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  2. Explain different goals, strategies, and tactics of various interest groups in state politics
  3. Give proper perspective on influence of interest groups in state politics
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Six Broad Categories of Interest Groups

• 1. Corporations and Business Firms

- Very influential in the political arena
- Concerned mostly with: environmental regulations, tax rates, enterprise zones, gov't subsidies, gov't contracts, and labor rules
- Corporate interests are related to the economy as a whole – these interest groups thus receive attention from elected officials in state gov't
- Some firms/groups are opposed to one another – one might try to get a gov't contract, to the decimation of their competitors
- Some interest groups are more active in one state/regions than in others (e.g., gaming industry in Nevada)
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2. Trade Associations
   - Often have interests that overlap with corporations and business firms – difference is corporate/business is a single corporation, whereas a trade association is numerous businesses organizing together
   - Among the most active of all interest groups in lobbying state gov’t
   - State Chamber of Commerce – very active
   - Chamber of Commerce for instance, pressured IN and AR against passing “religious freedom” laws
Six Broad Categories of Interest Groups

3. Labor Unions

- Organizations of workers that bargain collectively with their employers – usually for compensation (wages, benefits)...so they can sit around and not work very hard...
- Often interested in: minimum wage, tax policy, civil rights legislation
- Union membership has declined over time – used to dominate in construction, manufacturing, mining, transportation – but there are not as many of these jobs anymore.
- Union memberships now largest in public and service sectors – Service Employees International Union (SEIU), American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
- States with powerful unions tend Democratic: NY, CA, HI, WA, OR, NJ, RI, MI, CT
- CA – Teacher’s Unions 6 most powerful of all state teacher’s unions according to recent report. United Auto Workers powerful in Michigan, etc.
Union Membership Decline

Union Membership
Percent of All U.S. Workers
1948 to 2010

Source: BLS
mjperry.blogspot.com
Districting

- State legislators elected from constituencies defined by geographical boundaries

- CA Assembly District Map

- Eligible voters who call a district home have the right to participate in elections to select its representatives

- The district boundaries are redrawn periodically via the redistricting process – typically this is a highly political process

- In redistricting, often a clash of values – whether to keep similar/community/geographic spaces versus partisan electoral considerations

- Inclusion/exclusion of certain neighborhoods – particularly partisan, racial/ethnic characteristics, home of incumbent

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Redistricting Today

- Still a major issue in electoral politics – take PA Congressional districts as an example
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- R:13 (72%); D:5 (28%)
- 2012 President: R: 47%, D: 52%
- 2008 President: R: 44%, D: 55%
- 2004 President: R: 49%, D: 51%
Organization of State Legislative Districts

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  - Nesting: (14 states) Upper chamber district wholly encapsulates two or more single-member lower chamber districts.
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- VT and WV have multimember districts for their upper and lower chambers

- MD and NH use multimember districts for lower chamber only
- NH employs floterial districts – districts to the same chamber may overlap – imagine a Venn diagram
- Voting rules for these multimember districts vary – some hold separate at-large elections for each seat, others employ bloc voting (voters get a number of votes equal to the number of seats and apportion them among the candidates)

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State Legislative Redistricting Regulation

- Those drawing district lines are constrained by state and federal constitutional and statutory regulations, classified into 3 categories:
  1. Institution-selecting: A body who draws the lines, such as a legislature or commission.
  2. Process-based: Constrain how district lines are drawn – i.e., equal populations or respecting existing boundaries.
  3. Outcome-based: Achieve a specific electoral outcome, such as Voting Rights Act and state requirements for partisan fairness.

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23 states use commission: states may use commission for only state legislative redistricting, only congressional redistricting, or both.
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- California – Standalone commission – Initial: 3 Dem, 3 Rep, 2 other, plus six additional members (2, 2, 2)
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  - CA, AZ, and NY – attempt to remove partisan politics from equation by selecting additional members that are not members of one of the two major political parties.
State Legislative Redistricting Regulation

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  - With bipartisan commission, usually incumbents are protected
Deviations from Redistricting Outcomes

- Political circumstances outside the regular process induce deviations – CA Democrats in post-2000 redistricting compromised with GOP to institute incumbent protection

- CA GOP threatened to put a redistricting reform initiative on the ballot...which they did later anyways to the ultimate detriment of themselves

- CA GOP has 10/40 seats (25%) in State Senate; 25/80 seats (31%) in State Assembly

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• Commissions can be considered more independent when regulation is introduced to reduce political influence through regulation of commission membership.

- AK first state to stipulate: no commissioners may be public employees or officials.
- MO first state to restrict commissioners from running for office in the districts they draw.
- AZ and CA employ both of these regulations along with complex vetting procedures to ensure that commissioners are not closely tied to politicians.
- As a result, CA has more competitive elections than it once did, because there is less incumbent-consideration in redrawing districts.
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