocumented students in schools or initiatives to push undocumented immigrants from public assistance, and changing university rates for nonresident students.

On the other hand, Asian RMIGs were likely to support bills that legislated preferences for minority-owned businesses and other contract-related policies, access to emergency services by those with limited English proficiency, access to college, and expanding protections against discriminatory hiring practices. For example, a policy to require California's Emergency Management Agency to take actions to assist people with limited English proficiency to prepare and understand information during state emergencies was continually advocated and supported by Asian RMIGs on four separate occasions over five years. Another clear policy of interest for Asian RMIGs was expanding college access by creating funding programs for college preparation, the expansion of community college districts, waiving specific fees, and lowering costs for attendance. Compared to Black and Latinx RMIGs, Asian RMIGs are less likely to signal support for bills that expand state programs, reform student discipline, and expand college

financial aid to undocumented students.

A more precise look at specific topics through the STM clarifies and strengthens H2 by showing that, though RMIGs lobby on diverse topics, their activities reflect coherent preferences. RMIGs "own" specific issue themes or domains that depend on the racial group they represent. The diversity of topics that RMIGs engage with are not random but fit within stable, complementary policy agendas.

4.6 Conclusion

Though scholars have noted biases in the activities of advocacy organizations that represent marginalized communities, I find evidence that racial minority interest groups (RMIGs) are reliable representatives of their communities. They do not leave behind the most vulnerable segments of their communities. My theory of RMIG advocacy sees RMIGs as a separate, distinct, and under-studied category of interest groups. I argue that RMIGs' unique role in racial/ethnic domains and historical birth from social movements provide them with distinct motivations and constraints. It also shapes their strength toward cooperative behavior and coalition-building. In analyzing the actual lobbying activity of RMIGs through support and opposition letters in formal letters, I find that RMIGs lobby on diverse issues that affect a range of individuals in their group. My findings also indicate that RMIGs represent the interests of disadvantaged-subgroups as much as or more than advantaged-subgroups and the majority.

I present substantial evidence that RMIGs regularly advocate for a wide array of issues for the marginalized people in their racial groups. Upon closer inspection, RMIGs can balance their focus on issues that pertain to the majority and the privileged with those critical to the less well-off and intersectionally disadvantaged. I attribute this to the unique historical trajectory of RMIGs, from their transition from the social movements of the civil rights era, and a strong strategic incentive to build coalitions with diverse organizations and the need to maintain legitimacy. In building these coalitions and engaging with other RMIGs and advocacy organizations, they find

69

themselves in policy domains that go beyond the preferences of their own racial group's elites and majority to issues that affect the intersectionally disadvantaged. Maintaining their credibility in the eyes of legislators require that they are active on the core issues that matter to those on the margins of their group.

For example, I found that RMIGs consistently lobby on domestic violence issues that matter to women and expand access to state-sponsored health insurance for the poor–issues that matter to the weakest parts of their racial group. The analyses demonstrate that RMIGs adequately balance the major issues of its groups with minor, niche topics that pertain to their disadvantaged constituents. Though they advocate for policy that affects many of their constituents, like racial discrimination or health disparities, RMIGs also are active in lobbying on issues that pertain to prison reform or undocumented workers who comprise a marginalized subgroup. All three major RMIG types generally have stable topics of interest that revolve around healthcare, schools, labor laws, and social welfare.

This chapter provides evidence that speaks to RMIGs' uniqueness systematically and precisely. More specifically, this work demonstrates the type and topic of the legislation that racial minority interest groups (RMIGs) lobby on. In analyzing the official positions that RMIGs take on bills, I model the broad topics associated with them to sketch out the issue agendas of racial minority groups. I provide a clear description of their lobbying activities and evaluate whether RMIGs are reliable representatives of their constituencies. Contrary to the perception that advocacy organizations become biased towards the median and elite interests within their ranks, I find that RMIGs are as active or more active on issues that matter to their disadvantaged-subgroups. RMIGs are fundamentally different from traditional interest groups and advocacy organizations, with incentives and barriers that are unique to them. Their ability to persuade is dependent on the legitimacy and maintaining the credibility of their racial minority constituents. These strong incentives push them to be more vigilant on issues that affect the marginalized members of their groups. These findings show that lobbying is a viable path of political representation for historically marginalized groups beyond representation via

electoral politics and other civic engagement activities. This study also opens a new avenue of exploration into how racial minorities build coalitions and cooperate to reach their legislative goals. Moreover, it shows that RMIGs are different from traditional lobbying organizations. The recognition and re-conceptualization of racial minority interest groups as a distinct type, with separate motivations, constraints, and incentives, allow for a better understanding of how weak, marginalized groups can create policy change. Doing so enables researchers to explore the relationships of these groups to each other and with other interest groups. How often do Latinx, Black, and Asian RMIGs work together? How often do they conflict?

Beyond this, I introduce exciting new data and identification strategies for studying interest group lobbying from a racial perspective to elucidate marginalized groups' positions on policy issues, their political ties to legislators, and their policy interests. Future race and ethnic scholars and interest group lobbying researchers can use this data to push the frontiers of research on how racial and ethnic groups use their organizations to influence policymaking and the legislative process. I establish in this chapter the reliability of RMIGs in representing the entire segments of their racial group rather than just the elites. The transition from social movement organizations to formal institutional lobbying organizations does not lead RMIGs to become solely focused on elite interests. There is very little to no bias towards elite interests that may have been shown in other advocacy organizations. RMIGs are unique in this aspect. In the next chapter, I hone in on the lobbying behavior of RMIGs. Are RMIGs excluded from the lobbying system or do they compete on par with other interest groups? What are their lobbying strategies? Chapter 5 examines RMIGs' lobbying activity and strategy of building large and diverse coalitions.

Chapter 4 is currently under review for the publication of the material. The dissertation author was the sole investigator and author of this paper.

Chapter 5

RMIG Lobbying Dynamics - Large and Diverse Coalitions

5.1 Introduction

In response to sustained and heinous police violence against Black Americans, thousands of people joined protests to advocate for reform. Their protests on the streets were buttressed by RMIGs, like the formal Black Lives Matter organization and the NAACP, in the lobbies of state legislatures across the country as RMIGs channeled the energy of this movement into concrete policies to reform policing and safeguard the rights and lives of Black and Brown people. RMIGs provide organized insider access to racial and ethnic groups that have been historically on the margins of power and politics by giving them an institutionalized source of representation. In this way, RMIGs are at the center of the momentous policy battles that matter to their racial and ethnic communities. However, we know very little about their activities or the conditions that make their lobbying successful.

I theorized in the previous chapters that RMIGs have a strategic incentive to build large and diverse lobbying coalitions, and doing so will increase their chances of success. I argue that lobbying with a sizable coalition that is also very diverse communicates to legislators the importance and credibility of the bill. It also affects and provides signals to the legislator's electoral concerns. Intuitively, a large and diverse coalition convinces legislators that the bill's provisions have merit and that many different constituencies would be displeased if they voted

the wrong way. Such findings provide a viable strategy for RMIGs —and other similarly situated interest groups who are marginalized and financially strapped —to maximize their lobbying efforts and so create effective change.

Consider again the work of RMIGs in the Black Lives Matter Movement and their push to institute police reform. Though successful initially, policies that limited police violence and created lasting changes seemed to have been derailed across the United States. This revelation is occurring even in a very liberal state like California, as noted in chapter 3. Attempts to reform policing faced significant opposition from politically powerful and well-financed police unions and their allies. So why have attempts by RMIGs to reform policing been so uneven when there seems to be a robust and sustained movement for it? My theory points to not the political will but the ability of RMIGs to strike down powerful groups successfully. Like David confronting Goliath, we must look at the "weapons" of RMIGs – the slings and stones– that they use to overcome elite interests, like the police unions in the movement for police reform. I suggest that the police reform bills led by RMIGs failed because they could not build large and diverse coalitions. At the same time, those who succeeded were able to bear the strong informational signals of very large and diverse coalitions.

Take into account a recent 2020 California bill, AB 731 by Assemblymember Bradford, that aimed to create a commission to oversee the decertifying of police officers who engage in serious misconduct.[1] This bill was opposed by a coalition of fourteen powerful police unions. On the other side, it was supported by a coalition of Asian, Latinx, Black RMIGs, and other organizations. This support coalition was made up of sixty-six organizations of six different types, ranging from government groups to advocacy organizations. Compare this bill's coalitional make-up to another police reform bill, AB 392 by Assemblymember Shirley Weber. AB 392 sought to revise the conditions in which a police officer may use deadly force.[2] Both were major reform efforts authored by prominent Democrats that politically-connected and well-financed

---

[1] AB 731 (2019) - Bradford (CA).

[2] AB 392 (2019) - Weber (CA).

police organizations opposed. Nevertheless, Weber's bill passed, and Bradford's bill died. Why was this the case? AB 392 by Weber had a supporting coalition of two-hundred and eleven organizations from eight different types of organizations that included clergy, other RMIGs, and business groups. This coalition was more than twice as large as Bradford's bill and more diverse. This comparison shows a difference in lobbying approaches among RMIG-supported police reform bills that became law and those that died. The RMIGs supporting successful bills created a massive and very diverse coalition, while the supporters of losing bills had a smaller and less diverse coalition.

The case above intuitively illustrates the main contention I make: a lobbying strategy that emphasizes the creation of large and diverse coalitions will maximize the chances of policy success for weak and marginalized RMIGs. The push for better policies that matter to racial and ethnic minorities requires RMIGs to reach out to allies. What little financial and political resources they have must be made-up in coalitional numbers and diversity.

This chapter seeks to dispel and unpack some of the uncertainty surrounding RMIG lobbying by empirically analyzing whether RMIGs can build large and diverse coalitions to compete on par with more well-financed and politically connected interest groups. In particular, I test two hypotheses. First, I contend that racial minority interest groups (RMIGs) look to their strengths in fashioning large and diverse coalitions to overcome their handicaps in resources and political power. As a result, RMIGs are more easily able to make large and diverse coalitions compared to other interest group types. I expect RMIGs to be on more diverse and larger coalitions than their non-RMIG counterparts. By doing so, they can effectively advocate for their communities and constituencies. Second, I expect them to be as active and successful as most traditional lobbying organizations. RMIGs can kill the bills they oppose and pass the bills they support at similar rates to non-RMIGs.

To test these claims, I analyze the level of activity for each primary RMIG type (Black, Latinx, Asian) in the lobbying process and a first cut look at how successful they are in passing bills they support and stopping bills they oppose. Overall, my findings lend support to my

hypotheses. RMIGs tend to be on much larger and more diverse coalitions than other interest group types, are active at similar rates as other notable segments of the interest group universe, and generally are effective at lobbying. The bills they support pass at higher levels than most non-RMIGs, and the bills they oppose die at higher or very similar rates to other traditional interest groups.

By conducting an in-depth examination of racial minority interest group lobbying, I find that contrary to Schattschneider's assertion, RMIGs are deeply involved in legislative advocacy and compete at comparable levels to other interest groups. RMIGs are a successful source of representation for racial minorities. These findings suggest that economic and social elites do not always dominate interest representation. Those with fewer resources and connections can have their interests represented under certain conditions. Leveraging their uniquely situated positions, RMIGs can create large and diverse coalitions to influence policy.

5.2   Hypotheses

One of the central insights of my theory, as described in chapter 2, is that the size and diversity of coalitions help overcome the significant barriers to lobbying and allow weak groups to exert influence in the policy-making process through informational signaling. The creation of large and diverse coalitions maximizes the credibility of their signals. Politicians are responsive to political pressure and want to pick the correct decision. Given the high uncertainty and resource constraints, legislators often look for information to help them pick positions that will help their reelection (Hansen 1991). Per the literature on lobbying as persuasion, interest groups exploit this uncertainty to provide legislators with strategic information to push them toward the interest groups' positions (Ainsworth 1993; Austen-Smith and Wright 1992). However, legislators receive an abundance of heterogeneous information from many sources in this uncertainty. Other lobbyists, committees, colleagues, and agencies are constantly providing information to the legislators as well (Kingdon 1995). RMIGs' signals must outperform or be

more dependable than other sources within this cloud of information and cues. The size and diversity of a lobbying coalition help dampen the noise of other groups to the benefit of the coalition and help their informational signals stand out. The critical insight of my theory is that RMIGs are much more adept at creating these large and diverse coalitions than other elite interest groups, like businesses or professional organizations (See Chapter 2).

Since no racial group comprises a significant portion of the constituency in every legislative district, RMIGs have an incentive to build large coalitions. They must make up for this lack in numbers by cobbling together a coalition of other racial minority interest groups and other types of interest groups. A large coalition of many groups more clearly and credibly communicates the legislator's potential electoral reward or punishment. Again, RMIGs can more easily create these large and diverse coalitions. Their history as social movement organizations and the nature of racial political participation make them much more adept at creating coalitions and cooperating with allies. This historical experience is what makes RMIGs qualitatively different from traditional lobbying organizations. The centrality of race in U.S. politics has created a group consciousness and commonality that RMIGs can build on with each other and similarly situated organizations. Like Dawson's (1994; 2001) theory of linked-fate, I contend that there is a prevalent belief among RMIGs that their group interests are intertwined with each other RMIGs and their potential allies. The racialized constraints on their advocacy work reinforce the sense of linked fate between the organizations and those they advocate for, as Dawson (1994) suggested.

Beyond a history and inclination towards coalition-building, RMIGs have a strong strategic incentive to do engage in this type of lobbying. Doing so leverages their experience but, more importantly, it is one of the few effective strategies available to them. The constraints related to resources and political power limit other options. Thus, I expect RMIGs will be more likely to build large, oversized coalitions than traditional interest groups (**Hypothesis H1**).

H1: RMIGs are more likely to be in large and diverse lobbying coalitions than non-RMIGs.

Given the historical constraints, struggles for equity, and shared experiences among RMIGs with their constituents and across RMIG organizations, RMIGs are more attuned and sensitive to the plight of others which helps them more easily partner with groups in other domains (Masuoka and Junn 2013; Hero, Preuhs, Meeks, 2019). This strategic imperative could be observed in their lobbying actions. Traditional organizations like business or professional groups often have the resources to "go-it-alone" or simply form minimal coalitions with like-minded organizations that share their narrow interests. They can afford to maintain autonomy to reinforce their distinct identity (Hojnacki 1997; Whitford 2003).

Engaging in this strategy of informational signaling with diverse and large coalitions could also improve RMIGs' success in passing bills they support and killing bills they oppose (Phinney 2018; Lorenz 2020). Consequently, I would also expect that RMIGs would be just as successful as non-RMIGs in achieving their legislative priorities (**Hypothesis H2**).

H2: RMIGs pass the bills they support, and defeat bills they oppose at the same rates as non-RMIGs.

In sum, I have two expectations. First, I expect RMIGs to be in much larger and more diverse coalitions than their non-racial lobbying counterparts because of the strong strategic advantage of increasing the credibility of their signals. Creating larger and more diverse coalitions also leverages their status as visible constituencies to better point to legislators' electoral concerns and pools resources to more effectively lobby. This strategy draws from RMIGs' unique ability to readily build and maintain coalitions and use their strengths in human capital to make up for their lack of material resources, as suggested by resource mobilization theory (McCarty and Zald 1977). Finally, and because of these strategies, I hypothesize that RMIGs are more able to compete on par with non-RMIGs in the lobbying realm. They pass bills they support and kill bills they oppose at higher rates than previously supposed in the lobbying literature.

5.3 Research Design and Data

I once again turn to my California Bill Analyses Data from 1997 to 2018 to test the hypotheses described in the previous section. Leveraging the unique features of the data, I can identify the interest groups engaging in lobbying during this period and analyze their activity. The main feature of these bill analyses is that it also records interest group positions. Individuals and organizations may register their support or opposition by sending a letter to the committee, and their name is present in the analysis for legislators and staffers to see. Moreover, analyses are re-written and updated every time a bill undergoes substantive change or moves to other committees and legislative chambers. This process feature allows me to track changes to a bill and its accompanying set of supporters and opposers as it proceeds through the legislative process.

To determine the type of groups signaling on each bill analysis, I hand-coded 3000 groups along 13 dimensions, ranging from business organizations to hospitals, based on prescribed definitions (See Appendix B). These classifications are adapted from Schlozman and Tierney's (1986) classification system, where interest group types are identified by their constituency and policy interests.[3] I then used an unsupervised method to code the rest of the roughly 91,265 unique groups that sent a letter during this period. I randomly administered quality spot-checks to ensure precision. To ensure reliability, a team of ten trained undergraduate researchers went through line-by-line each organization's name and machine-coding to verify that the group type is precisely verified.

A coalition is a partnership among interest groups to pursue a common goal (Phinney 2019). It can be formal or informal, but measuring informal coalitions can be challenging since such coalitions can be fleeting and coalesce for a specific issue. Hence, I measure coalitions as

---

[3]I used general lobbying group categories to code the groups along with a single predominant category. I recognize that some organizations have multiple dimensions to them. This complexity is difficult to capture and is highly time-consuming. Instead, my coders and I use all available information on the group to classify and agree on only one of the 13 general dimensions.

a set of groups who signaled their position on the same side of a bill. There is some level of coordination that occurs when groups send in letters signaling their position. Groups on the same side of a bill frequently work together, though this may not always be true. What is certain is that being on the same side of a bill shows that they share a common goal——to either support or defeat a bill. In this way, being on the same side satisfies the basic condition of a policy coalition to work towards passing and stopping legislation.

I measure the diversity of each coalition, both in support and opposition of bills, by calculating its Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (HHI) number. The HHI is a standard measure of market concentration and competitiveness, and its principles measure diversity and ethnic fractionalization in political science. Therefore, I adopt this measure to calculate the diversity of interest group coalitions. HHI is calculated by summing the squared market share of each competing firm in a market:

$$HHI = s_1^2 + s_2^2 + s_3^2 + ... s_n^2,$$

where S_n is the market share percentage of firm n expressed as a whole number.

The closer a market is to a monopoly, the higher the market's concentration and the less competitive or diverse that market is. Building on this idea, I calculate the coalition diversity score by squaring each group type's share of the *coalition* for a bill and summing it:

$$Diversity\ Score = \frac{g_1^2 + g_2^2 + g_3^2 + ... g_n^2}{1000},$$

where g_n is the coalition share percentage of group type n expressed as a whole number.

The diversity score for each support and opposing side of a bill is calculated using this formula. We scale it by dividing the score by 1000 to create a diversity score of 0 to 1. A coalition with a score closer to 1 is dominated by only one type of interest group signaling support or oppose on a bill, while one closer to 0 indicates many different groups engaged in signaling. If, for example, there was only one type of group in support of a bill, then its diversity score would equal 1, indicating no diversity in its coalition. This is because only one type of

79

group is signaling support. Conversely, a score of 0 would indicate complete diversity for the coalition signaling on a bill.

I use this identification strategy and measure to test whether RMIGs are on larger and more diverse coalitions (H1) by first counting the number of signals each group type sent and tabulating the number of groups in the support or oppose coalition of each bill. I then calculate the diversity of each coalition, measured as the concentration of each group type that sent a letter of support or opposition (HHI for a side) on every bill. Finally, I use legislative records to compute the success rates of RMIGs and non-RMIGs to test H2, which hypothesized that RMIGs are as successful as non-RMIGs in their legislative endeavors. Success rates are simply the percent of bills that received a support letter from a RMIG or non-RMIG and ended up at the governor's desk and the percent of bills that received an opposition letter and died in the legislature.

I must note that these lobbying signals in the shape of formal support and opposition letters are not "cheap talk" and carry weight with legislators. Since legislators must make voting decisions on thousands of bills in a legislative year, resources pale compared to the number of legislative responsibilities placed on state legislators. Moreover, the limited staff and constrained cognitive resources mean that legislators must look for shortcuts to emulate fully informed decisions and cope with uncertainty by depending on heuristics to guide decisions (Downs 1957; Kuklinski and Quirk 2001; Lau 2003; Popkin 1994). Thus, it stands to reason that RMIG signals of support (and opposition) can also act as information cues or heuristics for state legislators. These signals are also not cheap since they are often accompanied by in-person lobbying and meetings with legislators' offices. The letters themselves are circulated to many offices and end up as written parts of the public record. In doing so, RMIGs and other lobbying organizations are staking their reputations along with the positions they take. For interest groups and lobbying organizations, reputation is a vital resource that helps improve a group's likelihood of obtaining its goals (Hula 1999; Carpenter, Esterling and Lazer 2004; Leifeld and Schneider 2012). Each signal of support or opposition on a bill can damage or improve the lobbying organization's

80

reputation; hence, sending a signal is a substantial risk and could be costly.

Based on my experience observing the California legislature, I find that legislators examine support and opposition listings of a bill to help them make decisions. Staffers often highlight which groups oppose or support bills when creating their weekly vote recommendations. While on the floor, legislators scroll through the bill analyses on their laptops to look specifically at the support and opposition listings prior to a vote. Signals of support from a RMIG can act to activate legislators. It shows them that the issue is essential to racial minorities and communicates the vote preference of the racial minorities. Sympathetic legislators and those representing a large portion of racial minorities can use these heuristics to quickly make voting decisions when they have no clear personal position or are agnostic on the bills. Hence, a strategic imperative exists for RMIGs and other interest group types to consistently weigh in on policy proposals.

