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Citizen Groups in Big City Politics

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CITIZEN GROUPS are qualitatively different from other types of interest groups that are active in American politics. Specifically, unlike labor unions, trade associations, professional associations, and the corporate and governmental institutions that dominate the interest group landscape, citizen groups are open to anyone and everyone (Walker 1983, 393). Indeed, the only prerequisite for joining a citizen group is the ability to shoulder the relatively minimal costs (in terms of time or money) of membership. In this sense, citizen groups have tremendous promise to represent the best of what interest groups have to offer. In short, unlike other types of interest groups, citizen groups have the potential to represent before policymakers the views of ordinary Americans. It is this potential, in fact, that leads some interest group scholars to refer to citizen groups as "public interest" groups. According to Berry (1977, 7), "a public interest group is one that seeks a collective good, the achievement of which will not selectively and materially benefit the membership or activists of the organization."

Citizen groups represent a very small portion of the interest group universe—a universe largely dominated by corporations and their trade associations. Nonetheless, political scientists have lavished far more attention on citizen groups than on other types of organized interests, such as trade associations, professional associations, and labor unions. Most studies of citizen groups fall into one of two categories: studies of citizen groups active in Washington, D.C., or studies of neighborhood and community groups. Studies of Washington citizen groups indicate how nationally active citizen groups such as the National Rifle Association and the National Wildlife Federation form and survive (Berry 1977; Chong 1991; McFarland 1984; Nownes and Cigler 1995; Rothenberg 1992; Walker 1983; 1991), how they attempt to influence public policy (Berry 1977; 1984; 1999), what roles they play in policy communities (Bosso 1987; Heinz et al. 1993), and how much power they wield over policy outcomes at the national level (Berry 1977; 1998; Heinz et al. 1993). Studies of locally active neighborhood, community, and "NIMBY" groups have shown how such groups originate, what they do, and what role they play in determining local government policy.

Despite the dozens of studies dedicated to understanding citizen groups, little is known

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about their activities and influence at the local level. To gain a better understanding of the role of citizen groups in American politics, we present the results of a survey of 141 citizen groups active in seven of America's largest cities. Data are presented on how citizen groups maintain themselves, what they do, and what roles they play in big city politics.

The Literature

Studies of Washington-Based Citizen Groups

The literature on citizen groups primarily focuses on groups that are active in national politics. It is generally acknowledged that citizen groups have a particularly difficult time overcoming the barriers to collective action because they emphasize collective benefits (Olson 1965). Nonetheless, subsequent studies (especially Berry 1977) have shown that by relying heavily on patron support (Walker 1983; 1991) and by offering a mixture of material, nonmaterial, and social benefits (see also Nownes and Cigler 1995; Walker 1983; 1991), citizen groups can successfully form and survive. In fact, many treatments of Washington interest group politics suggest that cozy subgovernments (i.e., insular policy communities in which a small number of interest groups, legislators, and administrators worked together on an ongoing basis to produce policy outcomes to their liking), which operated relatively autonomously of the larger political system in the 1940s and 1950s, were exploded by burgeoning numbers of citizen groups in the 1970s and early 1980s (Berry 1984). By the end of the last century, some observers went so far as to suggest that citizen groups now exert disproportionate influence on national policy (Berry 1999). In sum, studies of Washington-based citizen groups suggest the following: (1) there are hundreds (if not thousands) of citizen groups representing a broad array of interests at the national level; (2) citizen groups have a difficult but not impossible time overcoming the barriers to collective action; (3) citizen groups exert a great deal of influence over national policy.

Studies of Community, Neighborhood, and NIMBY Groups

Except for studies of community power, which dominated the literature on urban politics until the mid-1960s, little research exists on organized interests at the local level. Research on political participation in urban contexts consistently shows that organized interests are important players in local politics (Fleischmann 1997, 154). These studies leave little doubt that business organizations (both individual corporations and trade associations) are the most active organized interests in cities (Abney and Lauth 1986; Fraga 1988; Logan and Molotch 1987; Logan and Rabrenovic 1990; Stone 1989). Nevertheless, many scholars (e.g., Berry, Portney, and Thomson 1993; Dilger 1992; O'Brien 1975; Thomas 1986) have found that neighborhood groups are quite active in local politics. Other types of groups include environmental groups, service organizations, civic associations, growth management groups, churches, NIMBY groups, and taxpayer organizations. Local citizen groups are primarily reactive instead of proactive. As Dilger (1992, 130) suggests, these groups are "like sleeping tigers. When left alone, they are of little concern to those around them, but once aroused from their sleep, they are clearly a force to be reckoned with at the local government level."