5.4   RMIGs Are More Likely to Be in Large and Diverse Coalitions

As Figure 5.1 indicates, a plurality of letters that are sent either in support (25%) or opposition (35%) of a bill is from business interests like the Chamber of Commerce or corporations. Government entities, such as cities or agencies, are the second most likely to send letters, with 19% of total support letters and 20% of opposition letters. There is also a tendency to submit more letters expressing support rather than opposition. About 65% of all letters signaled support compared to just 35% that signaled opposition. Although RMIGs make up a tiny portion of groups that lobby in California, at around 1% to 2%, they are just as active as other traditional interest group types. For example, RMIGs send more support letters than health organizations, ideological groups, agricultural interests, consumer protection organizations, and Native American groups.
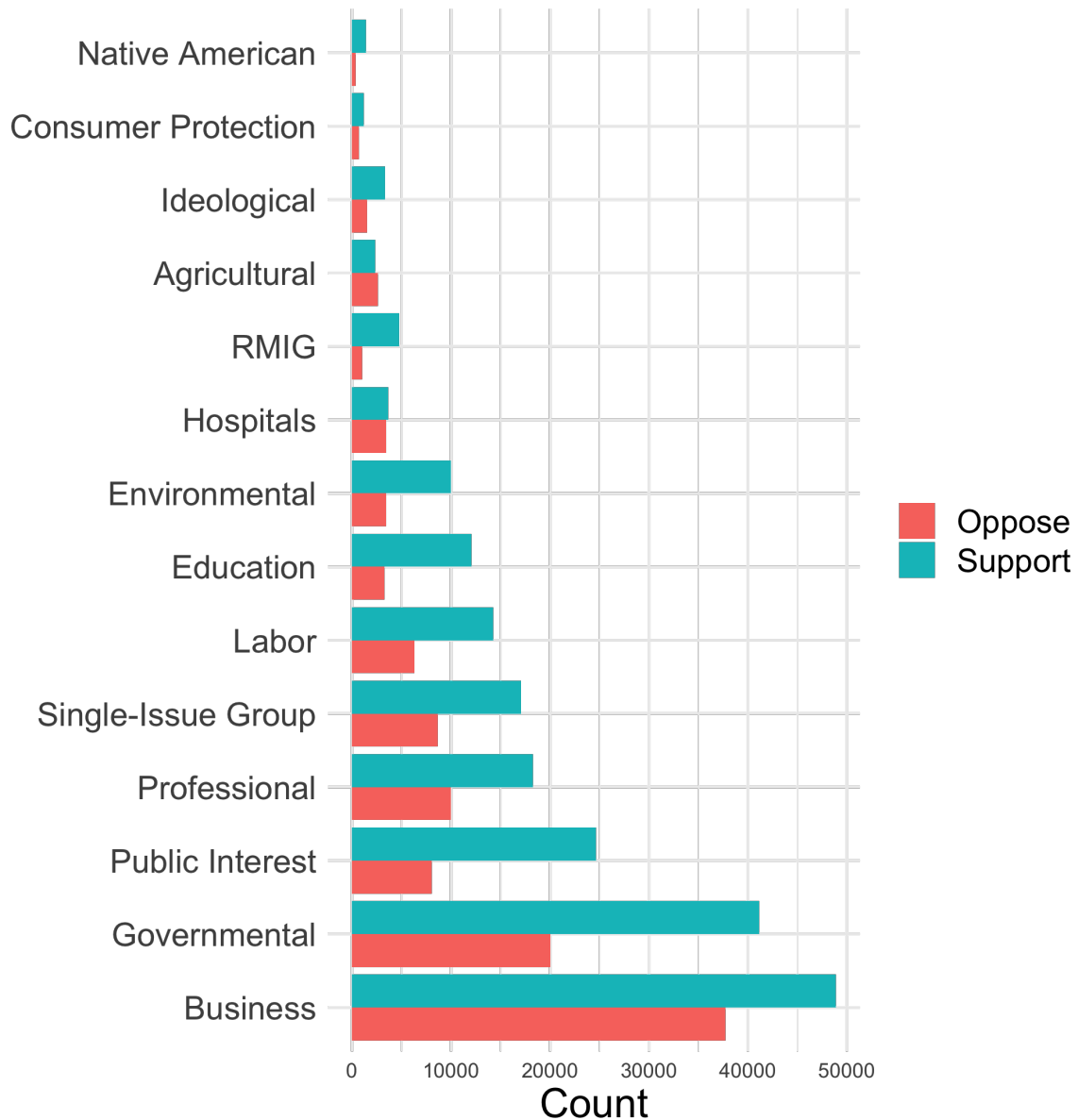
Figure 5.1. Lobbying Signal Distribution by Group Type, 1997-2018

Figure 5.2 demonstrates the ebb and flow in the number of times each primary type of RMIGs (Latinx, Black, Asian) sent a letter of support or opposition to a bill in the California legislature from 1997 to 2018. It shows that RMIGs are generally active in lobbying. Asian RMIGs, surprisingly, are the most active compared to Black and Latinx RMIGs; they consistently send the most support and opposition signals of all the three major RMIG types. Latinx RMIGs are second to Asian RMIGs in sending signals of opposition and support. However, by the

end of this period, Asian RMIGs had overtaken Latinx and Black RMIGs as the most active RMIG type. Over time, all three RMIG types increase lobbying activities to support bills. Asian and Latinx RMIGs maintained steep increases in their support signaling activities, except for a decrease in 2005 and 2009 legislative sessions. On the other hand, Black RMIGs had a steady upward trend in supporting bills. We see similar trends in their opposition signaling. Asian RMIGs gradually maintained an increase in their activity level, while Latinx had an increase in oppositional signaling from 2001 to 2005, but ebbed in later periods. Black RMIGs' opposition signaling plateaued throughout this period.

Asian RMIGs dramatically increased their activity over this period, particularly for support signals. As a result, we see a steep rise in both opposition and support signals sent by Asian RMIGs from 2001 to 2009. This finding is surprising since Asians are the least active in politics compared to Black and Latinx people. Historically, they have voted and participated less than other racial groups (Krogstad and Lopez 2017; Grumbach and Sahn 2019). Only 17% of Asian respondents to a recent survey, for example, considered themselves very interested in politics in 2020 compared to 25% of Black and 20% of Latinx respondents (Frasure et al. 2020). Nevertheless, Asian RMIGs are the most active among the major RMIG types. Paired with a recent analysis showing the rise of Asian advocacy participation in amicus brief filings (Hero, Preuhs, and Meeks 2017), the lack of individual Asian participation is offset by organized Asian groups in institutionalized domains. Asian RMIGs, in other words, are making up for the lack of electoral participation in both legislative and court arenas. Interestingly, Black RMIGs have modest gains in their lobbying activities over time. Their lobbying activities are generally less than their Latinx and Asian counterparts. Overall, the patterns in RMIG activity indicate increased lobbying efforts among the three major RMIG types over time. They are not shut out of the lobbying process but are escalating their lobbying activities.
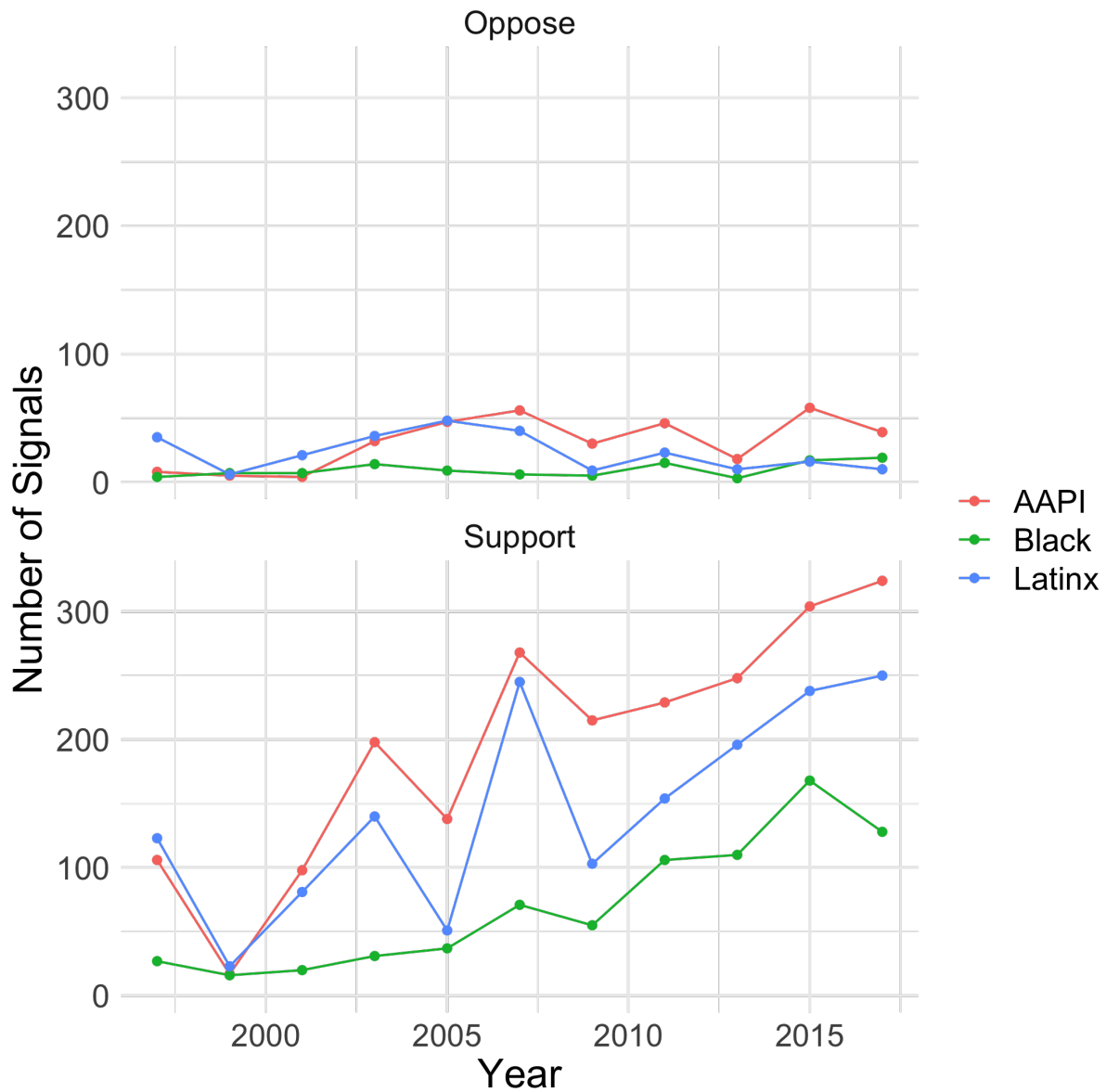
Figure 5.2. Number of Times RMIGs Signal Support or Opposition by Year, 1997-2018

Another trend is that most letters are sent in support rather than in opposition. The number of bills that received a RMIG letter of opposition is significantly less over time than the number of bills that received a letter of support. This finding shows an interesting but intuitive point: RMIGs are wary of killing bills. This may be since it is much more costly to raise opposition than champion support for a policy proposal. Opposing a bill requires a considerable investment in resources to build an opposition coalition, formulate counterarguments, and figure

out potential compromises. It logically follows that a signal of opposition to a bill is not taken lightly, so any observed opposition reveals the issue's importance to the organization sending it. An opposition signal is an indication that the policy issue is highly salient and vital to the organization that is sending it.

To help with lobbying endeavors and strengthen their positions, interest groups create lobbying coalitions to maximize their ability to lobby effectively. This tactic is common among groups representing weak or small organizations (Strolovitch 2007; Phinney 2018). I find that RMIGs partner with many different organizations in their lobbying activities. The coalitional make-up of RMIG signaled bills are very large. Counting the number of organizations on the same "side" of a policy issue of RMIGs shows that, on average, RMIGs end up supporting or opposing bills with lots of other organizations.

Figure 5.3 shows that non-RMIG signaled bills have a median coalition size of around 14 organizations. Non-RMIG coalition size is dramatically less than RMIG coalitions. RMIG coalitions have a median size of around 20 organizations. This finding indicates that RMIGs build large coalitions to support their goal, whether to pass a bill or kill it. As Figure 5.4 shows, all three RMIG types have an upward trajectory in their coalition size over time. Asian RMIGs, for example, had a median support coalition size of about 14 and a median of 12 groups opposing a bill with them in 1997. By 2017, the median coalition size increased to 23 (support coalitions) and 21 (opposition coalition). We also observe similar increases in coalitional size with Latinx and Black RMIGs. These findings give evidence to the theory that RMIGs' lobbying power is derived from their ability to build diverse coalitions and from their ability to project strength through numbers.
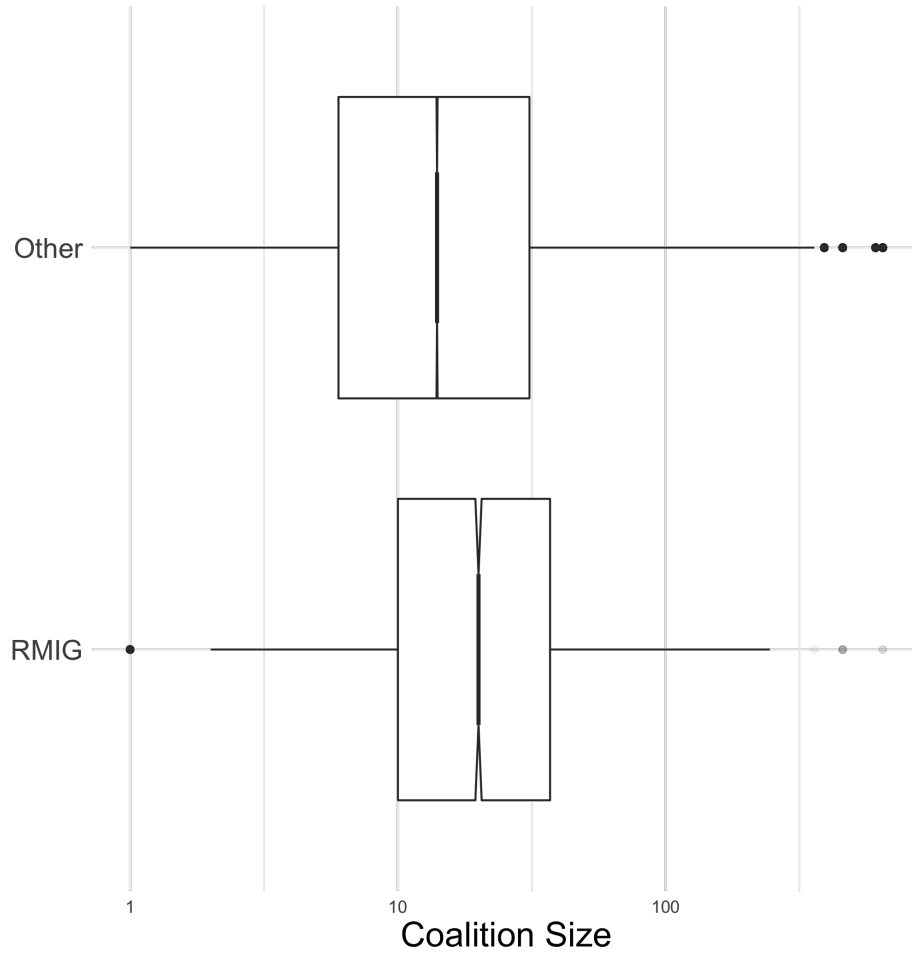
Figure 5.3. Median Coalition Size of RMIG and Non-RMIGs
Note: Notched box plots are used to compare groups; if the notches of two boxes do not overlap, this suggests that the medians are significantly different. The figure is on a log 10 scale for improved visualization.
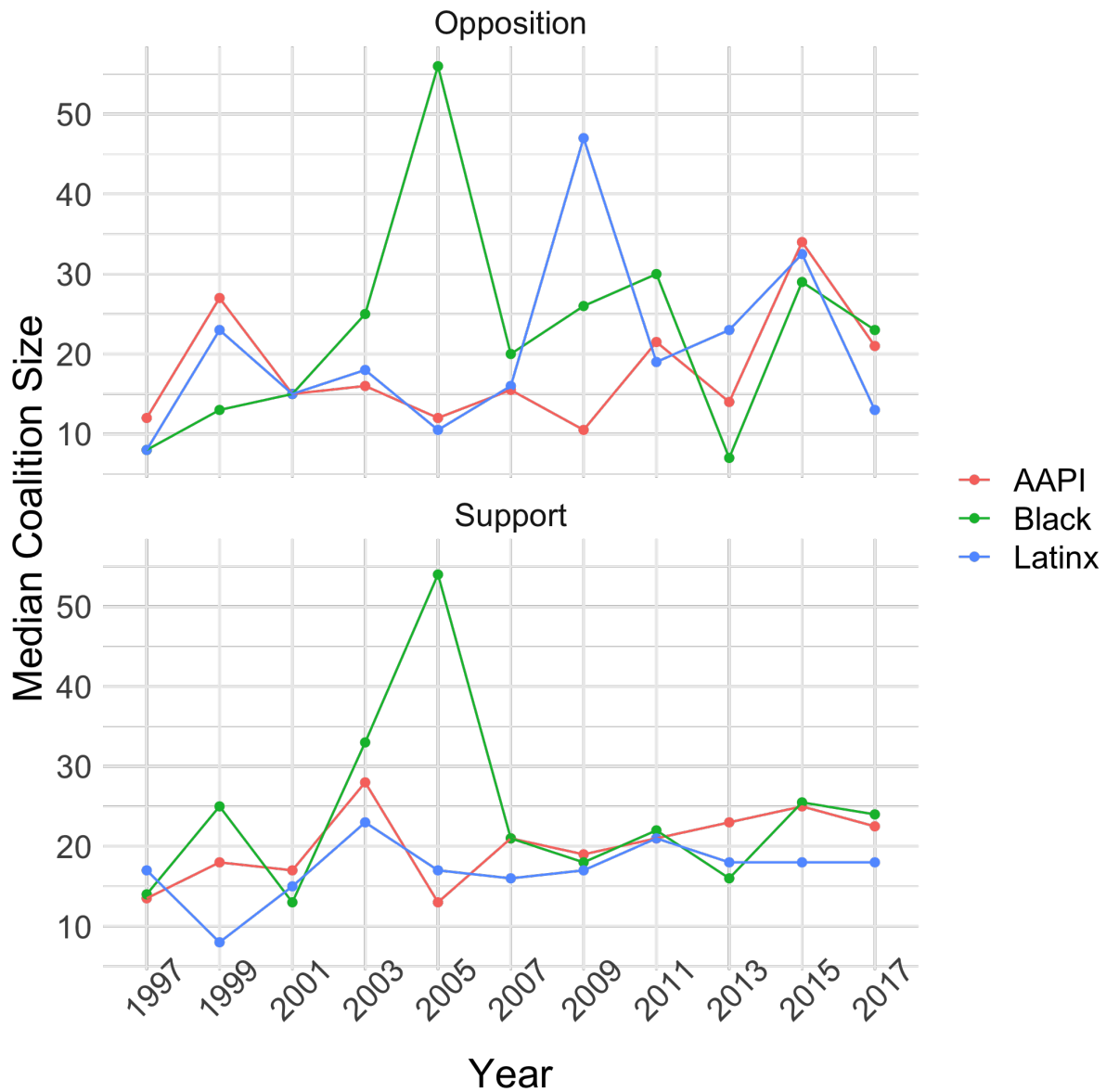
Figure 5.4. Median Coalition Size of RMIGs Over Time

Figure 5.5 shows that RMIGs tend to be on coalitions that score very low on the HHI measure, indicating that their coalitions are very diverse, which lends support to the first hypothesis. RMIGs have a mean and median HHI score far below nearly all group types. RMIGs' median overall HHI score is 0.2 compared to non-RMIGs' overall median HHI of close to 0.3. Such differences are statistically significant (Figure 5.5). When RMIGs take a position, they often do it in a coalition with different organizations, much more so than non-RMIGs. They have

the second-lowest median HHI score among all groups (Figure 5.6). The data, in sum, show that RMIGs are often on the same side of a bill with a very large and diverse group of organizations. The number of organizations on the same side as a RMIG is high, and their coalitions are made up of many different interest groups. Such findings support H1 that predicted RMIGs to be on coalitions that are larger and more diverse than non-RMIGs, indicating a strategic choice to act on building large and diverse lobbying coalitions.
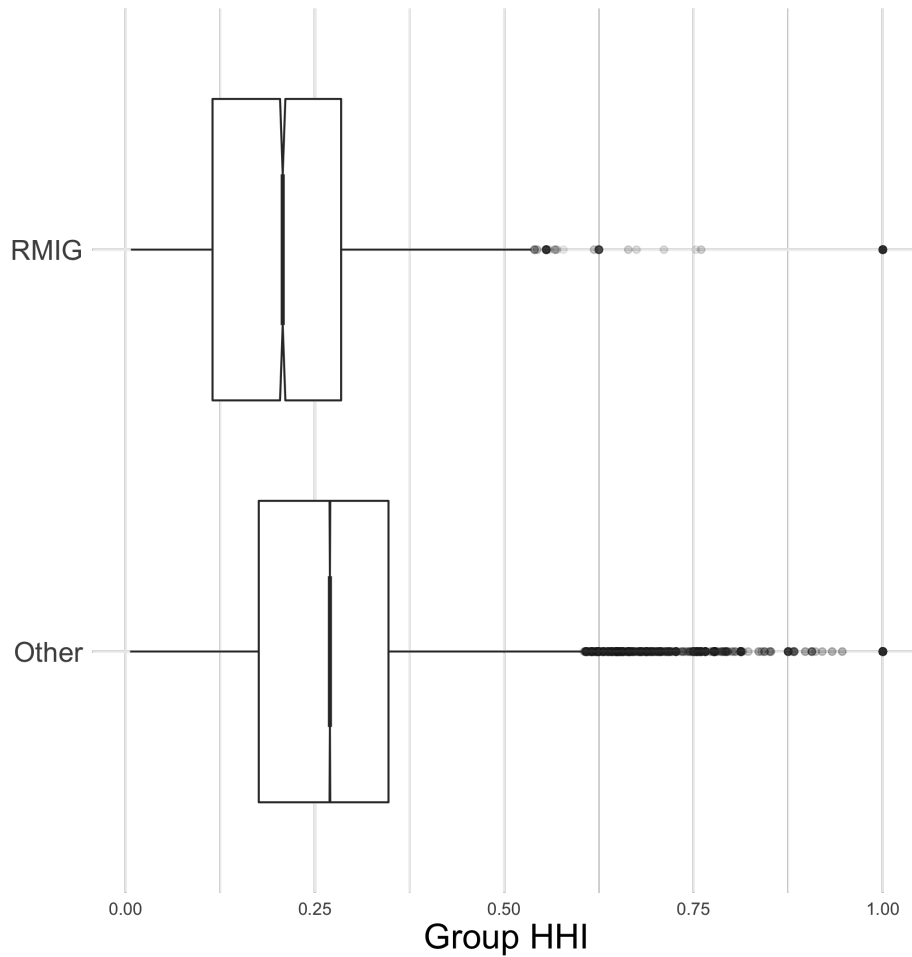
Figure 5.5. Median Diversity Measure (HHI) of RMIG and Non-RMIGs
Note: Notched box plots are used to compare groups; if the notches of two boxes do not overlap, this suggests that the medians are significantly different.
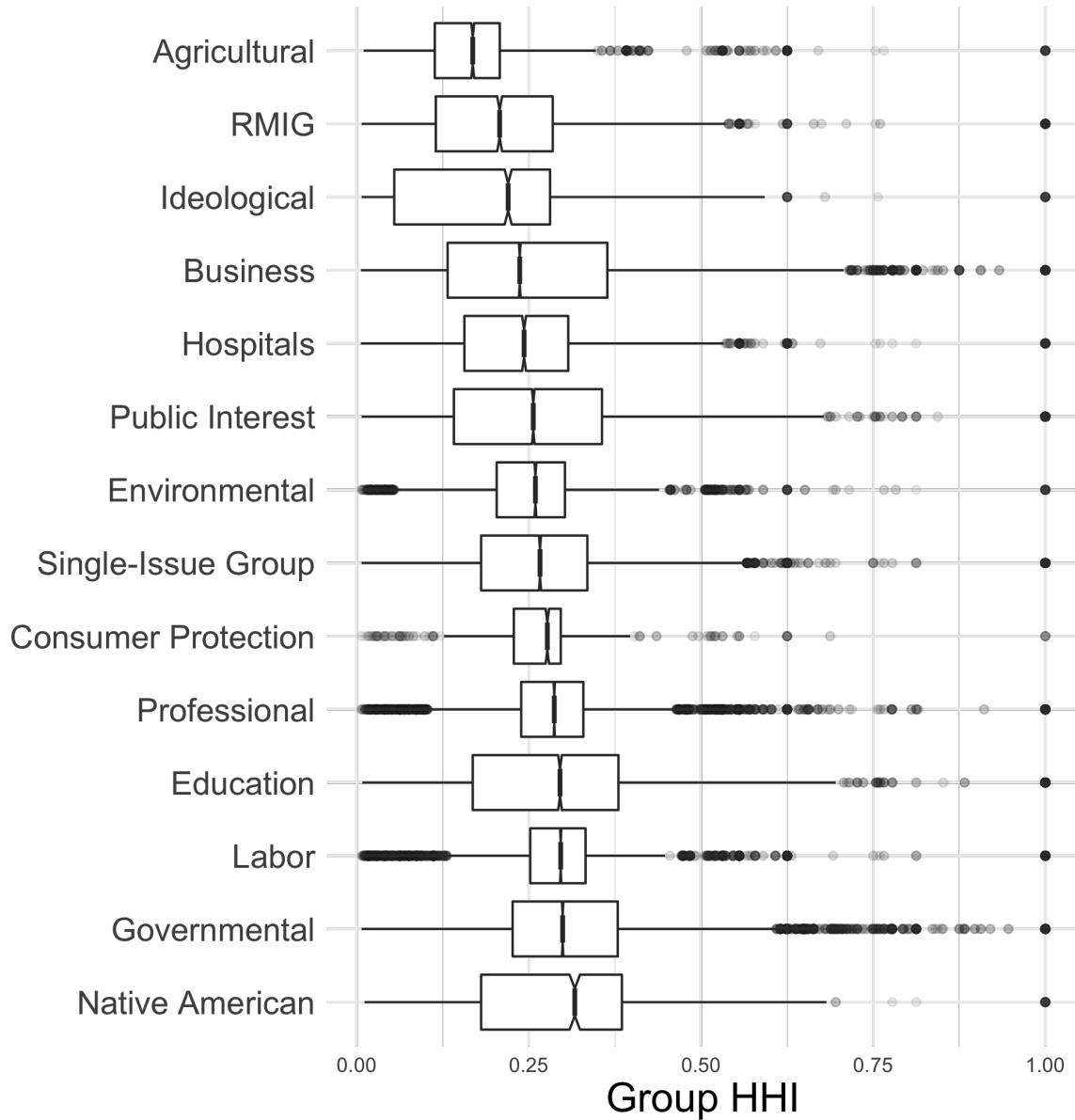
Figure 5.6. Median Diversity Measure (HHI) of Interest Group Types
Note: Notched box plots are used to compare groups; if the notches of two boxes do not overlap, this suggests that the medians are significantly different.

5.5   RMIGs are Successful in Achieving Policy Victories
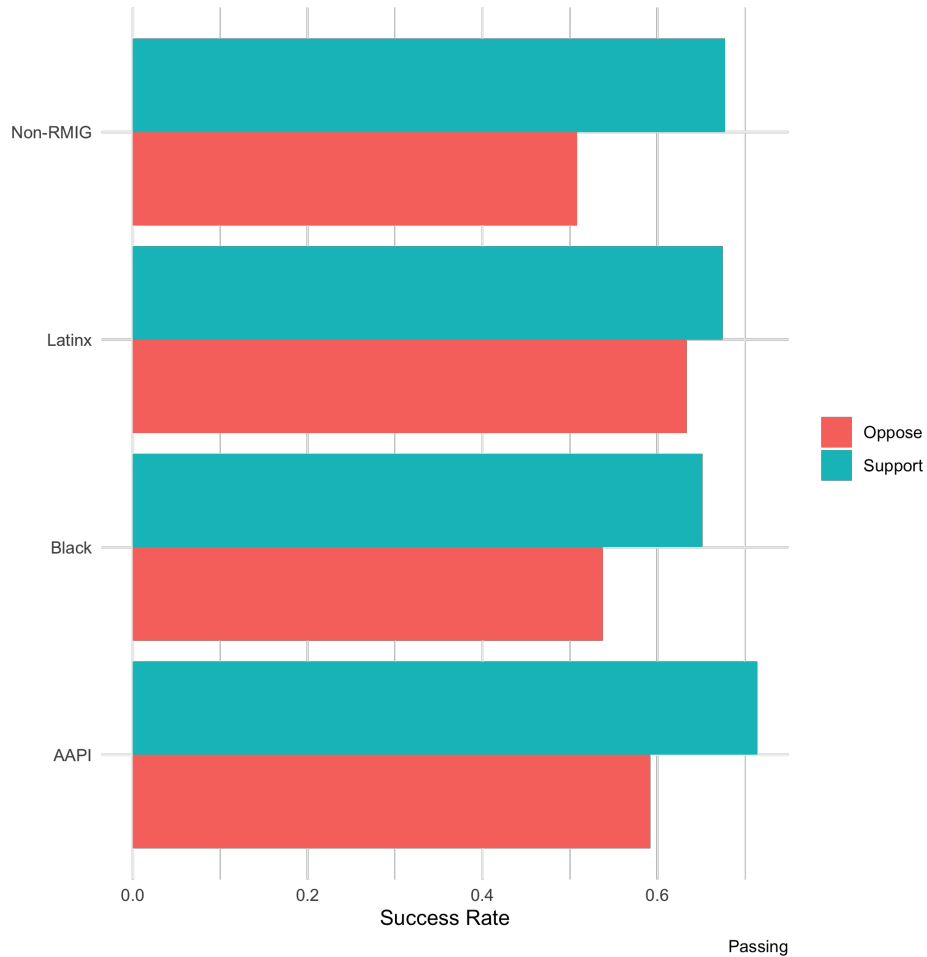
Figure 5.7. Rates of Legislative Success for RMIGs Compared to Non-RMIGs

H2 predicted that RMIGs would pass bills they supported and kill bills they opposed at similar rates as non-RMIGs. If this is the case, then RMIGs are not as shut out of the process as the lobbying literature has previously suggested and are strong modes of representation for racial minorities. Figure 5.7 provides initial indication that RMIGs compete on par with non-RMIGs. We see that the bills that RMIGs support pass out of the legislature at higher rates than non-RMIGs and that the bills they opposed die in the legislature at higher rates than non-RMIGs. Approximately 69% of RMIG supported bills reach the governor's desk, compared to 67% of

total non-RMIGs. RMIGs are more adept at stopping bills from passing, with 57% of their opposed bills dying in the legislature instead of only 51% of non-RMIG opposed bills. RMIG's overall combined success rate in passing bills they supported out of the legislature and killing bills they opposed is about 67% compared to 62% for non-RMIG interest groups.

Breaking down overall success rates by interest group types offers a clearer picture of RMIGs' ability to achieve policy victories. For one, RMIGs have the third-highest overall success rate in this period of 67%. However, they slightly lag behind Labor (72%) and Native American groups (75%). Surprisingly, elite and wealthy interest groups, like businesses and professional groups, do far less well compared to weaker interest groups (Figure 5.8).

However, looking primarily at rates of success calculated by whether a bill passes out of both legislative houses as an indication of RMIG influence may be confounded by the RMIG's signaling choice. They may only signal support on bills they know will be successful or signal opposition on bills they know will eventually die. Whether it was their signals that caused the outcome, as opposed to some other interest group or the individual merits of the bill, remains an open question. Making a causal claim about RMIG signaling as the sole influence on the bill's success would be dubious. Nonetheless, the data indicate that RMIGs tend to get what they want when they send a letter of support or opposition. The main goal of this chapter is not to test the casual influence of RMIGS but rather to show that RMIGs' often succeed in their lobbying goals.
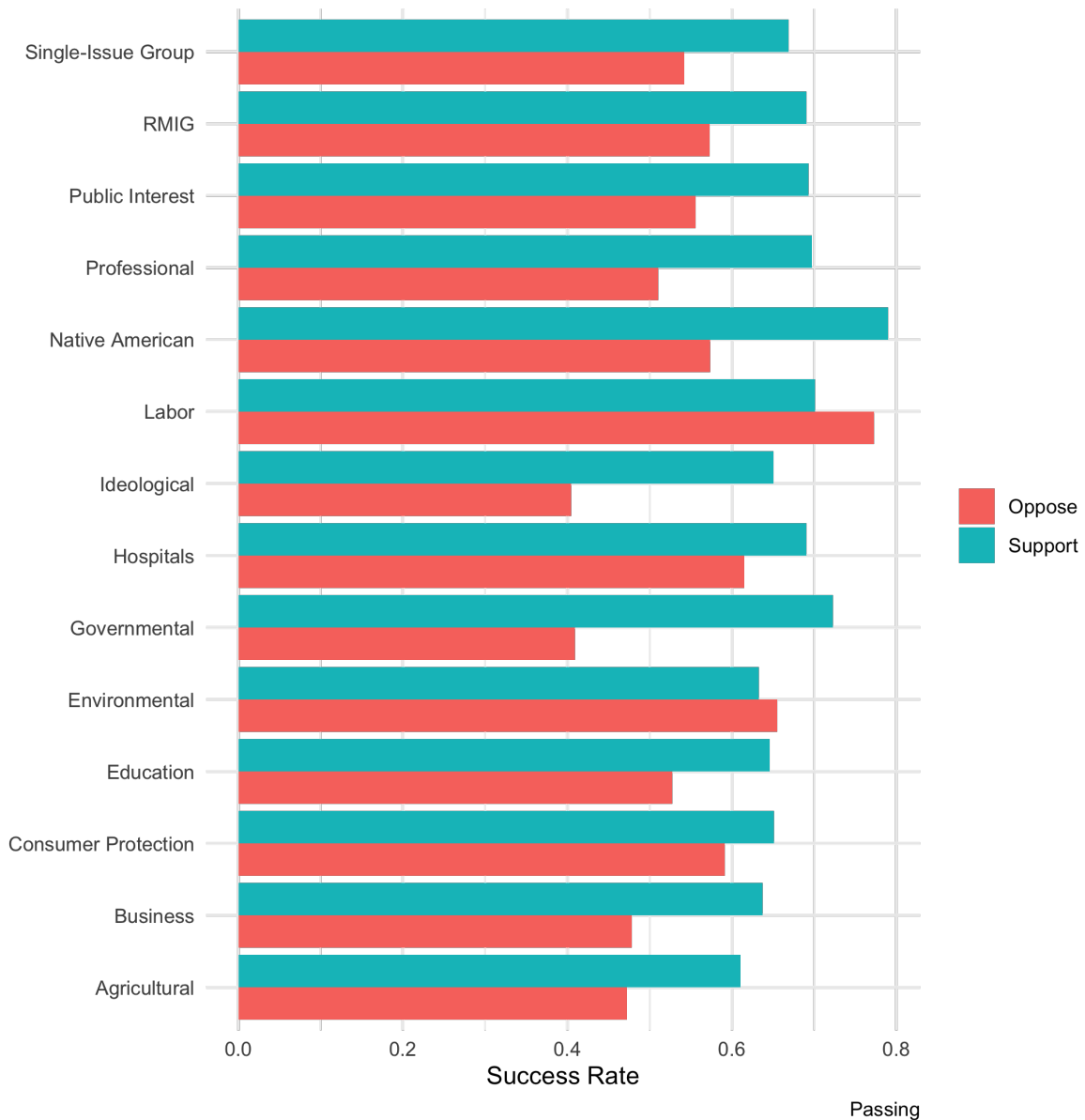
Figure 5.8. Rates of Legislative Success for RMIGs Compared to Other Interest Group Types

Their overall success rates for passing bills they support and killing bills they dislike are somewhat close, as high, or better than their interest group counterparts. This finding may strike many as unexpected and surprising since most RMIGs are under-funded and less organized than most organizations that compete in the lobbying game. RMIGs, like many other organizations that advocate on behalf of marginalized groups, are consistently poorer compared to organizations that represent other interests. Strolovitch (2007) shows that interest groups such

as corporate, business, and professional organizations far outpace RMIGS regarding resources and organizational tools. That being the case, the generally high rates of success that RMIG's experience, even at the most peripheral stage, bodes well for RMIGs, indicating that they can and do win at the same rates if not sometimes better than non-RMIGs. The next chapter of my dissertation attempts to get a stronger sense of RMIGs' abilities to win policy activities and influence political actors.

5.6   Conclusion

Schattschneider's assessment of an upper-class accent in the chorus of the pluralist heaven suggests a lobbying system where under-resourced or poor groups are shut out of the policy-making process. This perspective would expect racial minority groups, armed with very little financial and political power, to exert little to no influence on policy. Still, the findings presented in this chapter call for a reevaluation of this claim. Based on a systematic analysis of bills spanning over two decades, I find that RMIG lobbying is a robust and effective mode of promoting the interests of racial minorities.

As I hypothesized, I find that RMIGs often on the same side as many groups and are on very diverse coalitions more often than non-RMIG organizations. The median and average coalition size of RMIG coalitions is high. Moreover, an exciting finding of this paper demonstrates that Asian RMIGs are the most active among all RMIGs in lobbying, even though Asian-Americans have historically been the least politically engaged among racial minorities. This result may prove RMIGs' role in enhancing representation: they balance any lack of electoral participation through increased lobbying.

Second, RMIGs tend to support bills rather than oppose them and meet their lobbying goals more often, on average, than their non-RMIG counterparts. Third, RMIG's success rates for passing bills they support and killing bills they dislike are as high or better than their interest group counterparts. Finally, RMIGs are more involved in laying out their legislative priorities,

advocating for new policies, and enacting legislative changes rather than expending lots of resources to kill bills unless such issues are highly salient.

Previous scholars have found that most interest groups, especially corporations and businesses, often lobby to prevent harmful policy changes and to kill bills. Defensive lobbying is more prevalent than offensive lobbying for traditional lobbying organizations (Baumgartner et al. 2009; LaPira and Thomas 2017). In this way, RMIGs act very differently than traditional interest groups. But when they engage in defensive lobbying, they are much more effective than most non-RMIG counterparts. These two findings point to a strategy by RMIGs to influence policy by forming large and diverse coalitions, which helps compensate for their lack of resources and related structural disadvantages.

Taken altogether, this chapter offers several notable contributions to existing research. It is one of the first to systematically and comprehensively show the interactions and activities of racial minority interest groups in lobbying for and against policies. RMIGs' unique role in racial/ethnic domains and historical birth from social movements provide them with distinct motivations and constraints. It also shapes their strength toward cooperative behavior and coalition-building. Developing this concept and its subsequent identification strategy led to several important findings discussed above.

I expand on the finding that RMIGs are successful and active lobbying participants by honing in on their ability to convince legislators and the public, particularly racial minorities, to conform to their interests. Chapter 6 examines the mechanisms of large and diverse coalitions to influence policy and evaluates their ability to influence the political behavior of the public. Together with Chapters 4 and 5, this last chapter shows that RMIGs are effective conduits of representation.

Chapter 5 is currently under review for the publication of the material. The dissertation author was the sole investigator and author of this paper.

Chapter 6

RMIG Influence on Policy and Politics

6.1   Introduction

RMIGs, as seen in previous chapters, are reliable representatives of their constituency and engage in a strategy of building large and diverse coalitions. I theorize that such strategies help RMIGs exert influence in the policy process. In maintaining lobbying agendas that focus on the most disadvantaged segments of their constituency, RMIGs can cultivate a more robust image of legitimacy, strengthening their lobbying signals. Legislators can more reliably trust the signals they send because RMIGs are the legitimate representatives of their racial groups or the organizations that carry the faith of these communities. Another method of piercing through the fog of uncertainty facing legislators' decisions is the creation of large and diverse coalitions. Large and diverse coalitions act as cues for legislators and help limit uncertainty, especially when it comes to issues outside their purview. I argue that RMIGs are successful representatives of marginalized racial minorities through these ways.

In this chapter, I work to evaluate the political impact of RMIGs further as it pertains to legislative lobbying and the voting decisions of racial minorities. Are RMIGs politically influential? I show that the twin mechanisms of diversity and size of coalitions significantly affect a bill's outcome. Phinney (2018) demonstrates that coalitional diversity can increase lobbying influence through a formal signaling model. I test the implications of this formal model's diversity mechanisms while also including coalitional size as an important additional

mechanism with my data on bill outcomes. One of the critical sources of RMIG signaling effectiveness is the threat of racial minority backlash against unresponsive legislators. The possible electoral backlash from racial minorities implies that RMIGs influence the voting behavior of their constituents. Are racial minorities in contact with RMIGs, and do they respond positively to their recommendations? Is there trust between them? Through a survey experiment, I evaluate RMIGs' influence on voting behavior by testing whether a RMIG endorsement of a hypothetical candidate affects respondents' candidate choice.

My analyses show that increasing coalitional diversity and size positively and significantly affect bill outcome and that RMIGs' endorsements of candidates can also sway survey respondents' vote choice. Coalitional size and diversity can break through legislators' uncertainties and influence their voting decisions. Since RMIGs, as shown in the previous chapter, engage in a strategy of large and diverse coalitions, they will likely be more successful in their legislative endeavors. Increased coalitional diversity and size of a bill lead to a higher likelihood of bill passage, and RMIGs are more successful at building these diverse and large coalitions. Hence, it is not surprising that RMIGs are so successful in lobbying. RMIGs' political reach also extends to the voting behavior of their constituencies. It illustrates that RMIGs hold legitimacy among their constituents. Through these findings, I argue that RMIGs are an effective source of representation for marginalized racial communities.

6.2   Hypotheses

6.2.1   Models of Diversity and Size

Phinney's (2018) simple signaling model of coalition formation establishes the fundamental interactions and mechanisms of how diversity influences legislators' voting behavior. A signaling model highlights the conditions of informational asymmetries that legislators and interest groups operate under and, in doing so, illustrates the intuition behind the role of coalition diversity. The critical assumption is that interest groups have information that a legislator values

96

but cannot access. For example, such information can be the likelihood of a policy outcome, constituents' preferences, or technical expertise on the policy. We can isolate how interest groups and legislators interact through a signaling game. For example, an interest group has a solid incentive to mislead legislators toward a decision that only benefits them.

A signaling game requires two players: a signaler of information and a receiver of information. The signaler is an interest group, while the receiver is a legislator (Ainsworth 1993). The signaler (interest group) aims to make the receiver (the legislator) act in their interest, like enacting a policy change that benefits them. Within the confines of this game, the legislator is uninclined to enact the policy change that the signaler wants. The legislator, however, will only do so if there is a high or credible likelihood that the benefit of enacting the policy change outweighs its costs to the legislator. The signaler's job is to convince the legislator, through the sending of information, that enacting their preferred policy would be more beneficial than costly. The signaler "sends" these signals through writing position letters, testifying in committee hearings, mobilizing constituents, working collaboratively with other groups, and other acts. These signals reveal to the legislator the potential consequences of failing to enact the policy. The legislator, at this stage, must evaluate the quality or trustworthiness of the information signal they see at this stage. Are the informational signals credible? Would enacting the signaler's preferred policy outcome benefit the legislator? If the legislator is convinced by the information signals sent by the signaler, then the policy is accepted or supported. On the other hand, the policy is rejected if the legislator remains unconvinced.

Following Phinney (2018) and other signaling models, an interest group can be labeled as one of two types: a *low-type* or a *high-type*. In this theory, a low-type is a group that "exists in an environment in which no other groups support the policy *p*, whereas a high-type group exists in an environment of strong support for policy *p* across a diverse array of organized interests" (Phinney 2018; 32). Each group's environment defines its type, and both groups would like to signal that the policy enjoys strong support rather than low support. They want to express that they are a high-type rather than a low-type. The crux of this policy game is whether the signal

sent by the group allows the legislator to determine the group's type. The legislator wants to make the right decision by following the recommendations of a high-type rather than a low-type.

However, both low-type and high-types have a strong incentive to convince legislators that they are the high-type regardless of whether this is true or not. For example, Phinney's (2018) theory presents a diverse coalition as the "separating strategy" signal that legislators use to pick a decision. Only the high-type, in this setup, exists in an environment of broad support for a policy change. Therefore, both types will do their best to build diverse coalitions to convince legislators that they are the high-type. If both types can build diverse coalitions, legislators will be unable to differentiate between the two types. But if the two types differentiate in strategy, then the signal of a diverse coalition "provides information to the legislator about the group's true type–specifically, that she is dealing with a high- rather than a low-type group" (Phinney 2018; 32).

The central insight of this model is that two types of groups may separate in their lobbying approaches if the costs of building a diverse or large coalition are higher or if doing so is difficult for the low- and high-types. Costs and difficulty in building coalitions differ across interest group types. Legislators can then infer that the group is a high-type in seeing a diverse coalition. High diversity in a coalition communicates to legislators that the group is a high-type or that there is strong political support for the policy change. My theory on RMIG lobbying argues that the costs of building diverse coalitions are much lower for them and that it is easier for them to do so. Hence, they can send a strong signal that they are a high-type even if it may not necessarily be true. RMIGs' ability to convince legislators through these signals allows them to compete on similar levels to traditional interest groups, including those with an advantage in political and financial power.

I expand on this model by arguing that the coalition's size sends an even more credible signal and more easily differentiates the signaler as the high-type. A diverse coalition communicates to a legislator that there may be broad support for the policy change being advocated by the signaler. Within this uncertainty, a diverse coalition tells legislators that the policy change

98

may be politically advantageous for them. I argue that the number of groups in the coalition also plays a similar role. A signal that shows that many interested parties care about the policy change shows legislators that the policy issue is highly salient and that there is substantial support for its enactment. This signal is much more effective when the supporting coalition is larger than the opposing coalition on the bill.