Although previous studies have addressed the subject of citizen groups, many questions remain unanswered. Among them are, where do big city citizen groups get the money they need to survive? How do they attract and keep members? How do they attempt to exert influence over local policy outcomes? Do they use the same lobbying techniques as their counterparts at the state and federal levels? If so, to what effect? What kinds of relationships do big city citizen groups have with local policymakers? Where do these groups fit into broader policy-making networks? These questions and others have been largely ignored

by scholars of urban politics, and our goal is to begin to address them here.

Data and Methods

For data collection, 7 cities (Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Phoenix, San Diego, San Francisco, and San Jose) were randomly chosen from among the 20 largest cities in the United States. In this study, representativeness was sacrificed for randomness: most of the cities are located in the West, and California is obviously overrepresented. Early in the study, it was determined that under most city lobbyist registration laws, many citizen groups are not required to register. For each city, groups were researched in the yellow pages under the following headings: charitable organizations, civil rights organizations, community organizations, consumer organizations, environmental organizations, ethnic organizations, labor unions, neighborhood organizations, political organizations, and women's organizations. A master list of citizen groups for each city was then compiled. Because we did not have the resources to survey all the groups identified, approximately one-third of each list was randomly eliminated. In the end, the number of organizations for each city was as follows: 110 in Chicago, 110 in Houston, 142 in Los Angeles, 84 in Phoenix, 100 in San Diego, 139 in San Francisco, and 126 in San Jose. We surveyed a different number of groups in each city because some cities have more groups than do others.

Response rates were as follows: 25 percent for Chicago, 25 percent for Houston, 15 percent for Los Angeles, 23 percent for Phoenix, 25 percent for San Diego, 29 percent for San Francisco, and 28 percent for San Jose. The overall response rate was 24 percent. Twenty-nine labor unions were eliminated from the sample of 170 groups, leaving 141 big city citizen groups. The survey contained 28 items and was modeled after surveys used by Nownes and Freeman (1998) and Schlozman and Tierney (1983; 1986). Respondents were asked about their personal attributes, their advocacy activities, and their perceptions of big city politics. A copy of the survey instrument is available from the authors.

We acknowledge that our data are not perfect. For instance, it is possible that our sample does not accurately mirror the population of big city citizen groups everywhere. After all, although the yellow pages are the best available resource, they may not be entirely representative. Second, our data come from only seven of America's largest cities, which has implications for the generalizability of the study. Third, because the study is limited to citizen groups in America's largest cities, the conclusions may not apply to smaller localities. Nevertheless, we believe that our data make a significant contribution to our understanding of the role of citizen groups in big city politics.

Findings

Organization and Maintenance of Big City Citizen Groups

Table 1 shows where big city citizen groups get their money. Two things stand out. First, big city citizen groups tend to derive the bulk of their money from routine contributions from individuals. For example, the average group receives one-third of its money from individual membership dues, another 8 percent from large donations from individuals, and over 10 percent from special events. Money from individual sources greatly exceeds money from institutional patrons. On average, only one-third of big city citizen groups' yearly income stems from corporations, foundations, and governmental and association sources combined. This finding provides little support for the notion that big city citizen groups rely on patrons for survival. Second, big city citizen groups are largely self-sufficient. The average big city citizen group receives less than 2 percent of its annual income from national and/or state affiliates. The 23 percent of the sample groups that had either state or national affiliates derived very little money from them. The

Table 1. Average Percentage of Revenue Obtained by Groups from Each Source in 2000 Budgetary Year

Source	Percent
Routine contributions from members/supporters	
Dues (n = 115)	33.12
Special events (n = 114)	10.14
Large individual contributions (n = 115)	7.97
Merchandise sales (n = 114)	1.38
Publications (including advertising income) (n = 114)	1.96
Conferences, conventions, etc. (n = 114)	.45
Total from individuals	55.02
Nonindividual Patronage	
Government (n = 114)	16.85
Foundations (n = 115)	9.23
Corporations (n = 115)	5.48
Other Associations (n = 114)	.91
Churches (n = 114)	.44
Total from institutional patrons	32.91
Affiliates	
National organization (n = 114)	1.10
State organization (n = 114)	.18
Total from affiliates	1.28
Other	
Miscellaneous (n = 112)	7.20
Rent (n = 115)	2.90
Interest (n = 114)	.94
Royalties and honoraria (n = 115)	.26
Loans (n = 114)	.07
Total from other sources	11.37

Note: Total percentage is 100.58 due to rounding.

typical group with a state affiliate receives only 1.3 percent of its income from the affiliate. Similarly, the typical group with a national affiliate receives only 4.1 percent of its income from the national organization. In short, affiliating may have its benefits, but money is not one of them.