The net number of support, in this case, takes into account potential large opposing coalitions as well. It might be the case that a bill has massive opposition. Taking the difference between supporting and opposing coalitions gives us a clearer picture of how coalitional size affects lobbying. The ability to build large coalitions also varies among groups, and the group type will determine its costs. Having both a large and diverse coalition, in these ways, can further differentiate interest groups as the high-type. The credibility of the signaler is maximized.

Phinney's (2018) model predicts that a diverse lobbying coalition will lead to stronger influence on legislators' behavior. This result is the case because it would signal to the legislator that they are a high-type, increasing the probability that the legislator will choose the policy change. I expand on this model by arguing that the size of a coalition also plays a role in showing legislators that the signaler is a high-type. To test the ability of diverse and large coalitions to influence policy change, I present the following hypotheses:

H1: Bills with a larger net supporting coalition will pass out of the legislature more often than those supported by a smaller net supporting coalition.

H2: Bills supported by lobbying coalitions with high diversity of group types will pass out of the legislature more often than those supported by less diverse coalitions.

I also argue that the presence of a very large and diverse coalition will lead to the most policy success. Having both strengths in size and diversity magnifies the credibility of the signal sent to legislators. It is the most effective in convincing legislators to pick the signaler's policy change. Hence:

H3: Bills supported by large lobbying coalitions with high diversity will be the most successful in passing out of the legislature.

This section attempts to test the causal mechanisms of size and diversity in influencing legislators' policy decisions. A simple signaling model shows legislators' dilemma: they must decide on accepting a policy choice based on the signals they received in a situation of high uncertainty. Coalitional diversity and, in extension, its size work best to convince legislators that they can trust an interest group's policy preference. I use this model within the framework of my theory on RMIG lobbying to show that even though they are politically and financially weaker than their competitors, RMIGs can be successful because they can send these two signals more efficiently. As a result, they are more suited to creating large and diverse coalitions, as shown in Chapter 5. Suppose the twin mechanisms of coalitional diversity and size play an outsized role in convincing legislators. In that case, it is unsurprising that RMIGs are able to win just as often as their more affluent counterparts.

6.2.2 RMIG's Influence with the Public

RMIGs' ability to influence policy should show their ability to marshal support from their racial minority constituents. The theory of RMIG lobbying argues that the credibility and legitimacy of RMIGs extend from racial minorities' trust in these organizations. Lawmakers see RMIGs as true representatives of their racial minority constituents and choose to respond because they believe these RMIGs can galvanize a possible threat to their re-election. Previous research has shown that community organizations have long been important in mobilizing people of color (Sterne 2001; Wong 2008). Filling in for the decline in political party presence, community organizations like RMIGs act as the main mobilizing force among racial minority communities (Wong 2006). They do so for various reasons, but primarily to expand their membership and maintain strong connections with their groups. Strengthening ties with their respective racial groups help further their image as legitimate representatives of their group and thereby increases their credibility among lawmakers.

100

I explore the ability of an RMIG endorsement to affect voters' decisions, particularly among racial minorities. Similar to other studies, an *endorsement* is a public, official declaration of support for a particular candidate (Benjamin 2017). Prominent leaders, politicians, and organizations often make endorsements to influence an election for the endorsed candidate. Previous research on the value and effectiveness of candidate endorsements has been unclear. Scholars are uncertain as to whether voters find endorsements to be persuasive. In particular, it is not entirely clear from the prevailing research whether endorsements from racial organizations would be persuasive. There is evidence that group identity and group membership increase the influence of endorsements, like in the case of union members and women's group members reacting affirmatively to their organizations' endorsements. On the other hand, it is unclear whether RMIG endorsements would affect racial minority voters in the same way (Rappaport, Stone and Abramowitz 1991; McDermott 2006).

The historical role of RMIGs as representatives of their racial groups, including their lobbying work and mobilizing abilities, creates a strong level of trust between them and their communities. Some studies have shown that co-racial and co-ethnic cues in voting and voter mobilization play an essential role in influencing racial minority political behavior (Benjamin 2017; García-Bedolla 2012). Specifically, the Co-Ethnic Elite Cues Theory argues that "if elites have formed a coalition to gain access to the political arena, they will inform voters of this coalition via endorsements" (Benjamin 2017). These cues are helpful because it helps racial and ethnic minorities navigate the electoral landscape. For example, Kuklinski and Hurley (1994) show that Black voters respond more positively when they receive a Black elite or leader cue. Benjamin's (2017) recent study on elite racial cues at the local level showed that co-racial endorsements affected vote choice. The race of the person giving an electoral endorsement has a significant influence on racial minorities' vote choices since they believe that co-racial and co-ethnic members are more trustworthy and will look out for their best interests (Campbell et al. 1960; Zaller 1992). I expect RMIGs, as racial organizations, to have similar impacts on the vote choice of racial minorities. RMIGs' roles as intermediaries and advocates for racial

101

minority communities naturally forge strong trust. Therefore, I would expect RMIGs' signal of endorsement to be influential on racial minorities' vote choice:

H4: Racial minority voters will choose candidates with a higher level of RMIG endorsements.

RMIGs' endorsements work like elite cues by informing voters that the endorsed candidate is a good choice for their interests. These endorsements have the effect of vouching for the candidate. Similar to previous research on elite racial cues, I expect RMIG endorsements to work because racial minority communities believe that RMIGs have their best interests at heart. In addition, RMIGs' work to transform their demands into policies substantially reinforces this trust.

6.3 Data and Design

6.3.1 Testing the Effects of Large and Diverse Coalitions on Bill Success

I first test hypotheses **H1** to **H3**, which predicts that large and diverse coalitions lead to more bill success by relying on my bill analyses data as described in Chapter 3. The data contain all bills presented to the California state legislature from 1997 to 2018 and record instances of lobbying by interest groups. Specifically, it lists the name of interest groups that have registered their support or opposition to a bill. Next, I count the number of groups that sent in letters of support and opposition on every bill to measure the size of the coalitions for each side of a bill. A coalition is a partnership among interest groups that pursue a common goal. From this perspective, groups on the same side of an issue are a coalition. Hence, coalitional size is the total number of groups on either support or opposed side of a group.

The data also contains a measure of coalitional diversity, as used in Chapter 5. It is a simple Hefindahl-Hirschmann Index (HHI) calculation of each bill's coalition. In economics, the HHI is commonly used to measure market concentration, and it can measure diversity in political science. Finally, I combine this data with the official historical records of the California

legislature to include the outcome of the bill. Bill success is determined by whether it can pass out of both houses of the state legislature.

The three hypotheses can be modeled as logistic regression models with year-fixed effects. A logit model can be used to investigate the relationships between multiple explanatory variables and a binary outcome variable. It is appropriate when the response takes one of only two possible values, like success or failure. Hypothesis **H1** can be expressed as the following equation:

For bill i in year t,

$$\text{Pr(Bill Passage}_{it}) = logit^{-1}(\beta_0 + \beta \text{Net Coalition Size}_{it} + \varepsilon_{it}),$$

where Bill Passage$_{it}$ is the dependent variable indicating whether bill i passed out of the legislature in year t, and Net Coalition Size$_{it}$ is the net number of interest groups supporting bill i in year t. Our key explanatory variable is Net Coalition Size$_{it}$, which is calculated by subtracting the number of groups opposing bill i from the number of groups supporting it. Finally, ε_{it} is the residual in each observation not explained by the explanatory variables and fixed effects combined.

I can further express the effects of the presence of a RMIG with coalition size by interacting the term indicating RMIG support for a bill with the term expressing the net size of the supporting coalition:

For bill i in year t,

$$\text{Pr(Bill Passage}_{it}) = logit^{-1}(\beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Net Coalition Size}_{it} + \beta_2 \text{RMIG Support}_{it} +$$
$$\beta_3(\text{Net Coalition Size}_{it} \cdot \text{RMIG Support}_{it}) + \varepsilon_{it}),$$

where Net Coalition Size$_{it}$ is interacted with RMIG Support$_{it}$, indicating whether there is any RMIG supporting the bill. The interaction term captures the differential effect of coalition size in the presence of a RMIG in the coalition.

Hypothesis **H2** is analogous to **H1** but primarily tests the diversity of a coalition on bill passage. It replaces the net number of supporting organizations for a bill with the diversity of the coalition supporting it. The relationship can be expressed as:

For bill i in year t,

$$\Pr(\text{Bill Passage}_{it}) = logit^{-1}(\beta_0 + \beta \text{Coalition HHI}_{it} + \varepsilon_{it}),$$

where $\beta \text{Coalition HHI}_{it}$ is the Herfindahl-Hierschmann measure of diversity for the supporting coalition of bill i in year t.

I also interact the main explanatory variable of coalitional diversity with the presence of a RMIG in the supporting coalition:

For bill i in year t,

$$\Pr(\text{Bill Passage}_{it}) = logit^{-1}(\beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Coalition HHI}_{it} + \beta_2 \text{RMIG Support}_{it} +$$
$$\beta_3(\text{Coalition HHI}_{it} \cdot \text{RMIG Support}_{it}) + \varepsilon_{it}),$$

where the main explanatory is the interaction term. These four models allow me to test the independent effects of coalitional size, coalitional diversity, and presence of RMIG support for Hypotheses **H1** and **H2**.

Finally, I address Hypothesis **H3** by modeling bill passage as a function of the interaction between coalitional size and coalitional diversity. The model can be expressed as:

For bill i in year t,

$$\Pr(\text{Bill Passage}_{it}) = logit^{-1}(\beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Net Coalition Size}_{it} + \beta_2 \text{Coalition HHI}_{it} +$$
$$\beta_3(\text{Net Coalition Size}_{it} \cdot \text{Coalition HHI}_{it}) + \varepsilon_{it}).$$

The expectation is that bills with both high coalitional diversity and large coalitional size would be most likely to pass out of the legislature.

6.3.2 Testing the Effects of a RMIG Endorsement on Vote Choice: Conjoint Experiments

In order to test the influence of RMIG endorsement of candidates on voters' choices (Hypothesis **H4**), I fielded a survey experiment in the 2020 Congressional Elections Survey

(CES).[1] I asked respondents in the 2020 Collaborative Multi-racial Post-Election Survey (CMPS) to indicate how often they hear from RMIGs and to evaluate their dependence on RMIG information in their voting decisions. The survey experiment design is based on Hainmueller et al.'s (2014) conjoint analysis to identify the causal effects of multiple treatment components. A conjoint experiment allows me to identify and estimate the causal effects of many parts of the treatment simultaneously. The main advantage of these survey experiments is their strength in creating causal conclusions. I can randomly vary and control candidate characteristics across groups of respondents to ensure systematic differences in respondents' post-treatment attitudes are only due to the treatment.

I use a standard candidate conjoint experiment to measure the effects of a RMIG endorsement. This experimental design mirrors the real-life circumstances of an election, where respondents are required to choose between candidates. Candidates' characteristics are generally varied. They have different racial identities, socio-economic statuses, ideological leanings, and more. Conjoint experiments allow me to consider these differences and reliably test the impact of a RMIG endorsement on a candidate's chance of being picked. I hold most major characteristics similar and vary only candidates' ideological leanings and level of RMIG endorsement. The key treatment to be assessed is the RMIG endorsement.

Respondents to the 2020 CES were presented with five conjoint tables showing two candidates for a state house position. Candidate profiles were shown side-by-side. Prior to seeing the tables, respondents saw a short vignette explaining the role of a RMIG endorsement in the form of a voting report card. Organizations often release report cards on politicians' voting records. These report cards contain a simple scoring of how often the politician has voted in line with the organization's preferred policies. A high rating on a report card from an organization means that the politician has consistently voted in line with the organization's interests. During

---

[1] I also fielded the survey experiment in the CMPs but due to limited funding, I was only able to contribute a single conjoint table question. Typical conjoint experiments require respondents to evaluate multiple tasks for generalizability. Because of concerns with power and generalizability, I rely solely on the CES survey experiment for my analysis.

real-life elections, these report cards act as an endorsement signal of candidates and are often disseminated during election periods.

The attributes of both candidates on the conjoint tables were highly similar. For example, the name, party, age, education, profession, and political experience of the two candidates are almost the same. However, each candidate was randomly assigned an attribute for two characteristics: 1) candidate ideology measured as their position on immigration and 2) an endorsement report card score from a prominent RMIG (NAACP). Respondents were then asked, "If you were voting for this election for state assembly, which candidate do you think you would vote for?" and forced into picking one of the two candidate profiles. Finally, the position of the hypothetical candidate in the table is randomized to be either on the right or left of the table. Table 6.1 shows an example of the conjoint tables shown to respondents.

Table 6.1. Example of a Conjoint Table in the 2020 CES and CMPS

The following are potential candidates for **state assembly:**

Candidate	Dustin Lucas	Colin Smith
Party	Republican	Republican
Age	35	33
Education	College graduate	College graduate
Profession	Lawyer	Lawyer
Political Experience	City Council Member	County Supervisor
Supports Creating Pathway to Citizenship for	*[randomized position]*	*[randomized position]*
Score Card Rating from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)	*[randomized score]*	*[randomized score]*

Candidate ideology is measured through three levels, expressed through the hypothetical candidate's position on supporting a pathway to citizenship for unauthorized immigrants under different conditions: liberal ("All unauthorized immigrants with no criminal records"), moderate/middle-of-the-road ("Unauthorized immigrants with no criminal records who entered the U.S. as minors"), and conservative ("No unauthorized immigrants"). Ideological leanings

106

of candidates are historically believed to be a determining factor for vote choice (Key 1966; Downs 1957). Randomizing candidate ideology helps control for the role of ideology in vote choice and acts as a foil to compare the effects of RMIG endorsements. RMIG endorsement is signaled as either "high" at a 90% scorecard rating or "low" at a 10% scorecard rating from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The NAACP is chosen as the signaling RMIG because of its position as one of the oldest, most prominent, and highly recognizable RMIG in the United States.

I then calculate each randomized attribute's average marginal component effect (AMCE) to respondents' candidate choices. What attributes causally increase or decrease vote choice? The AMCE is a causal estimand, developed by Hainmueller et al. (2014), representing the effect of a particular attribute value of interest against another value of the same attribute while holding the other attributes in the design equal. It can be interpreted as a measure of the overall effect of an attribute after accounting for the effects of other attributes by averaging over the variations caused by them. Since I am interested in the overall effect on respondents' choice of a candidate with a high RMIG endorsement versus a candidate with a low RMIG endorsement, I can calculate the average causal effect of this attribute value by calculating the proportion of candidates chosen by respondents with a high RMIG endorsement and subtracting it from the proportion of chosen candidates with a low RMIG endorsement. The AMCE, in effect, summarizes the overall average effect of an attribute when the respondents are also seeing other attributes like the ideological leanings of the hypothetical candidate. In other words, the AMCE can be interpreted as the change in the average vote share attributed to the presence of an attribute level (Bansak et al. 2020). In our case, the AMCE can tell us whether a high RMIG endorsement leads to higher vote share for candidates.

6.4 Findings: Large and Diverse Coalitions are Likely to Lead to Legislative Success

The bill analyses data provide compelling evidence that large and diverse coalitions lead to more policy success. In support of Hypothesis **H1**, bills with a large support coalition are more likely to pass out of the legislature and end up at the governor's desk. Considering the opposing coalition, bills with lots of organizations supporting them pass at higher rates than those in smaller support coalitions. Figure 6.1 presents the results of a logit model on the relationship between a bill's net coalition size and bill passage out of the legislature. It shows a substantial increase in the predicted probability of passage out of both houses of the legislature for bills with lots of net support.
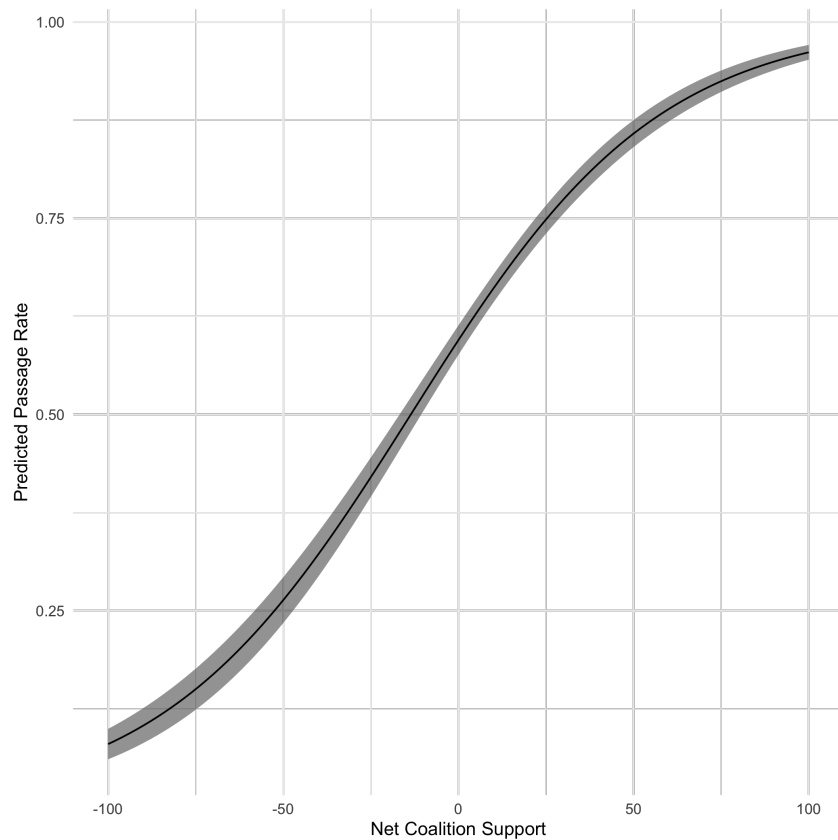

Figure 6.1. Predicted Probability of Bills Passing Based on Net Coalition Size in Support of a Bill

"Net support", again, refers to the overall number of organizations supporting the bill minus the number of organizations opposing it. As Figure 6.1 shows, bills with lots of opposition are more likely to fail, while those with lots of supporting organizations dramatically increase the bill's chance of passing. The model shows that moving from a net coalition of zero to 100 increases the chance of passage by about 30%. The size of a coalition is a statistically significant predictor of bill passage. Altogether, results are strongly consistent with Hypothesis **H1** and my general theory that coalition size has a strong influence on bill success. To expand on Phinney's (2018) and Lorenz's (2022) theory and work on the influence of diverse coalitions, I find that the size of the coalition also matters to bill passage. Chapter 5 shows that RMIGs are in larger legislative coalitions than non-RMIGs. This new evidence of the effect of coalition size on success reinforces the idea that RMIGs are successful, regardless of financial constraints and marginalizing barriers, because of this unique ability to create large coalitions.

I further explore the role of RMIGs and group size by interacting the presence of a RMIG on a bill with net coalition size. Does having a RMIG in a support coalition affect bill passage, given net coalition size? In other words, do RMIGs improve or hinder bill passage rate given a very large support coalition or a very small one? Figure 6.2 shows the predicted probabilities of a bill passing based on net support coalition size given a presence of a RMIG in the coalition.
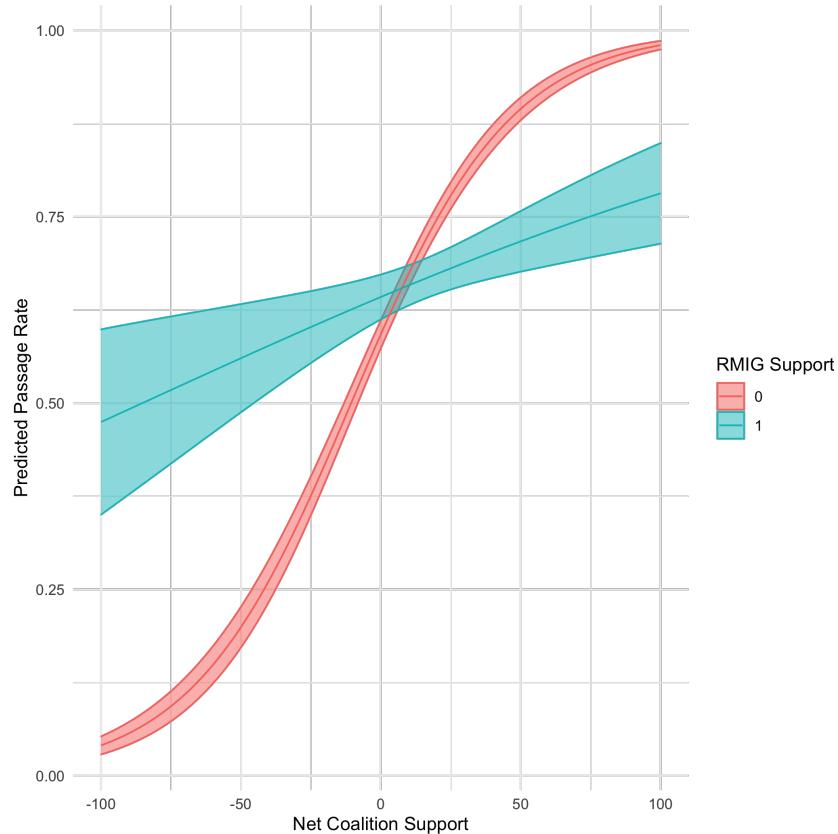
Figure 6.2. Predicted Probability of Bills Passing Based on Net Coalition Size and Presence of a RMIG in Support of a Bill

Figure 6.2 shows that when RMIGs signal support on bills with outnumbered support, or fewer organizations supporting than opposing it, the bill is much more likely to pass than those with non-RMIGs on the bill. However, as net support becomes positive, the presence of a RMIG supporting the bill does not add more to the likelihood that the bill will pass. Bills with more organizations supporting than opposing them do not gain extra benefit from having a RMIG supporting them. This finding suggests that bills with small supporting coalitions would greatly benefit from having a RMIG on its team. Though surprising, this finding fits in with the general theory of RMIGs' role in maintaining legitimacy and being able to mobilize support from racial minority communities. Having this asset is particularly important when one goes up against larger opposition. Altogether, it is evident that coalition size matters to the success of a bill and that its makeup also has important effects on bill passage. Having a RMIG, for example, in a

small coalition can be very helpful.