Although 33 percent of the annual incomes of big city groups is derived from patronage, the data hardly suggest that they depend on institutional patrons to survive. The data suggest that government sources are most important. The average group in the sample received almost 17 percent of its annual income from government sources. This finding supports previous work (see, for example, Cigler and Swanson 1981; Langton 1978; Walker 1983) suggesting that the government often provides an important impetus for the formation and maintenance of citizen groups.

Big city citizen groups rely to a great extent on their members for support. Table 2 provides indications of how groups manage to attract and keep members. Respondents were asked what benefits they provide their members. Social and purposive (i.e., nonmaterial) benefits are extremely important to big city citizen groups. Friendship was mentioned by most respondents (98 percent), with advocacy on important issues (93 percent) and oppor-

Table 2. Benefits Offered by Big City Citizen Groups

	Percent	
Benefit	**Providing[a]**	**Important[b]**
Friendship (n = 114)	98	79
Advocacy on important issues (n = 116)	93	90
Opportunities for participation in public affairs (n = 115)	92	84
Publications (n = 112)	87	79
Representation of members' opinions (n = 113)	86	81
Conferences and meetings (n = 111)	84	67
Coordination of activities with other organizations (n = 106)	82	62
Communication with professional peers and colleagues (n = 111)	77	55
Training, education, technical assistance (n = 110)	73	57
Research (n = 110)	54	37
Organized trips and tours (n = 108)	40	18
Legal help (n = 106)	30	21
Licensing, accreditation, codes development (n = 108)	22	12
Discounts on consumer goods (n = 108)	20	7
Low cost insurance (n = 107)	18	9

[a] Percent responding that provide the benefit.

[b] Percent responding that say the benefit is "important."

tunities for participation in public affairs (92 percent) close behind. Material benefits are not unimportant, however. Eighty-seven percent of respondents said they provide their supporters with publications; 73 percent said they offer training, education, or technical assistance; and 54 percent said they provide research results. However, Table 2 supports the notion that nonmaterial incentives are typically more important to big city citizen groups than are material incentives. This conclusion is supported by the numbers in the last column of Table 2, which show the percentage of respondents saying that each benefit was "important." Again, the benefits deemed most important were advocacy (90 percent of respondents said advocacy was important), opportunities for participation in public affairs (84 percent), representation of members' opinions (81 percent), and friendship (79 percent). Publications were considered important by 79 percent of respondents.

What Big City Citizen Groups Do

To determine which lobbying techniques big city citizen groups use, a list of 21 techniques was developed based on Schlozman and Tierney (1983; 1986) in their seminal works on Washington lobbying and Nownes and Freeman (1998) in their examination of lobbying in the states. Each respondent was asked to indicate whether his or her group used each technique often, occasionally, rarely, or never. Table 3 shows the results of this inquiry.

The columns under Big City Citizen Groups in Table 3 show, respectively, the percentage of respondents who reported having used the technique either occasionally or often and those who reported having used the technique rarely, occasionally, or often. The other sets of numbers are included for comparison purposes. The percentages in the columns for Big City Lobbyists come from a survey of lobbyists, almost all of whom represent business interests (see Nownes and Giles 2002). The comparisons between big city citizen groups and big city lobbyists are not foolproof because many big city lobbyists represent more than one organization. Nonetheless, the comparisons are broadly suggestive. As with big city citizen groups, the table shows the percentage of respondents who reported having used the technique either occasionally or often and those who reported having used the technique rarely, occasionally, or often. The numbers in the columns for State Lobbying Groups and Washington Lobbying Groups indicate the percentage of respondents who reported using each technique. The data for the state lobbying groups come from an earlier study of state organizations (Nownes and Freeman 1998, 92), and those for Washington lobbying groups come from Schlozman and Tierney's (1983; 1986) survey of Washington-based groups.