I evaluate Hypothesis **H2** through a logit model of the relationship between support coalition diversity and bill passage out of the legislature. My key predictor is the diversity of a supporting coalition on a bill, as measured by the HHI score of a bill coalition. An HHI score close to zero expresses high diversity while a score close to one expresses little diversity in coalitional makeup. My analysis shows that, following Phinney (2017) and Lorenz (2022), coalitional diversity has a strong and significant effect on bill success. Figure 6.3 is consistent with Hypothesis **H2**. It shows that highly diverse support coalitions are more likely to pass bills than less diverse ones. The predicted passage rate of a bill decreases as the HHI score of their supporting coalition increases or, in other words, a less diverse coalition supports the bill.
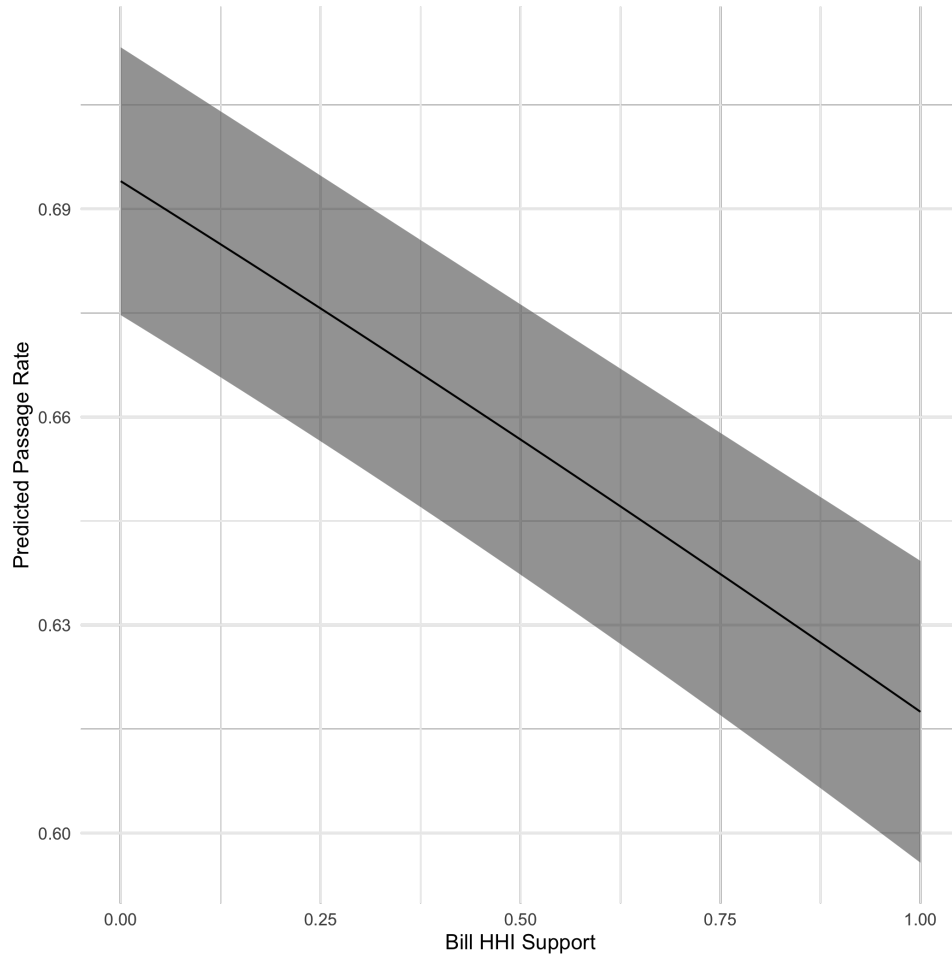
Figure 6.3. Predicted Probability of Bills Passing Based on Support Coalition Diversity of a Bill

The analysis results give credence to a central insight of my theory: the diversity of coalition partners allows influence in the legislature. Diversity in lobbying coalitions means that a coalition contains organizations representing different interests. Bringing diverse actors in support of a bill increases the credibility of the information being sent to legislators about the potential consequences of the bill and its urgency. Those who can quickly and easily create or be on diverse coalitions will be more successful. I argue that RMIGs have this ability. Hence, they can win policy victories more often than expected, given their marginalized positions.

By expanding the model to include the interaction of the measure for supporting coalition diversity and the presence of a RMIG in the coalition, I show that bills with more diverse

supporting coalitions and include RMIGs do less well than those with diverse coalitions and no RMIG support. The presence of a RMIG does not seem to help bill passage, as long as bills have more diverse supporting coalitions, as shown by Figure 6.4. To be clear, the wide confidence intervals of Figure 6.4 mean that I can not draw firm conclusions from this model. But it seems that RMIGs do worse at passing bills out of the legislature when lobbying on their own or with fewer types of groups. RMIGs seem to pass less bills when they go-it-alone or are unable to build very diverse coalitions. Conversely, RMIGs are much more successful when they are on diverse coalitions.
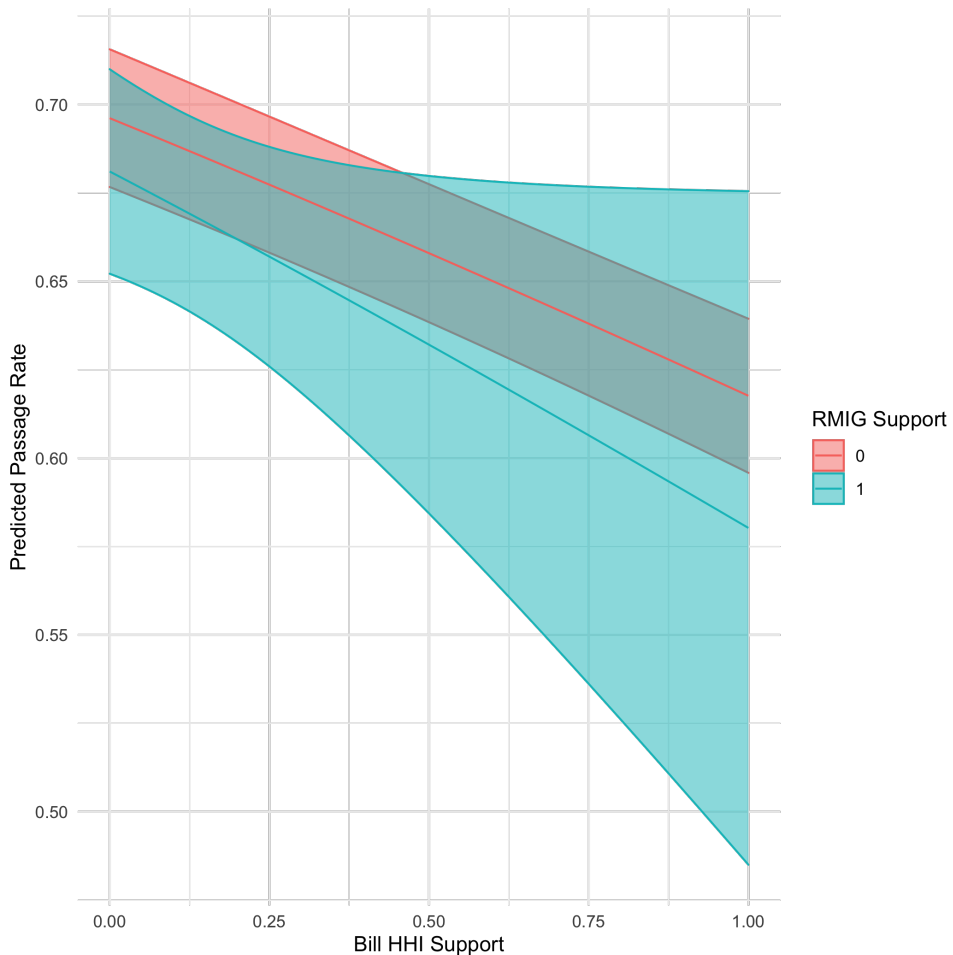
Figure 6.4. Predicted Probability of Bills Passing Based on Coalition Diversity and Presence of a RMIG in Support of a Bill

Finally, combining net support coalition size and support coalition diversity, the data present some support for Hypothesis **H3** and fascinating patterns on the effects of both coalition size and diversity. Figure 6.5 shows the predicted probability for bill passage at various levels of diversity and net coalition size. The heat map visualizes the interaction of two continuous variables, with bill diversity on the x-axis and net coalition support on the y-axis. The shading of the area shows regions that correspond to predicted bill passage rates at different cut-points. The lighter shading refers to higher predicted passage rates, while the darker shading reflects lower predicted passage rates.
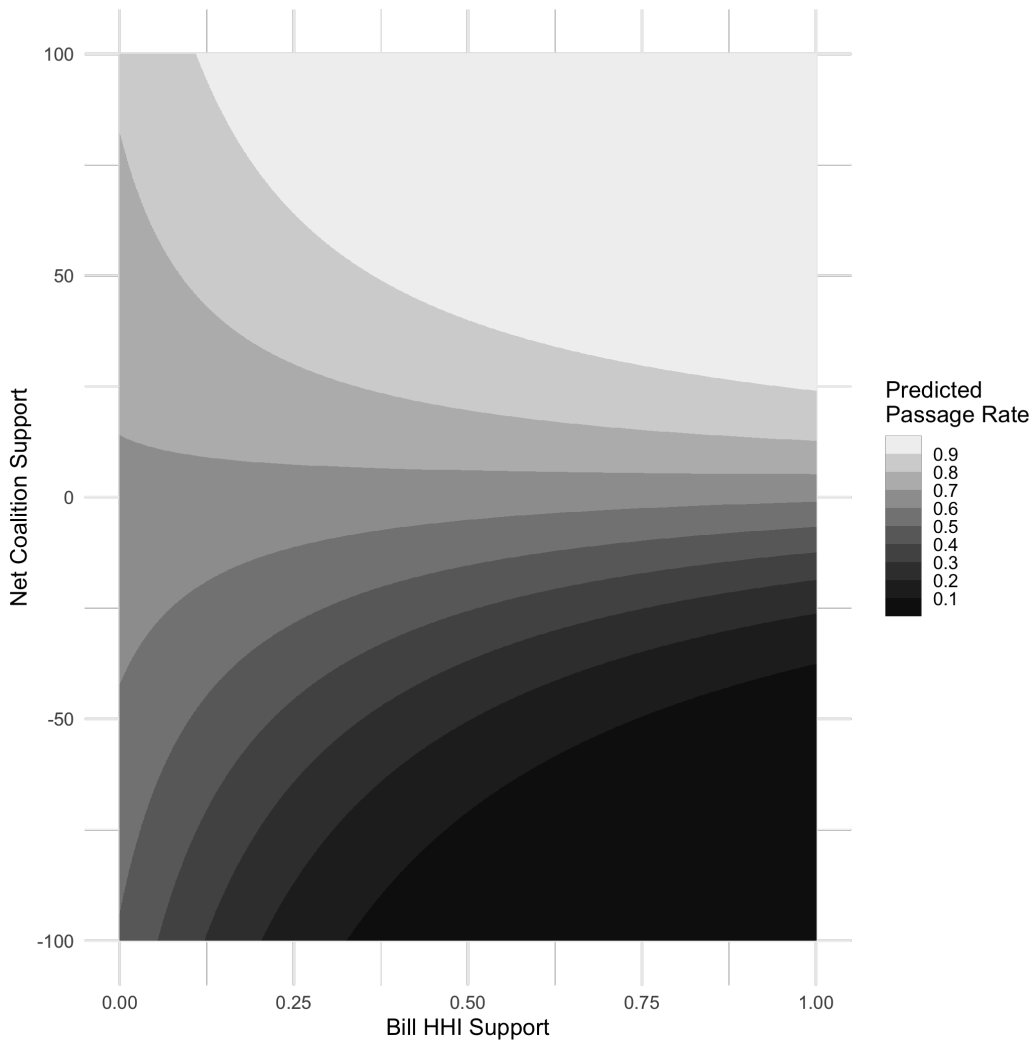
Figure 6.5. Predicted Probability of Bill Passage at Different Levels of HHI and Coalition Size

114

Large and diverse coalitions predict a high probability of bill passage, at around 60% to 80%. However, the highest passage rates are in regions with low diversity and large coalitions. This finding is surprising since it suggests that bills with large coalitions can still be successful without having to be diverse. Our analysis would suggest that a bill with a large supporting coalition of only one type of group would be highly likely to pass. For example, a bill with only agricultural groups supporting it but has a net supporting coalition of 100 or more of such groups would be successful. On the other hand, consistent with my Hypothesis **H3**, the lowest passage rates are in regions where supporting coalitions are less diverse and small. Altogether, the data show that having diverse coalitions is ideal if one is facing lots of opposition, as visualized at the bottom edge of Figure 6.5, but worse if there is a large coalition as shown by the top edge of the figure. Large coalitions do not need diversity to pass bills.

Do a lobbying coalition's size and diversity influence the passage rate of bills in the legislature? Compared to smaller and less diverse coalitions, the data show that bills with larger and more diverse coalitions tend to pass at higher rates. There are similar patterns when RMIGs are in the supporting coalition. RMIGs help increase the passage rate for bills with smaller net support coalitions, but that influence diminishes as coalition size increases. On the other hand, a RMIG does not strengthen passage rate as long as the supporting coalition maintains a diverse supporting coalition. RMIGs, on their own, seem to do worse than when non-RMIGs signal support on their own. RMIGs are much more successful when they signal in diverse coalitions.

6.5   Findings: RMIG Endorsements are Able to Influence the Vote Choice of the Public

Figure 6.6 shows that approximately 12% of respondents in the 2020 CMPS were encouraged by a RMIG to vote. Approximately 10% of Asian respondents, 19% of Black respondents, and 12% of Latinx respondents said they were contacted by RMIGs and asked to vote. White respondents were only contacted 6% of the time. Though the percentage of

respondents whom RMIGs contacted is low, we know that RMIGs actively communicate with their racial minority communities.

Over the past 12 months, were you asked to register or to vote by a RMIG?
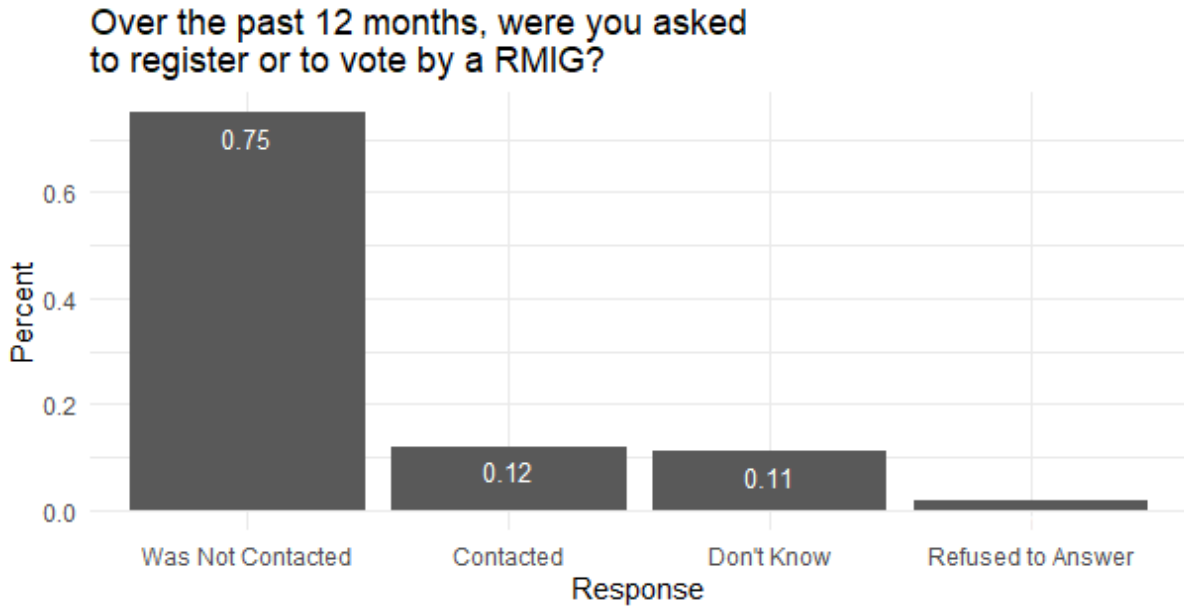
Figure 6.6. 2020 CMPS Respondents: Contacted by a RMIG in Last Year

Respondents who received contact from RMIGs expressed that they believed the information that they received from RMIGs was important. A total of about 49% of respondents stated that RMIG information was either somewhat or very important to how they voted in 2020 (Figure 6.7). About 46% of Asian respondents expressed that RMIG information was somewhat or very important to their voting decisions in 2020, compared to 61% of Black respondents and 54% of Latinx respondents. Such responses lend support to RMIGs' role in mobilizing and shaping the voting decisions of their constituents. Racial minority respondents seem to take the voting information provided by RMIGs very seriously.
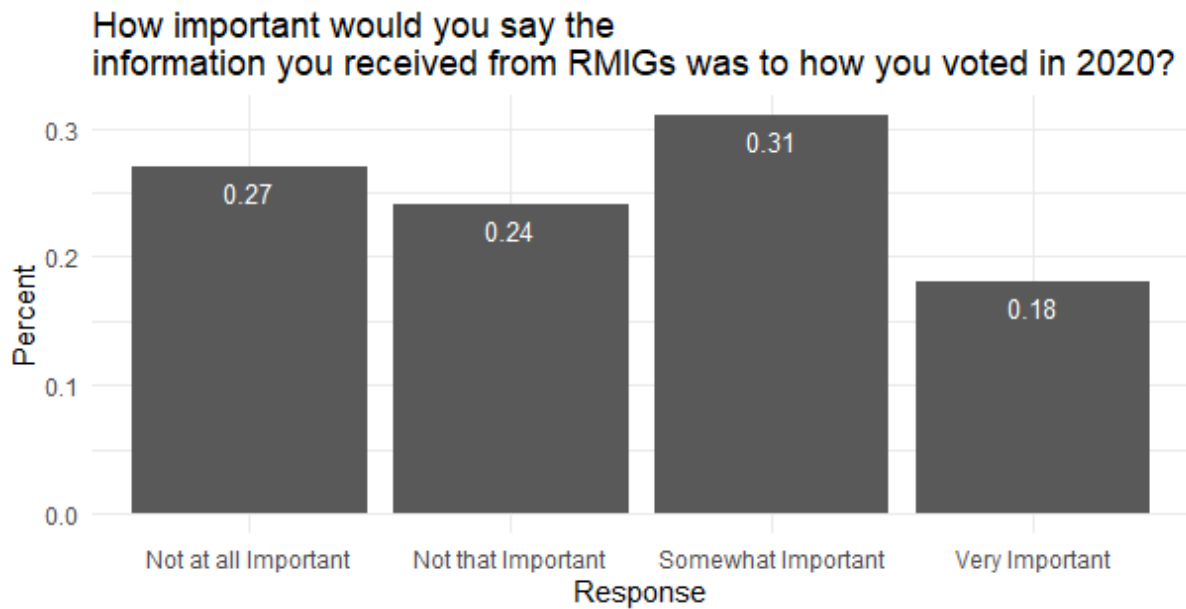
Figure 6.7. 2020 CMPS Respondents: Importance of RMIG Information

Our conjoint experiments yielded results that strongly support Hypothesis **H4**. I calculate the AMCEs for the main randomized attributes simultaneously by running a single regression on the choice outcome with the set of dummy variables for the attribute values of ideology and RMIG endorsements. For interpretation, the reference category is set as a liberal candidate with a low RMIG endorsement (10% report card rating). The AMCE for going from the reference category to the comparison category is then given by the coefficient estimates on the respective dummy variables. Again, the AMCEs can be interpreted as the expected change in the choice of a candidate profile when a given attribute value is compared to the baseline. For instance, I find that candidates who received a 90% RMIG report card rating are on average 16% more likely to be picked than those who received a 10% RMIG report card rating. RMIG endorsement seems to be a strong predictor of candidate choice. Figure 6.8 shows the effects of candidate ideology and RMIG endorsement score on the selection of candidates. The plots show estimates of the effects of randomly assigned candidate ideology and RMIG endorsement levels on the probability of being preferred in a hypothetical election. The dependent variable is a binary "forced choice" indicator in which respondents had to choose between the two candidates. Estimates are based

on the regression estimators with clustered standard errors, and bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Effects of Candidate Attributes: RMIG Endorsements and Candidate's Ideology

Candidate Ideology: Position on Immigration - Centrist

Baseline: Liberal

Candidate Ideology: Position on Immigration - Conservative

Baseline: Liberal

RMIG (NAACP) Endorsement Level: Low (10% baseline) to High (90%)

0   .2
Change in Pr(Vote for Candidate)
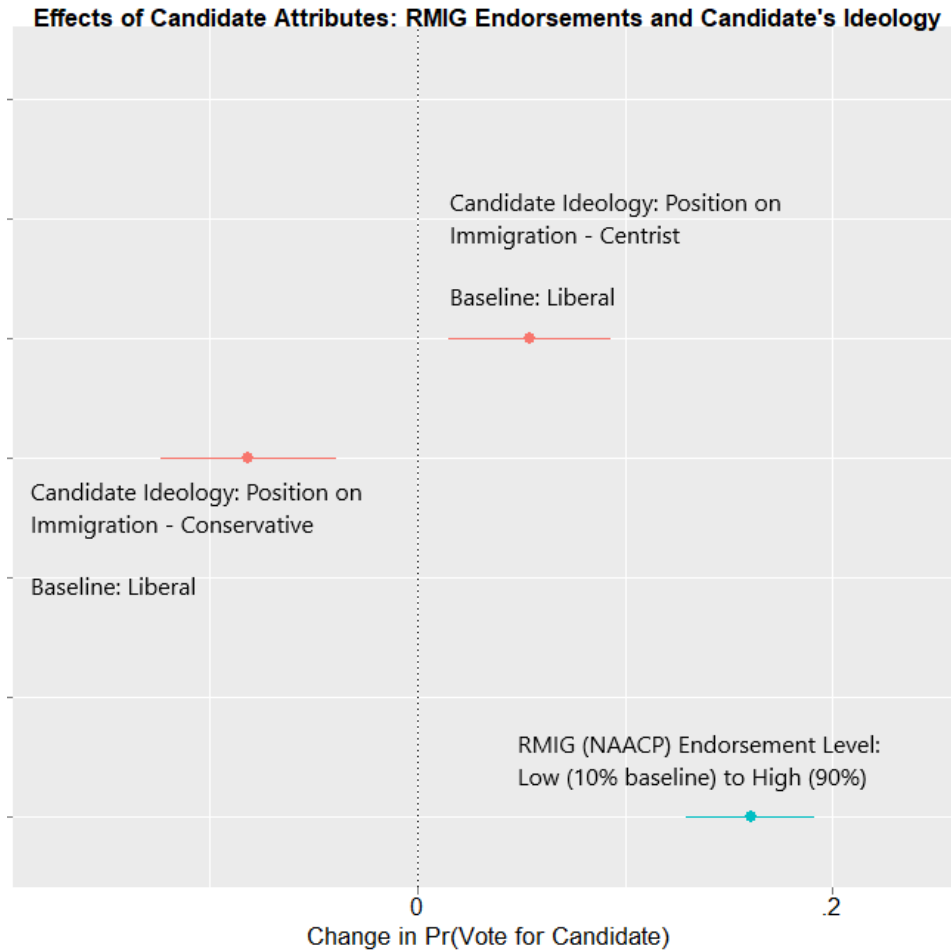
Figure 6.8. Conjoint Experiments: Effects of Candidate Attributes - RMIG Endorsements and Candidate's Ideology (AMCEs)