Big City Citizen Groups

The most common lobbying techniques used by sample groups are trying to shape the government's agenda, testifying before the legislature, having influential constituents contact local legislators, and talking with the media. Other popular techniques include alerting representatives to a bill's effects, attempting to shape implementation, inspiring letter-writing and telegraph campaigns, and engaging in informal contacts with officials or in grassroots lobbying campaigns. The least-used lobbying techniques are running advertisements, litigating, making monetary contributions to candidates, endorsing candidates, and working on electoral campaigns.

Overall, the findings reveal that big city citizen groups simply tend to do less than other types of big city lobbying organizations. Specifically, Table 3 shows that citizen groups do less of all of the following: testifying at legislation hearings, attempting to shape implementation, engaging in informal contacts with policymakers, consulting with legislative leaders, helping to draft legislation, helping to draft regulations, attempting to influence appointments to public office, doing favors for policymakers, engaging in litigation, and engaging in all types of electoral activity. This relative lack of activity is not balanced by citizen groups doing more of other things. In

fact, attempting to shape the government's agenda, talking to the media, and protesting are the only activities that citizen groups report doing more of than their counterparts.

At first glance, Table 3 seems to support a simple "inside/outside" interpretation of lobbying activity. Specifically, it appears that citizen groups rely on "outside" techniques such as protest and media strategies, while other types of groups rely on "inside" techniques such as helping to draft legislation and engaging in informal contacts with officials. Moreover, Table 4—which contains information on the targets of city government considered to be most important by big city citizen groups and registered lobbyists—indicates that big city citizen groups are much more likely than registered lobbyists to consider the courts to be a very important target of activity.

This inside/outside interpretation is inaccurate, however. Although it clearly is the case that citizen groups appear to work less closely with public officials than do other types of groups, citizen groups do not engage in substantially more outside activity. On the one hand, citizen groups do engage more in pro-

Table 3. Percentage of Lobbyists Using Each Lobbying Technique

Technique	Big City Citizen Groups		Big City Lobbyists[a]		State Lobbying Groups[b]	Washington Lobbying Groups[c]
Shaping government's agenda by raising new issues and calling attention to previously ignored problems (*n* = 121)	73	90	63	88	83	84
Testifying at legislative hearings (*n* = 121)	72	90	82	97	99	99
Having influential constituents contact legislator's office (*n* = 118)	71	86	83	94	92	80
Talking to media (*n* = 121)	70	92	54	89	74	86
Alerting representatives to the effects of a bill on their constituents (*n* = 120)	67	84	77	91	94	75
Attempting to shape implementation of policies (*n* = 118)	61	85	78	95	85	89
Inspiring letter writing or telegraph campaigns (*n* = 121)	63	85	62	81	83	84
Engaging in informal contacts with officials (*n* = 117)	62	83	88	97	81	95
Mounting grassroots lobbying efforts (*n* = 119)	62	84	61	83	86	80
Serving on advisory boards or commissions (*n* = 118)	59	80	63	87	76	76
Consulting with government officials to plan legislative strategy (*n* = 119)	45	75	75	96	84	85
Helping to draft legislation (*n* = 120)	44	75	70	91	88	85
Helping to draft regulations, rules, or guidelines (*n* =117)	39	73	68	94	81	78
Attempting to influence appointment to public office (*n* = 115)	35	60	46	75	42	53
Engaging in protests or demonstrations (*n* = 119)	34	64	6	22	21	20
Doing favors for officials who need assistance (*n* = 118)	31	68	57	80	36	56
Working on election campaigns (*n* = 116)	31	51	52	78	29	24
Endorsing candidates (*n* = 116)	25	35	46	68	24	22
Making monetary contributions to candidates (*n* = 118)	21	37	82	91	45	58
Filing suit or otherwise engaging in litigation (*n* = 118)	18	45	28	62	40	72
Running advertisements in media about position (*n* = 121)	15	42	18	50	21	31

Notes: For Big City Citizen Groups and Big City Lobbyists: the first column indicates percentage using technique occasionally or often. The second column indicates percentage using technique rarely, occasionally, or often. The numbers in the last two columns are the percentage of respondents reporting having used the technique. Lobbyist data come from Nownes and Giles (2002). State data come from Nownes and Freeman (1999), Table 2, page 92. Washington data come from Schlozman and Tierney (1983), Table 1, page 357.

[a] $N = 227$.

[b] $N = 301$.