Conditional on race, a high RMIG endorsement also leads to a higher chance of candidate selection. Figure 6.9 displays the interaction effects of candidates' RMIG endorsement score and respondents' race on the selection of candidate. The plot estimates the effects of the randomly assigned RMIG endorsement scores on the probability of being picked by respondents, conditional on respondents' race. On average, Black, Latinx/Hispanic, and Asian respondents are more likely to choose the candidate with the high endorsement score than the one with the

118

low endorsement score. Black respondents respond most to RMIG endorsement scores, followed by Asian and Latinx/Hispanic respondents. Furthermore, these results show that voters respond more to the RMIG endorsement cue than the ideological cue. Compared to the ideological labeling of candidates, the RMIG endorsement scores, on average, have much stronger effects on candidate choice.
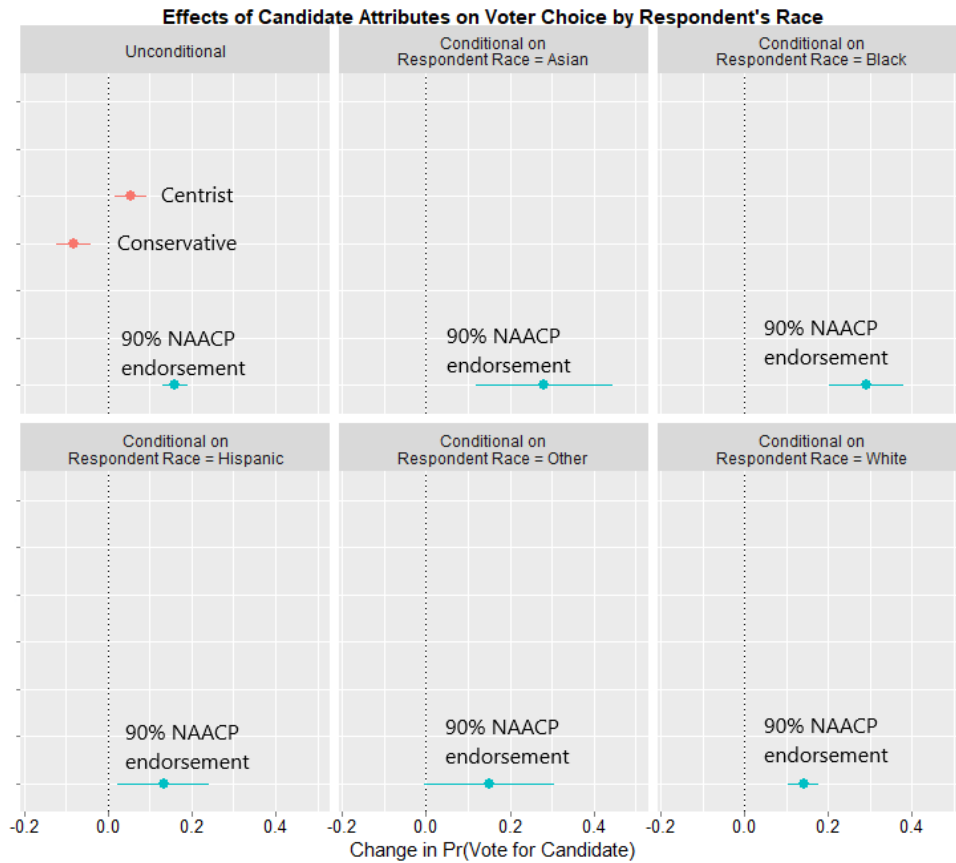
Figure 6.9. Conjoint Experiments: Effects of Candidate Attributes - RMIG Endorsements and Candidate's Ideology Conditional on Respondent's Race (AMCEs)

RMIGs' endorsements have a positive and statistically significant effect on respondents' choice of candidates. Interestingly, these endorsements seem more potent than the classic predictor of ideology. While respondents respond more to centrist candidates compared to liberal candidates, the effect of a RMIG endorsement leads to higher change in the probability of voting for the candidate. The more important finding is that RMIG endorsements affect racial minority

voters' choices at higher rates. RMIGs' constituents, taken together with the survey responses on their evaluation of RMIG information, seem to react positively to RMIG cues. Racial minorities' electoral behavior can be induced to change by RMIGs. This finding reinforces my argument that RMIGs hold a position of trust in their respective racial communities. It is this trust that helps them perform so well in legislative lobbying. My conjoint experiments reveal that RMIG endorsement signals affect vote choice and that racial minority voters respond to these signals at higher rates.

6.6   Conclusion

I show that RMIGs can exert influence in the policy process through coalitional size and diversity mechanisms. Chapter 5 found that RMIGs were able to build and be on much larger and more diverse coalitions than non-RMIGs. Building on the work of other scholars, I test the effects of coalitional size and diversity on the ability of bills to pass out of the legislature (Phinney 2018; Lorenz 2022). The data show that coalitional size and diversity are significant predictors of bill passage rates. Bills with large support coalitions that outnumber the opposing coalition are much more likely to pass than those with smaller support coalitions. Similarly, bills with more diverse supporting coalitions tend to do better than those with less diverse coalitions. These findings support the theory that the diversity and size of an interest group coalition can break through legislators' uncertainties and convince them to vote in line with the coalition's position.

Interestingly, I find that the presence of RMIGs in smaller supporting coalitions outnumbered by the opposing coalition has a better chance of passing their preferred bill than non-RMIGs in similar small coalitions. Bills supported by RMIGs pass at higher rates when the size of the coalition is larger. Surprisingly, bills supported by non-RMIGs do much better than those supported by RMIGs when the supporting coalitional size is larger than the opposing coalitional size. That is, if a coalition is already large then having a RMIG does not meaningfully

lead to higher chances of success. The size of a supporting coalition seems to be the decisive determinant of bill success. On the other hand, RMIGs in very diverse coalitions do better than RMIGs in less diverse coalitions but not as well as non-RMIGs in similar situations. Non-RMIGs are more successful on their own.

Further analysis revealed that the highest predicted probability of passing a bill occurs when there is lower diversity but lots of members in the supporting coalition of the bill. At the same time, having very large and very diverse coalitions also lead to higher chances of passage but not as much as if there is a large and homogeneous supporting coalition. These findings point to bounds of success related to coalition diversity and size, where diversity seems to matter less once a coalition reaches a threshold in their size–around at least 40 to 50 net supporting organizations.

My theory predicts that RMIGs significantly influence their constituents' voting behavior. As the representatives of their racial groups in legislative affairs, RMIGs occupy a position of trust. Scholars note that voting cues from co-racial elites to racial minority voters seem to be effective and that this is dependent on the level of trust they have as co-racial members (Benjamin 2017). I expect RMIGs to play a similar role in the voting decisions of racial minorities. First, surveys show that RMIGs actively reach out to their racial communities during elections though not as often as one expects. The low percentage of people who claim to receive directions from RMIGs reflects the financial weaknesses that RMIGs have. As we know through the literature on campaigns, reaching these communities is expensive and complicated. However, the information they provide is taken seriously among the people they do reach.

I find that RMIG report card ratings as endorsements, modeled on actual legislative report cards issued by RMIGs and other interest groups, significantly affect voters' choices. Respondents to my conjoint experiment report chose the candidate with the higher RMIG endorsement rating over the candidate with the lower RMIG endorsement. On average, the effects of the RMIG endorsement are higher than that of ideological cues. Similarly, racial minority respondents responded much more to the RMIG endorsements. These findings provide

121

support for the role of RMIGs in shaping the vote choice of the public, particularly their racial minority constituents.

RMIGs are great conduits of representation for racial minorities because they can create large and diverse coalitions, which in turn increases the likelihood of their policy success. Diverse and large coalitions work to overcome legislator uncertainties and make lobbying signals more credible. The data support this postulate. In addition, RMIGs trust their constituencies, who generally act on their endorsements and use the information they provide when it pertains to elections. The other chapters of the dissertation tell a story that culminates in the findings of this chapter. RMIGs are separate, distinct types of interest groups that pursue a strategy that helps them overcome their lobbying weaknesses. Consequently, they can pass bills more often than expected, given their marginalization. I show that they do this because they can build more diverse and large coalitions and maintain a stable connection to their respective racial minority groups.

Chapter 6 is currently being prepared for submission for publication of the material. The dissertation author was the sole investigator and author of this paper.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

The formation and rise of new interest groups representing racial minorities have dramatically affected the role of lobbying as a method for voicing the demands of marginalized racial minority communities. Since the 1960s, groups that were once kept out of the political system can now freely participate as different groups advocating for the poor, women, racial minorities, and other disadvantaged segments of society became more prevalent (Wilson 1974). Groups representing specifically racial minority interests that I call *racial minority interest groups*, or RMIGs, play a crucial role in representing their respective racial groups by raising the concerns of their communities and working to pass policies that benefit them. If anything, the "Pluralist Heaven" criticized by Schattschneider (1960), where groups represent all interests of society, is much closer today than it was in the past. However, one can intuitively sense that equal representation in lobbying is not necessarily the reality.

Though thousands of voices are heard in Congress and state capitals across the country, it is evident that the majority and the loudest come from primarily elite, wealthy parts of our country like those of major corporations or powerful professional groups. Therefore it is necessary to evaluate the state of lobbying and representation in the United States by analyzing the behavior of weaker groups, like RMIGs, and evaluate whether they are successful in the lobbying arena. Are RMIGs, representing politically marginalized racial minority groups, shut out of the legislature, or can they compete on par with other powerful interests? As shown in the chapters of this

123

dissertation, my findings show that RMIGs are an effective vehicle of representation for their communities despite severe constraints. The main implication of this study is that racial minority groups should pursue lobbying as a valuable avenue for voicing policy grievances.

In this dissertation, I propose a theory of why RMIGs are distinct from our traditional understanding of interest groups and how they can effectively lobby in a biased political system toward elite interests. The main distinction between RMIGs and traditional interest groups is that RMIGs primarily advocate for the interests of a racial group. This racial distinction cannot be taken lightly because it shapes the obstacles and resources available to RMIGs. RMIGs' actions are evaluated through racialized views and stereotypes. They often have to overcome racist views of whether specific policies are deserving, like in the case of welfare reform.

On the other hand, racial identity can be a source of strength. Linked-fate, a phenomenon described by Dawson (2004) in which racial minorities feel connected through their racial identity, is much stronger and more prevalent compared to other identities. A shared sense of linked-fate allows RMIGs to mobilize and cooperate more easily and often than other groups. These resources and barriers are distinct to RMIGs, and they navigate a lobbying environment that is wholly different from classic interest groups. Finally, RMIGs' road into political incorporation was shaped by their experiences in social movements, which helped these groups develop strategies based on cooperation and coalition-building. These experiences and their trajectory from social movements shaped their behavior as formal lobbying organizations in legislatures.

I argue that RMIGs can successfully compete against powerful groups and win policy battles because they are able to create large and diverse lobbying coalitions more easily. The historical development of RMIGs has created a general inclination towards cooperative lobbying. RMIGs lobby in coalitions and send informational signals rather than through campaign contributions or lobbying alone. The unique character of RMIG, honed through the social movements for civil rights, political access, and equality, makes them more inclined to cooperate with other organizations. The strategic advantage of coalition-building reinforces this characteristic. Large and diverse coalitions increase their lobbying capabilities and reduce informational uncertainty

124

among legislators. Through these ways, RMIGs can compete and pass policies that matter to marginalized racial minority communities.

This dissertation is the first to comprehensively evaluate the role of RMIGs in providing representation for their respective racial groups. It brings an institutional lens to the study of racial politics by analyzing how organizations can participate in formal lobbying to advocate for racial interests. Doing so improves the current study of racial politics by pushing the field beyond mass behavioral studies to that of institutions like the legislature, courts, agencies, and more. I introduce lobbying as a complementary and viable method of representation for racial minorities along with voting, protesting, and pursuing political office.

7.1   RMIGs as Reliable and Successful Representatives

First, I show that once excluded racial minority groups are being actively represented by many different RMIGs that advocate on their behalf. There is evidence that RMIG lobbying activity is consistently at competitive levels and is increasing over time. For example, Asian RMIGs' lobbying activity has dramatically shot up in the past 20 years. Second, chapter 4 shows that, contrary to the current state of the literature, there is evidence of RMIGs acting as reliable representatives of their racial groups. The transition of RMIGs from social movements to formal lobbying organizations does not lead to a bias towards the elite and wealthy segments of their group. Moving from jeans worn in the streets during protests to suits donned in the lobbies of legislatures seems to have caused RMIG leaders to double down on being more connected to their base of support. In Chapter 4, I present empirical evidence that RMIGs are more dedicated to advocating for the issues of the disadvantaged parts of their constituency compared to elite issues or the majority.

The strategic need to maintain legitimacy to enhance lobbying credibility has led to more activity on interests that pertain to their most marginalized. RMIGs are generally concerned with issues such as welfare reform, expanding access to resources for the undocumented, and

combatting domestic violence. RMIGs can avoid the same bias reflected in other advocacy organizations and interest groups. RMIGs are as active or more active on issues that matter to those on the margins of society. Though other scholars have shown a bias towards elite interests within advocacy organizations that represent the marginalized, I do not find such evidence for RMIGs (Strolovitch 2007). As modes of representation, there is evidence that RMIGs work to represent the interests of their entire constituency, including the most vulnerable among them. However, are they also effective?

I show in Chapters 5 and 6 that RMIGs pursue a particular strategy of building large and diverse coalitions, and through these coalitions, they can win policy battles. RMIGs are on very large and very diverse coalitions more often than their interest group counterparts. This tendency separates them further in their behavior compared with traditional interest groups like businesses who prefer to lobby on their own (Hojnacki 1997; Hula 1999; Newmark and Nownes 2019). The data show that RMIGs have an advantage in creating and joining diverse and large lobbying coalitions. Why pursue such a strategy? Based on previous work by Phinney (2018) and Lorenz (2020), my theory suggests that these types of coalitions help limit legislator uncertainty and send credible signals to legislators. These signals help interest groups convince legislators and lead to policy success. I find that RMIGs pass bills they support and kill bills they oppose at higher or similar rates than other more powerful groups (Chapter 5).

Moreover, I find that the large and diverse coalitions are solid mechanisms for bill passage. Chapter 6 analyzes the role of coalitional size and diversity in increasing the passage of bills out of the legislators. Bills with large supporting coalitions or very diverse coalitions are more likely to end up at the governor's desk. These findings point to why we observe RMIG success at lobbying when they have fewer presence and resources. RMIGs can more easily build large and diverse coalitions that help break through legislators' uncertainty and lead to influence.

Furthermore, there's strong support for RMIGs' ability to influence racial minorities' voting behavior. The trust racial minorities hold for RMIGs spill into elections. RMIG endorsements are highly predictive of racial minorities' vote choice, as seen in my survey experiments.

The information communicated by RMIGs hold sway over voters' behavior, especially if they are a racial minority. Together, I find multiple pieces of evidence that show RMIGs as not only reliable but successful representatives for racial minorities.

7.2   What are the Conditions of Cooperation and Conflict for RMIG Lobbying? A New Line of Future Research

Contrary to the classic literature on interest group lobbying, I show that RMIGs are not biased in ways that fail to represent the marginalized portions of their group. Secondly, I find that they participate in large and diverse coalitions and pass or kill bills at similar rates as other interest group types. The research findings in this dissertation enhance our understanding of how representation can work for racial minorities and lays out a successful general strategy for vulnerable groups to adopt. Engaging in creating large and diverse coalitions can pay massive dividends for policy success. While my current dissertation research shows that racial minority interest groups (RMIGs) are inclined to cooperate and build coalitions, it is also inevitable for conflicts to arise. What might explain the variation in coalitional behavior among Black, Latinx, and Asian RMIGs? What might explain the variation in coalitional behavior among Black, Latinx, and Asian RMIGs?

I plan to discover the dynamics of racial minority cooperation and conflict pertaining to the legislative arena. Most studies on racial conflict in politics focus on the only Black and Latinx relationship. Only recently have we seen more work on multi-group relations that also include Asian-Americans in the Black-Latinx dyad. These works find some degree of conflict between racial minority groups at the local level and in public opinion.

Future research should provide a much clearer understanding of how these groups work to achieve representation and when they may conflict. Most studies focus on the dyadic Black and Latinx relationship and only recently do we see more work on multi-group relations that also focus on Asian-American relations. These works find some degree of conflict between racial

minority groups at the local level and in public opinion (Kim 2000, Junn and Masuoka 2013). Given that the stakes are higher for policy change in the legislature rather than in other areas, like the courts, are we more likely to see conflict among groups? Moreover, the general pattern that emerges in the literature on inter-racial group conflict at the individual level is that conflict emerges when issues or policies are perceived to benefit one group at the cost to another (Nelson and Lavariega Monforti 2005; Telles et al. 2011). However, it is unclear if this translates to conflict at the interest group level. I intend to fill this gap of the literature. Expanding on this line of research on inter-minority group relations in the legislative arena can provide more insight into how racial minorities may enhance representation. It is a natural extension of the role of RMIGs in representing their communities because it looks at the instances where successful coalitions can occur in the first place.

Expanding on this line of research on inter-minority group relations in the legislative arena can provide more insight into how racial minorities may enhance representation. One approach to answering these questions is to leverage new archival data of the lobbying letters sent by RMIGs. Using these letters will allow researchers to test whether the influence of ideology and group interests are the most critical factors in explaining the variation in group conflict in legislative lobbying.

I supplement my quantitative data with a set of lobbying letters collected from the California State Archives. RMIGs sent these letters in opposition to a whole host of bills. Hence, every set of letters per bill will have a type of RMIG opposing it. Observing the actual information communicated in the letters is vital to understand their lobbying better. I collected 2,497 letters sent to legislative committees by interest groups to register their official positions on 124 bills opposed by RMIGs from 1997 to 2007. Each letter contains a plethora of information, mainly reasons why the groups opposed/supported the bill (see Appendix E). Researchers in the future can use the letters to identify the information these groups convey to legislators and build case studies to understand better how RMIGs and other groups used the letters to influence legislators. In particular, they can also examine the language used by cooperating groups as they

lobby to determine why they chose to cooperate. Similarly, one can also use the language to examine why conflicting groups ended on opposite sides.

Another analysis of RMIG coalitional activity can be measured through network models. For example, researchers can potentially describe networks of RMIG coalitions and the processes that influence the formation of this network. Future work can test whether there is a significant tendency for RMIG ties to be reciprocated (a measure of mutuality). In treating bills as "connectors" of interest groups, researchers can map instances when Asian, Black, and Latinx RMIGs end up on the same side of a bill. The potential for research into racial minority lobbying is high. Researchers can discover so much more about how these organizations function as they fight for policies that matter to their communities.

7.3 An Optimistic Picture of Racial Minority Representation

My research reveals color in a seemingly gloomy picture of the representation of racial minorities. In a highly competitive system of multiple loud voices, it is unsurprising that weaker voices are drowned out. A "natural selection" view of politics would dictate that interest groups with few resources, less familiarity with politics, and who represent people on the peripheries of power will be forced out of the lobbying world. Their voices will be drowned out by the most powerful or ignored by politicians who would rather cater to those with resources that can maximize their grip on political office (Page, Bartels, and Seawright 2013). RMIGs fall into the category of the weaker group because they exhibit all the traits of an organization that would perish in a cut-throat lobbying environment. They have fewer numbers, far fewer resources than most of their interest group counterparts, and represent communities that historically have participated less or cannot participate in politics.

Surprisingly, the data demonstrate that RMIGs compete on par or better than traditional elite interest groups. RMIGs draw on their wealth of experience and their shared identities to

adapt in ways that ensure their survival and success. We have seen this characteristic in action through the significant policy successes like gains in police reform, expansion of access to welfare, and new stronger commitments to combatting hate crime in the face of rising racism during the COVID-19 pandemic.[1] How do they do so? I find ample evidence of RMIGs engaging in strategies of building large and diverse coalitions to win policy battles. Through these mechanisms, RMIGs can provide credible information and cut through legislators' uncertainties that help sway them to their cause. I attribute RMIGs success to their essential nature as organizations that primarily work in *racialized* spaces and represent racial minorities.

I carve RMIGs as a separate and special class of interest groups whose nature and development are entirely different from traditional interest groups. Consequently, the current understanding of how interest groups operate, including strategies and internal biases, does not necessarily apply to RMIGs. My conceptualization of RMIGs pulls race's crucial role to the forefront of behavior and motivations. Conceived in this way, RMIGs are a valuable resource of representation because they are far more connected to their communities than other traditional organizations. Race, as an identity, is so persistent and predictive of so many outcomes for individuals. It affects multiple axes of life, including politics. The enshrinement of race in the analytical conceptualization of RMIGs yield multiple novel and exciting findings. They reveal how and why RMIGs are good modes of representation for racial minorities. Namely, RMIGs' divergent pathway from protest and social movement organizations to formal participants in lobbying equipped them with special abilities to create partnerships and cooperate with heterogeneous organizations. This pathway emphasized the need to maintain strong bonds to the roots of their community to maintain their positions as legitimate representatives of their racial groups.

The main implication of the findings in this dissertation is that RMIGs can be successful

---

[1]Trends for each of these major issues can be tracked through the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) databases. For example, for information on current policies related to expanded welfare, see: NCSL Economic Mobility Policy Tracking. For information on policies related to police reform, see: NCSL Legislative Responses to Policing. For progress on anti-hate crime policy progress, see: "Lawmakers Reflect on COVID, Anti-Asian Bias and Look to Future".

130

modes of representation. This state of affairs is even more profound when considering that RMIGs make up a tiny proportion of the lobbying universe. Vastly outnumbered by business interest groups, professional groups, and governmental groups, RMIGs can compete at similar levels. My findings show that, contrary to our classic understanding of lobbying, the quality of representation for RMIGs is rigorous and that they exert a strong influence on political affairs. Hence, we can improve representation for racial minorities by investing in or expanding RMIGs' role in lobbying. RMIGs are just as important to representation as mobilizing racial minority voters or electing a racial minority to office. The overall picture of representation for racial minority groups is much rosier than previously considered. To modify Schattschneider's (1960) famous description of the "Heavenly Chorus of the Pluralist Heaven" as being accented by an upper-class accent, I submit that there is also a persistent racial tune to its melody. RMIGs play a crucial and often overlooked role in the representation of racial minority communities.

Appendix A

The California Bill Analyses Dataset, 1997 to 2018, Data Collection Procedures

This study uses data I collected through publicly accessible databases from the California legislature. Every single time a bill is sent to a committee, the relevant committee staffers produce a bill analysis detailing a summary of the bill, its authors, background on the bill, and a listing of organizations that sent in a formal letter to the committee on the bill. These letters can be divided into "oppose" or "support." The names of the organizations are listed under the relevant "oppose" or "support" columns. Each bill usually has at the very least one bill analysis attached to it since analysis is written in every committee it lands in and is also written for the floors in both houses. Significant amendments to a bill also trigger a new analysis.

Using natural language processing, I parse and compile the names of these organizations for every bill that has a bill analysis. Each bill analysis has a column of "support" and "oppose" attached to it. If no letters are sent, "none" is coded for each column. For this paper, I identified the relevant RMIG groups by their names. Each racial minority interest group signal was coded by primary type using an initial keyword-matching pass, and then coders performed a manual review of the group names (Hero, Preuhs and Meeks 2017).

- Black RMIGs were identified based on – "African", "African American", "Black", "Colored", "NAACP".

- Latinx RMIGs were identified based on the keywords – "Hispanic," "Latino/a", "Chicano",

"Latin", "Mexican", "Raza".

- Asian RMIGs were identified based on the keywords – "Asian", "Chinese/China", "Japan", "Cambodia", "Vietnamese", "Filipino", "Lao", "south Asian", "Nikkei".

A.1   General Topic Coding

The topic of each bill was coded, when applicable, according to the U.S. Policy Agendas Project Codebook from the Comparative Agendas Project at the University of Texas, Austin. Of the codebook's 20 topics, 18 applied to the state (topic exceptions: "international affairs/foreign aid" and "defense"). When necessary, each bill title was accessed and looked up to get the correct topic assignment and is coded by two trained undergraduate research assistants. Where the coders disagree, the coders debate the appropriate code. The list of the general topic codes:

1. "Agriculture"
2. "Banking and Finance"
3. "Civil Rights"
4. "Community Development"
5. "Education"
6. "Energy"
7. "Environment"
8. "Foreign Trade"
9. "Government Operations"
10. "Health"
11. "Immigration"
12. "Labor and Employment"
13. "Law, Crime, Family Issues"
14. "Macroeconomics"
15. "Public Lands"
16. "Social Welfare"
17. "Technology"
18. "Transportation"

Appendix B

California Interest Group Type Codebook

Observations in the CA Bill Analyses datasets are coded according to the guidelines and group type system described below. Each group is coded into one of 14 major group types. This codebook provides a series of general coding guidelines for classifying each group found in the data. A complete list of all significant group types and examples of cases are found below. For this project, coders analyzed the group's name and categorized it into one of 14 categories. Most group names are evident and easy to classify. Coders will do more in-depth research on groups that are hard to identify. A machine-learning algorithm was applied to the dataset to code all interest groups. The coder's job is to verify and confirm the accuracy and precision of the coding assigned by the algorithm.

Table B.1. Interest Group Type Codebook

Type of Interest Group	Description
Business	-Advocates for the economic benefit of their members: represent people or organizations with common concerns and interests corporate or employer interests. -Generally represent business = a collection of parent and subsidiary companies that function as a single economic entity through a common source of control) -Example: US Chamber of Commerce
Labor	-Advocates for the economic/social interest of workers and trade organizations (skilled and industrial workers) Example: AFL-CIO, Teamsters, etc.
Professional	-Represent the economic interests for members of various professions: lawyers, doctors, engineers Example: American Medical Association
Agricultural	-Represents farmers and agricultural producer - Issues of interest such as crop prices, land use zoning, government subsidies, etc. Example: American Farm Bureau
Environmental	-Public interest group that advocates for conservation and ecological issues -Generally interested in conservation, environmental justice, and "green policy"
Consumer Protection	-Public interest group that advocates for consumer rights and information -Issues of interest are related to pricing, safety and consumer notification Example: Better Business Bureau (BBB)
Single Issue Group	-Focused on advocacy around a single defining issue - Main issues are: guns, abortion, taxation, animal rights, gay marriage, etc. Example: Howard Jarvis Tax Association
Governmental	-Represents the interests of government to other governments -Cities, state agencies, and states can lobby the legislature Example: CA Dept. of Finance, City of San Diego, etc.
Education	-Represents interests related to secondary and post-secondary education -Issues surrounding schools, teachers, students Examples: University of California, School districts, etc.
Racial Minority Interest Groups: RMIGS	-Represents pan-ethnic or racial groups; Native Americans coded separately. Example: Mexican-American Legal Defense Educational Fund (MALDEF)
Public Interest	-Public interest groups promote issues of general public concern (e.g., environmental protection, human rights, and consumer rights) sub-groups: civil rights, immigrant rights, economic justice, women's rights Example: Acorns, ACLU
Ideological	-Promotes and advocates for ideological issues Example: Republican Women's Association, churches, Democratic clubs, etc.
Hospitals	-Represents hospitals/medical staff and lobby on healthcare Example: Sutter Health Hospital

Appendix C

Structural Topic Modeling

Structural Topic Modeling (STM) is a form of topic modeling that employs metadata about the documents to improve the assignment of words to latent topics in a corpus of text (Roberts, Turner, and Tingley 2019). In other words, STM allows for a reliable unsupervised method of identifying the topics of bills of interest for RMIGs and modeling the relationship between these topics and whether they received a signal from one of the three major RMIGs. Using the structural topic model, I estimated and examined the effect of receiving a support or opposition signal from a Latinx, Black or Asian RMIG on the topic proportion of classified topics.

I used the RMIG signals of support and opposition to estimate two structural topic models, one for the corpus of RMIG supported bills and the other for the corpus of RMIG opposed bills. In the model, I let topic prevalence be a function of the different RMIG type signals and estimated a 20 topic STM model for RMIG opposed bills and a 14 topic STM model for RMIG supported bills.

The parameters for the number of topics (20 and 14) were picked by estimating many different models with varying numbers of topics and selecting the model that maximizes semantic coherence and exclusivity (see Figures C1, C2, C3 and C4). After estimating the models and its topics, the author evaluated and inspected the model results. Using the words from each topic estimated by the STM model, a label was attached to summarize the topic. The effects of each

RMIG type signal (Latinx, Black, Asian) were then estimated, and topic prevalence for each

topic is contrasted between the RMIG type signal and not receiving that RMIG type's signal.

Figure C.1. Diagnostic graphs for choosing k, or the number of topics, within the structural topic model for supported bills.

Figure C.2. Diagnostic Values by Number of Topics for supported bills
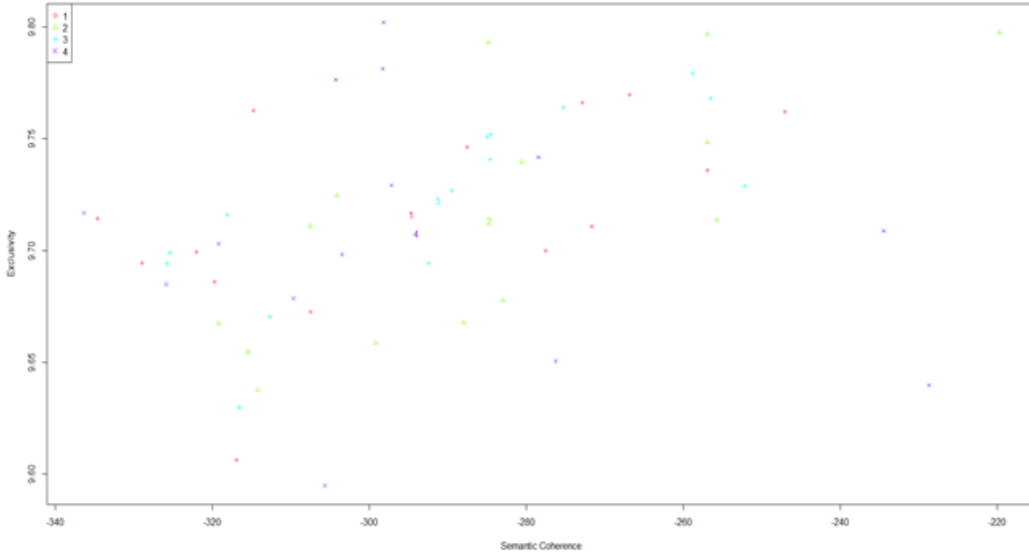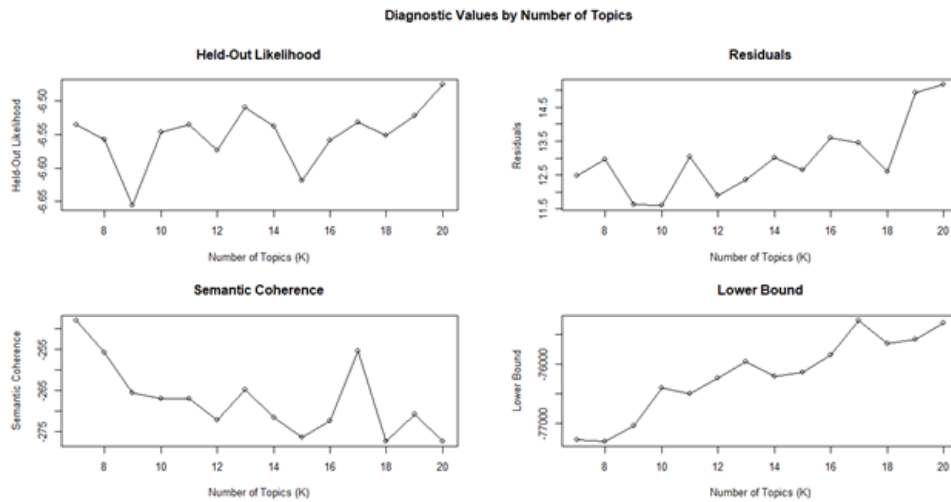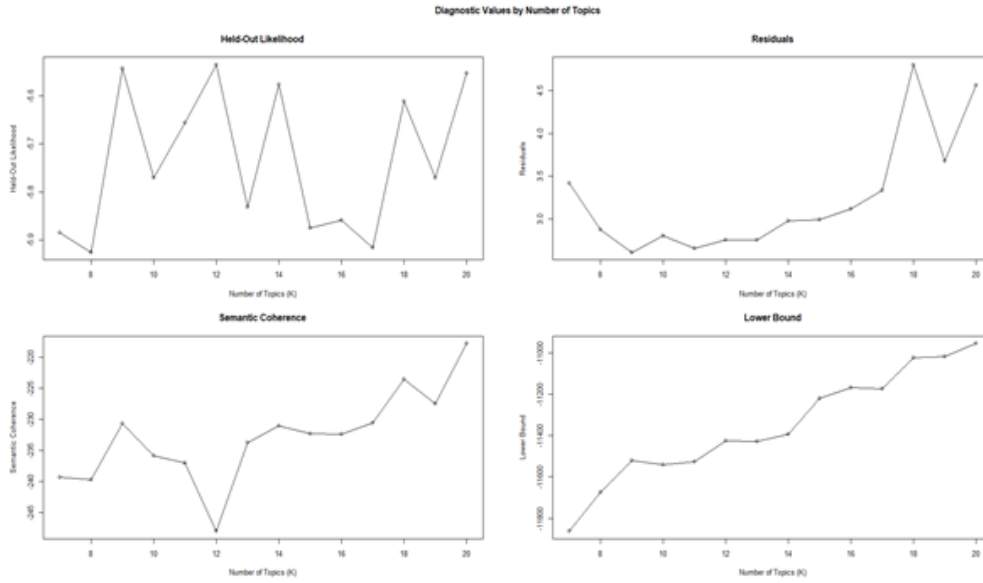
Figure C.3. Diagnostic graphs for choosing k, or the number of topics, within the structural topic model for opposed bills.
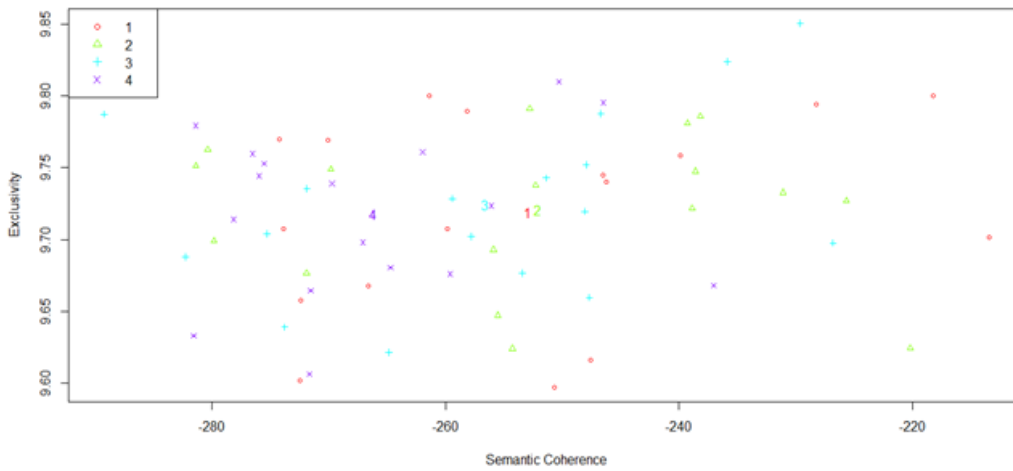

Figure C.4. Diagnostic Values by Number of Topics for opposed bills

Appendix D

Regression Table for Figures 6.1 to 6.5

Table D.1. Statistical Models for the Effects of Coalition Diversity and Size on Bill Passage

	Bill Passage				
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
(Intercept)	1.50***	0.82***	1.51***	0.82***	1.46***
	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.06)	(0.04)	(0.06)
Bill HHI Support	−0.34***		−0.35***		−0.26***
	(0.03)		(0.03)		(0.03)
Net Coalition Support		0.03***		0.04***	0.01***
		(0.00)		(0.00)	(0.00)
RMIG Support			−0.07	0.21***	
			(0.06)	(0.06)	
Bill HHI Support X RMIG Support			−0.09		
			(0.22)		
Net Coalition Support X RMIG Support				−0.03***	
				(0.00)	
Net Coalition Support X Bill HHI Support					0.06***
					(0.01)
Year FEs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
AIC	36314.86	43581.61	36316.11	43484.56	35952.73
BIC	36413.90	43682.52	36431.65	43602.29	36068.27
Log Likelihood	−18145.43	−21778.80	−18144.05	−21728.28	−17962.37
Deviance	36290.86	43557.61	36288.11	43456.56	35924.73
Num. obs.	28367	33176	28367	33176	28367

***$p < 0.001$; **$p < 0.01$; *$p < 0.05$

- Model 1: Diversity (HHI) of supporting coalition in relation to bill passage.

- Model 2: Net coalition size of supporting coalition (number of groups on supporting size minus number of groups on opposing side) in relation to bill passage.

- Model 3: Interaction of coalitional diversity and presence of RMIG in relation to bill passage.

- Model 4: Interaction of coalitional size and presence of RMIG in relation to bill passage.

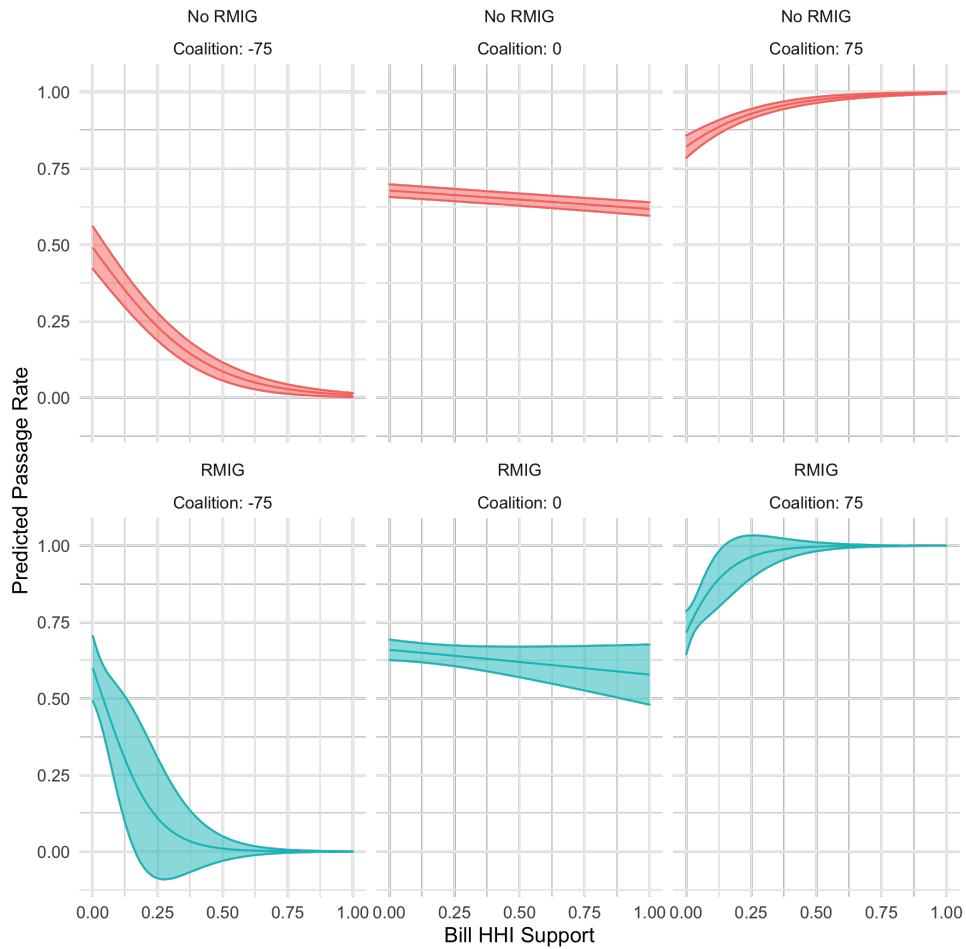- Model 5: Interaction of coalitional size and diversity in relation to bill passage.

Figure D.1. Predicted Probabilities of Bill Passage, Three-way Interaction (Diversity, Coalitional Size, and Presence of RMIG)

Appendix E

Data: Lobbying Letters on RMIG Opposed Bills, 1997-2006

My collection of lobbying letters narrowly focuses on bills opposed by RMIGs from 1997 to 2005. This sample selection was due to the time constraints placed by the California State Archives and the labor limitations related to copying and digitizing the letters. Legislative records from California have roughly a two to four-year waiting period before access is provided.[1] This is because legislative offices only send in records at the end of one to two legislative sessions (one session is two years). It takes time for archivists to process, record, and organize the large volumes of paper records they receive. Some records are also required to be placed under a time lock by the legislative office whose files are being archived, which means that they cannot be accessed until after a specified period or with written permission from the legislator. Hence, letters after 2005 are generally not available for collection. In addition, the letters are not digitized for an online archive, so they must be collected physically. To record thousands of letters would be highly labor-intensive and costly. I focused the data collection on this time period and RMIG-opposed letters with these constraints in mind to maximize theoretical leverage.

I argue that opposition letters provide a better description of RMIG lobbying because it takes more effort to kill a bill than signal support. An opposing coalition must articulate its reason for opposing and coordinate the attack on the bill among multiple groups. Raising opposition

---

[1] California State Archive procedures, conversation with state reference archivist. February 10, 2020

indicates that the group cares about the issue being considered or has a strong preference that cannot be dissuaded. Interest groups often try to compromise as much as possible to resolve disputes about an issue before they officially take a position. So when a RMIG lodges a letter of opposition, it is clearly a failure to compromise in informal settings. Focusing on RMIG opposition letters can provide a more accurate picture of how RMIGs lobby.

To systematically analyze these letters, I trained a team of ten undergraduate researchers to read and code each letter. First, each letter was analyzed for basic information like whether they opposed or supported the bill, the organization's name, the bill they are writing about, and their interest group type. Then each letter had to be analyzed for several binary indicators and signals. This included whether the group provided economic, legal, technical, electoral, or political information in their letter. My team also looked to see if the letters mentioned threats, rewards for cooperation, a sense of urgency, or a plea for collaboration. Finally, to ensure maximum accuracy, the undergraduate researchers performed rigorous audits of each others' work. As a result, the letters dataset allows me to look closely at the *type* of information that RMIGs send to legislators, as well as whether there is any particular focus on a type of information compared to non-RMIG groups.

MALDEF
Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund

**Sacramento
Satellite Office**
926 J Street
Suite 422
Sacramento, CA 95814
Tel 916.443.7531
Fax 916.443.1541

**National Headquarters
Los Angeles
Regional Office**
634 S. Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90014
Tel. 213.629.2512
Fax 213.629.0745

**Chicago
Regional Office**
188 W. Randolph Street
Suite 1405
Chicago, IL 60601
Tel: 312.782.1422
Fax: 312.782.1428

**San Antonio
Regional Office**
140 E. Houston Street
Suite 300
San Antonio, TX 78205
Tel: 210.224.5476
Fax: 210.224.5382

**Washington, D.C.
Regional Office**
1717 K Street, NW
Suite 311
Washington, DC 20036
Tel. 202.293.2828
Fax 202.293.2849

**San Francisco
Redistricting Office**
915 Cole Street
Suite 283
San Francisco, CA 94117
Tel. 415.504.0044
Fax 415.504.0044

**Albuquerque
Program Office**
1156 Central Avenue, SE
Suite 201
Albuquerque, NM 87106
Tel. 505.843.8883
Fax 505.246.9114

**Houston
Program Office**
Ingley House
4410 Navigation
Suite 224
Houston, TX 77011
Tel. 713.315.6894
Fax 713.315.6834

**Phoenix
Program Office**
902 E. McDowell Road
Suite 176
Phoenix, AZ 85004
Tel. 602.307.2218
Fax 602.307.4028

**Atlanta
Census Office**
2155 Loree Road
Suite 750
Atlanta, GA 30324
Tel. 404.504.7030
Fax 404.504.7023

March 25, 2004

The Honorable John Vasconcellos, Chairperson
Senate Committee on Education
State Capitol, Room 2083
Sacramento, CA 95814

                                                    Via Facsimile

RE: Senate Bill 1503 (McClintock) – Oppose

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF) is in strong opposition to Senate Bill 1503 (McClintock), which would repeal the recently-enacted Assembly Bill 540 (2001) and eliminate in-state tuition for California's undocumented high school students. This bill would undo years of work and effort by community and business leaders, civil rights and immigrants' rights advocates, and hundreds of student activists that have worked tirelessly to ensure that all of our children have the opportunity to strive for the highest level of academic success, regardless of their immigration status.

California's youth are our most valuable resource, and investing in their future helps to expand our economy, strengthen our families, and improve public safety in our communities. We commend your support of AB 540, which enabled some of our best and brightest high school graduates to attend California's prestigious public colleges and universities.

AB 540 established a fair tuition policy for all California high school students. It is important to note that it only provides benefits to students that have been longtime residents of California. Students who, with their families, have greatly contributed to the growth of our economy and have contributed to our state through the payment of income, sales, and property taxes.

For these reasons, I urge you to oppose SB 1503.

Sincerely,

Francisco Estrada
Director of Public Policy

cc: The Honorable Tom McClintock

Celebrating Our 33rd Anniversary
Protecting and Promoting Latino Civil Rights

Figure E.1. Example of a Letter Sent in Opposition to a Senate Bill from a RMIG, 2004

Bibliography

Abrajano, Marisa and Zoltan Hajnal. 2015. *White Backlash: Immigration, Race and American Politics*. Princeton University Press.

Ainsworth, Scott. 1993. "Regulating Lobbyists and Interest Group Influence"." *Journal of Politics* 55:41–56.

Alexander, Michelle. 2010. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. The New York Press.

Ansolabehere, Stephen, John M. de Figueiredo and James M. Snyder. 2003. "Why is There So Little Money in US Politics?" *Journal of Economic perspectives* 17(1):105–130.

Austen-Smith, David. 1987. "Interest Groups, Campaign Contributions, and Probabilistic Voting." *Public Choice* 53:127–40.

Austen-Smith, David and John R. Wright. 1992. "Competitive Lobbying for Legislative Votes." *Social Choice and Welfare* 9:229–57.

Baldassare, Mark, Dean Bonner, Alyssa Dykman and Rachel Lawler. 2020 (online). "Race and Voting in California.".
   URL: *https://www.ppic.org/publication/race-and-voting-in-california/*

Bartels, Larry M. 2016. *Unequal Democracy*. Princeton University Press.

Bauer, Raymond A., Ithiel de Sola Pool and Lewis A. Dexter. 1972. *American Business and Public Policy, 2nd Edition*. Chicago: Aldine-Atherton.

Baumgartner, Frank R and Beth L Leech. 2001. "Interest Niches and Policy Bandwagons: Patterns of Interest Group Involvement in National Politics." *The Journal of Politics* 63(4):1191–1213.

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

Benjamin, Andrea. 2017. *Racial Coalition Building in Local Elections: Elite Cues and Cross-Ethnic Voting*. Cambridge University Press.

Berry, Jeffery M. 1977. *Lobbying for the People: The Political Behavior of Public Interest Groups*. Princeton University Press.

Berry, Jeffery M. 1999. *The New Liberalism: The Rising Power of Citizen Groups*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

Berry, J.M. and C. Wilcox. 2015. *The Interest Group Society*. Routledge.

Bertrand, Marianne, Matilde Bombardini and Francesco Trebbi. 2014. "Is It Whom You Know or What You Know? An Empirical Assessment of the Lobbying Process." *American Economic Review* 104(12):3885–3920.

Bowen, Debra. 2011. "The California Initiative Process at its Centennial." *California Western Law Review* 47(2):3.

Browning, Rufus P., Dale R. Marshall and David H. Tabb. 2003. "Can People of Color Achieve Equality in City Government?" *Racial Politics in American Cities* .

Butler, Daniel M. and Adam M. Dynes. 2020. "Do Republican and Democratic Legislators Have Polarized Views of Their District's Demographics?"." *Research Politics* 7(3).

Campbell, Angus, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller and Donald E. Stokes. 1980. *The American Voter*. University of Chicago Press.

Carpenter, Daniel A., Kevin M. Esterling and David M.J. Lazer. N.d. "Friends, Brokers and Transitivity: Who Informs Whom in Washington Politics?" *Journal of Politics*. Forthcoming.

Chappell, Henry W. 1981. "Campaign Contributions and Voting on the Cargo Preference Bill." *Public Choice* 36:301–12.

Chappell, Henry W. 1982. "Campaign Contributions and Congressional Voting: A Simultaneous Probit-Tobit Model." *Review of Economics and Statistics* 64:77–83.

Cronin, Thomas E. 1989. *Direct Democracy: The Politics of Initiative, Referendum and Recall*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Crosson, Jesse M., Alexander C. Furnas and Geoffery M. Lorenz. 2020. "Polarized Pluralism: Organizational Preferences and Biases in the American Pressure System." *American Political Science Review* 114(4):1117–1137.

Dahl, Robert Alan. 1967. *Pluralist Democracy in the United States: Conflict and Consent*. Rand

McNally.

Dawson, Michael C. 1994. *Behind the Mule: Race and Class in African-American Politics*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Dawson, Michael C. 2003. *Black Visions: The Roots of Contemporary African-American Political Ideologies*. University of Chicago Press.

Dovidio, John F. and Samuel L. Gaertner. 2004. "Aversive Racism". In *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, ed. Mark P. Zanna. Vol. 36 p. 1–52.

Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper Collins.

Drutman, Lee. 2015. *The Business of America is Lobbying: How Corporations Became Politicized, and Politics Became More Corporate*. Oxford University Press.

Durden, Garey C., Jason E. Shogren and Jonathan I. Silberman. 1991. "The Effects of Interest Group Pressure on Coal Strip-Mining Legislation." *Social Science Quarterly* 72:237–50.

Espiritu, Yến Lê. 1992. *Asian American Panethnicity: Bridging Institutions and Identities*. Temple University Press.

Fabina, Jacob. 2021 (Online). "Despite Pandemic Challenges, 2020 Election Had Largest Increase in Voting Between Presidential Elections on Record." The United States Census Bureau.
URL: *https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/04/record-high-turnout-in-2020-general-election.html*

Fabina, Jacob and Zach Scherer. 2022 (Online). "Voting and Registration in the Election of November 2020.".
URL: *https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2022/demo/p20-585.html*

Fellowes, Matthew C. and Patrick J. Wolf. 2004. "Funding Mechanisms and Policy Instruments: How Business Campaign Contributions Influence Congressional Votes." *Political Research Quarterly* 57:315–24.

Fishkin, James, Thad Kousser, Robert C. Luskin and Alice Siu. 2015. "Deliberative Agenda Setting: Piloting Reform of Direct Democracy in California." *Perspectives on Politics* 13(4):1030–1042.

Flanagan, Constance and Peter Levine. N.d. "Civic Engagement and the Transition to Adulthood." . Forthcoming.

Fleisher, Richard. 1993. "PAC Contributions and Congressional Voting on National Defense."

Legislative Studies Quarterly 18:391–409.

Frasure-Yokley, Lorrie. 2018. "Choosing the Velvet Glove: Women voters, Ambivalent Sexism, and Vote Choice in 2016." *Journal of Race, Ethnicity, and Politics* 3(1):3–25.

Furnas, Alexander C., Michael T. Heaney and Timothy M. LaPira. 2019. "The Partisan Ties of Lobbying Firms." *Research Politics* 6(3):1–9.

García-Bedolla, Lisa and Melissa R. Michelson. 2012. Yale University Press.

Gay, Claudine and Katherine Tate. 1998. "Doubly Bound: The Impact of Gender and Race on the Politics of Black Women." *Political Psychology* 19(1):169–184.

Gilens, Martin. 1996. "'Race Coding' and White Opposition to Welfare." *American Political Science Review* p. 593–604.

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.

Goldstein, Kenneth M. 1999. *Interest Groups, Lobbying, and Participation in America*. Cambridge University Press.

Gopoian, J. David. 1984. "What Makes PACs Tick? An Analysis of the Allocation Patterns of Economic Interest Groups." *American Journal of Political Science* 28:259–81.

Gray, Virginia and David Lowery. 1996. *The Population Ecology of Interest Representation: Lobbying Communities in the American States*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Grenzke, Janet M. 1989. "PACs and the Congressional Supermarket: The Currency is Complex." *American Journal of Political Science* 33:1–24.

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

Hansen, John M. 1991. *Gaining Access: Congress and the Farm Lobby, 1919-1981*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Henry, P.J. and David O. Sears. 2002. "The Symbolic Racism 2000 Scale." *Political Psychology* 23(2):253–283.

Herndon, James F. 1982. "Access, Record, and Competition as Influences on Interest Groups' Contributions to Congressional Campaigns." *Journal of Politics* 44:996–1019.

Hero, Rodney E., Robert R. Preuhs and Olivia M. Meeks. 2019. "Are these Friends also 'Friends

of the Court'? Examining Minority Legal Advocacy Organization Coalitions in Amicus Brief Filings." *Politics, Groups, and Identities* 7(3):489–508.

Hero, Rodney and Robert Preuhs. 2013. *Black-Latino Relations in U.S. National Politics: Beyond Conflict or Cooperation.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hojnacki, Marie. 1997. "Interest Groups' Decisions to Join Alliances or Work Alone." *American Journal of Political Science* p. 61–87.

Hughey, Matthew W. 2014. "White Backlash in the 'Post-Racial' United States." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 37(5):721–730.

Hula, Kevin W. 1999. *Lobbying together: Interest group coalitions in legislative politics.* Georgetown University Press.

Hutchings, Vincent L. and Nicholas A. Valentino. 2004. "The Centrality of Race in American Politics." *Annual Review of Political Science* 7:383–408.

Kalla, Joshua L. and David E. Broockman. 2016. "Campaign Contributions Facilitate Access to Congressional Officials: A Randomized Field Experiment." *American Journal of Political Science* 60:545–58.

Kaufmann, Karen M. 2003. "Cracks in the Rainbow: Group Commonality as a Basis for Latino and African-American Political Coalitions." *Political Research Quarterly* 56(2):199–210.

Kim, Claire. 2003. *Bitter Fruit: The Politics of Black-Korean Conflict in New York City.* New Haven, Yale University Press.

Kim, In Song. 2017. "Political Cleavages within Industry: Firm-level Lobbying for Trade Liberalization." *American Political Science Review* 111(1):1–20.

Kim, In Song and Dmitriy Kunisky. 2021. "Mapping Political Communities: A Statistical Analysis of Lobbying Networks in Legislative Politics." *Political Analysis* 29(3):317–336.

Kim, Jae Yeon. 2020. "How Other Minorities Gained Access: The War on Poverty and Asian American and Latino Community Organizing"." *Political Research Quarterly* .

Kingdon, John W. N.d. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies.* 2nd edn ed. New York: HarperCollins.

Kollman, Ken. 1998. *Outside Lobbying: Public Opinion and Interest Group Strategies.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Kousser, Thad. 2005. *Term Limits and the Dismantling of State Legislative Professionalism.*

Cambridge University Press.

Krogstad, Jens Manuel and Mark Hugo Lopez. 2017. "Black Voter Turnout Fell in 2016, Even as a Record Number of Americans Cast Ballots.".

Kuklinski, James H. and Norman L. Hurley. 1994. "On Hearing and Interpreting Political Messages: A Cautionary Tale of Citizen Cue-Taking." *The Journal of Politics* 56(3):729–751.

Langbein, Laura I. 1986. "Money and Access: Some Empirical Evidence." *Journal of Politics* 48:1052–62.

LaPira, Timothy M. and Herschel F. Thomas. 2017. *Revolving Door Lobbying: Public Service, Private Influence, and the Unequal Representation of Interests*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.

Lee, Taeku. 2008. "Race, Immigration, and the Identity-to-Politics Link." *Annual Review of Political Science* 11:457–478.

Leifeld, Phillip and Volker Schneider. 2012. "Information Exchange in Policy Networks." *American Journal of Political Science* 56:731–744.

Leighley, Jan E. 2001. *Strength in Numbers?: The Political Mobilization of Racial and Ethnic Minorities*. Princeton University Press.

Loomis, Burdett A. 1983. "A New Era: Groups and Grass Roots". In *Interest Group Politics, 4th Edition*, ed. A. Cigler and B. Loomis. Washington D.C: CQ Press.

Lorenz, Geoffrey M. 2020. "Prioritized Interests: Diverse Lobbying Coalitions and Congressional Committee Agenda Setting"." *Journal of Politics* 82(1):225–240.

Mahoney, Christine. 2007. "Lobbying Success in the United States and the European Union." *Journal of Public Policy* 27(1):35–56.

Masuoka, Natalie and Jane Junn. 2013. *The Politics of Belonging: Race, Public Opinion, and Immigration*. University of Chicago Press.

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

McAdam, Doug. 1982. *Political Parties and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

McAdam, Doug. 1996. The Framing Function of Movement Tactics: Strategic Dramaturgy in the American Civil Rights Movement. In *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements:*

Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings, ed. Doug. McAdam, John .D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McCarthy, John D. and Mayer N. Zald. 1977. "Resource mobilization and Social movements: a Partial Theory." *American Journal of Sociology* 82(6):1212–1241.

McDermott, Monika L. 2006. "Not for Members Only: Group Endorsements as Electoral Information Cues." *Political Research Quarterly* 59(2):249–257.

Mease, Lindley. 2018. "Building a Movement for Worker Health, One Nail Salon at a Time: Interview with Julia Liou." *Blue Heart[blog]* .
URL: *https://medium.com/blue-heart/building-a-movement-for-worker-health-one-nail-salon-at-a-time-interview-with-julia-liou-b84775eccc6b*

Mendelberg, Talia. 2008. "Racial Priming Revived." *Perspectives on Politics* p. 109–123.

Michael, Jay. 2002. *The Third House : Lobbyists, Money, and Power in Sacramento*. Berkeley CA: Berkeley Public Policy Press.

Milbrath, Lester W. 1963. *The Washington Lobbyists*. Chicago: Rand McNally.

Mollenkopf, John. 2005. *Contentious City: The Politics of Recovery in New York City*. Russell Sage Foundation.

Moncrief, Gary and Joel A. Thompson. 2001. "On the Outside Looking In: Lobbyists' Perspectives on the Effects of State Legislative Term Limits." *State Politics amp; Policy Quarterly* 1(4):394–411.

Nelson, David and Susan W. Yackee. 2012. "Lobbying Coalitions and Government Policy Change: An Analysis of Federal Agency Rulemaking." *The Journal of Politics* 74(2):339–353.

Newmark, Adam J. and Anthony J. Nownes. 2019. "Lobbying Conflict, Competition, and Working in Coalitions." *Social Science Quarterly* 100(4):1284–1296.

Nownes, Anthony J. 2006. *Total lobbying: What lobbyists want (and how they try to get it*. Cambridge University Press.

Olsen, Mancur. 1965. *The Logic of Collective Action*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Omi, Michael and Howard Winant. 1994. *Racial Formation in the United States*. Routledge.

Oser, Jennifer, Marc Hooghe and Sofie Marien. 2013. "Is Online Participation Distinct from Offline Participation? A Latent Analysis of Participation Types and Their Stratification." *Political Research Quarterly* p. 99–101.

Ozymy, Joshua. 2010. "Assessing the Impact of Legislative Lobbying Regulations on Interest Group Influence in U.S. State Legislatures." *State Politics amp; Policy Quarterly* 10(4):397–420.

Ozymy, Joshua and Denis Rey. 2011. "Legislative Ambition, Resources, and Lobbyist Influence in US State Legislatures." *Journal of Political Science* 39.

Page, Benjamin I., Larry M. Bartels and Jason Seawright. 2013. "Democracy and the Policy Preferences of Wealthy Americans." *Perspectives on Politics* 11(1):51–73.

Peréz, Efren. 2016. *Unspoken Politics: Implicit Attitudes and Political Thinking*. Cambridge University Press.

Pinderhughes, Dianne M. 1995. Black Interest Groups and the 1982 Extension of the Voting Rights Act. In *Blacks and the American political system*, ed. Huey Perry and Wayne Parent. University Press of Florida.

Potters, Jan and Frans Van Winden. 1992. "Lobbying and Asymmetric Information." *Public Choice* 74(3):269–292.

Powell, Eleanor N. and Justin Grimmer. 2016. "Money in exile: Campaign Contributions and Committee Access." *The Journal of Politics* 78(4):974–988.

Quach, Thu, Kim-Dung Nguyen, Phuong-An Doan-Billings, Linda Okahara, Cathyn Fan and Peggy Reynolds. 2008. "A Preliminary Survey of Vietnamese Nail Salon Workers in Alameda County, California." *Journal of Community Health* 33(5).

Rappaport, Ronald B., Walter J. Stone and Alan I. Abramowitz. 1991. "Do Endorsements Matter? Group Influence in the 1984 Democratic Caucuses." *American Political Science Review* 85(1):193–203.

Rosenthal, Alan. 2000. *The third house: Lobbyists and lobbying in the states*. Cq Press.

Salisbury, Robert H. 1990. The Paradox of Interests in Washington, DC: More Groups and Less Clout. In *The New American Political System, 2nd ed*, ed. Anthony S. King. Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute.

Schlozman, Kay Lehman. 1984. "What Accent the Heavenly Chorus? Political Equality and the American Pressure System." *Journal of Politics* 46:1006–32.

Schlozman, Kay Lehman, Sidney Verba and Henry E. Brady. 2012. *The Unheavenly Chorus*. Princeton University Press.

Schlozman, Kay Lehman and Traci Burch. 2009. Political Voice in an Age of Inequality. In

America at Risk: The Great Dangers, ed. Robert F. Faulkner and Susan Shell. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Semlser, Neil J., William Wilson and Faith Mitchell. 2001. An Overview of Trends in Social and Economic Well-Being by Race? In *America Becoming: Racial Trends and Their Consequences*. Vol. I Washington, DC: The National Academies Press p. 21–40.

Skocpol, Theda. 2003. *Diminished Democracy*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

Smith, Robert G. 1996. *We Have No Leaders: African Americans in the Post-civil Rights Era*. Albany, N.Y: SUNY Press.

Sonenshein, Raphael. 1993. *Politics in Black and White: Race and Power in Los Angeles*. Princeton University Press.

Sterne, Evelyn Savidge. 2001. Beyond the Boss: Immigration and American Political Culture From 1880 to 1946. In *E Pluribus Unum? Contemporaryand Historical Perspectives on Immigrant Political Incorporation*, ed. Gary Gerstle and John Mollenkopf. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Stratmann, Thomas. 1992. "Are Contributors Rational? Untangling Strategies of Political Action Committees." *Journal of Political Economy* 100:647–64.

Strolovitch, Dara Z. 2006. "Do Interest Groups Represent the Disadvantaged?" *Journal of Politics* 68:893–908.

Strolovitch, Dara Z. 2007. *Affirmative Advocacy: Race, Class, and Gender in Interest Group Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Strolovitch, Dara Z. and David M. Forrest. 2010. "Social and Economic Justice Movements and Organizations". In *The Oxford Handbook of American Political Parties and Interest Groups*, ed. Sandy L. Maisel, Jeffrey M. Berry and George C. Edwards III. Oxford University Press.

Tarman, Christopher and David O. Sears. 2005. "The Conceptualization and Measurement of Symbolic Racism." *The Journal of Politics* 67(3):731–761.

Telles, Edward, Mark Sawyer and Gaspar Rivera-Salgado. 2011. *Just Neighbors?: Research on African American and Latino Relations in the United States*. Russell Sage Foundation.

Thernstrom, Stephan and Abigail Thernstrom. 1997. *America in Black and White: One Nation, Indivisible*. New York: Simon Schuster.

Truman, David. 1962. *The Governmental Process*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

UCLA Labor Center and the California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative. 2018. "Nail Files: A Study of Nail Salon Workers and Industry in the United States." https://www.labor.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/NAILFILES_FINAL.pdf. Online; accessed 12-July-2020".

Verba, Sidney, Kay Lehman Schlozman Henry Brady and Norman H. Nie. 1993. ""Race, Ethnicity and Political Resources: Participation in the United States"." *British Journal of Political Science* 23:453–497.

Vidal, Jordi Blanes, Mirko Draca and Christian Fons-Rosen. 2012. "Revolving door lobbyists." *The American Economic Review* 102(7):3731.

Walton Jr., Hanes, Cheryl M. Miller and Joseph P. McCormick II. 1995. Race and Political Science: The Dual Traditions of Race Relations Politics and African-American Politics. In *Political Science in History: Research Programs and Political Traditions*, ed. James Farr and John S. Dryzek.

White, Ismail K. 2007. "When Race Matters and When It Doesn't: Racial Group Differences in Response to Racial Cues." *American Political Science Review* 101(2):339–354.

Whitford, Andrew B. 2003. "The Structures of Interest Coalitions: Evidence from Environmental Litigation." *Business and Politics* 5(1):45–64.

Williams, David R., Selina A. Mohammed, Jacinta Leavell and Chiquita Collins. 2010. "Race, Socioeconomic Status, and Health: Complexities, Ongoing Challenges, and Research Opportunities." *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 1186(1):69–101.

Wilson, James Q. 1974. *Political Organizations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Witko, Christopher. 2006. "PACs, Issue Context, and Congressional Decision making." *Political Research Quarterly* 59:283–95.

Wong, Janelle. 2008. *Democracy's Promise: Immigrants and American Civic Institutions*. University of Michigan Press.

Wright, John R. 1985. "PACs, Contributions, and Roll calls: An Organizational Perspective." *American Political Science Review* 79(2):400–414.

Wright, John R. 1996. *Interest Groups and Congress*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Zaller, John R. et al. 1992. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. Cambridge university press.