[c] $N = 175$.

Table 4. Targets of Big City Lobbying Activity

Target	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Local legislative body			
Citizen groups (n = 122)	8.0	21	71
Lobbyists (n =228)	1.0	10	89
Mayor's office			
Citizen groups (n =119)	10.0	40	50
Lobbyists (n = 224)	3.0	23	75
Administrative agencies			
Citizen groups (n = 119)	8.0	40	52
Lobbyists (n = 227)	.5	24	75
Courts			
Citizen groups (n = 113)	58.0	25	17
Lobbyists (n = 215)	70.0	24	6

Notes: Lobbyist data come from Nownes and Giles (2002). Numbers are percentages of respondents reporting that the target is "not important," "somewhat important," or "very important."

tests and demonstrations. On the other hand, they do not engage in more grassroots lobbying or litigation. In the end, it seems that a "less of everything" interpretation is most accurate.

Citizen groups, it seems, simply do less than their noncitizen group counterparts in big city politics. To test this hypothesis, the average number of techniques used by citizen groups was compared with that used by registered big city lobbyists, again, most of whom represent business organizations (see Nownes and Giles 2002). The average big city citizen group uses 14.8 of 21 advocacy techniques, and the average registered lobbyist uses 17. However, these findings may mask a reactive approach to influencing city politics. Dilger (1992) suggests that neighborhood groups are primarily reactive rather than proactive. Most of the time, these groups are not active. When provoked, however, these groups may "spring into action" and can be quite influential. Thus, our findings that these groups do less than their noncitizen counterparts may reveal a reactive rather than a proactive approach to influencing big city politics.

This reactive interpretation is supported by two other sets of results. First, as Table 4 shows, big city citizen groups consider three of the four branches of city government to be less important than do registered lobbyists. Only the courts are considered to be very important by a larger number of big city citizen groups than lobbyists. Certainly, litigation is primarily a reactive tactic. Second, as Table 5 shows, big city citizen groups seem to be active on a smaller number of issues than are registered lobbyists. For example, Table 5 shows that the average big city citizen group monitors approximately 16 bills per legislative session, pays serious attention to 7, and takes a public position on 6. The average registered lobbyist, by contrast, monitors 41 bills per legislative session, gives serious attention to 19, and takes a public position on 9.

Citizen Groups and Groups Elsewhere

As for how citizen groups compare with groups elsewhere, there seem to be more similarities than differences. The studies being compared asked slightly different questions, the Schlozman and Tierney data are now over 20 years old, and our data set contains only citizen groups (whereas the national and state data sets contain information on all types of groups). Nevertheless, some comparisons are possible. Most important, the results suggest that, like groups in Washington, D.C., and in the states, big city citizen groups engage in a

Table 5. Level of Activity

Measure	Mean *N*	
	Citizen Groups	Lobbyists[a]
Number of bills monitored (n = 81)	15.81	40.34
Number of bills given serious attention (n = 82)	6.97	18.70
Number of bills on which public position is taken (n = 80)	5.83	9.06

Note: Lobbyist data come from Nownes and Giles (2002).
[a]N = 178.

wide variety of activities and use a large number of inside and outside techniques. There are a few differences, however. First, big city citizen groups appear to use protest much more than do groups elsewhere. Second, big city citizen groups appear less likely than groups elsewhere to help draft legislation, rules, regulations, and guidelines. Third, big city citizen groups are relatively unlikely to provide monetary support for candidates for public office.

Big City Citizen Groups in Policy Domains

Because detailed information about where big city citizen groups fit into local policy networks was unavailable, the issue was explored by assessing conflict and consensus in policy domains in which respondents operate (see Schlozman and Tierney 1984; 1986; Nownes and Freeman 1998). The results of this inquiry are found in Table 6. The results of an earlier study of registered big city lobbyists are included for comparison purposes.

Respondents were asked the degree to which they agreed with three statements. The first statement read as follows: "Generally, the policy area(s) in which this organization works is (are) marked by intense conflict or disagreement over fundamental policy goals." As Table 6 indicates, only 18 percent of respondents agreed that this statement provided a "good description" of their experience in local politics. Almost twice as many registered lobbyists stated that it was a good description. Another conflict-related survey item read, "Generally, this organization is active in (a) policy area(s) in which conflict erupts often." Only 32 percent of respondents indicated that this statement was a good description, compared with 44 percent of registered lobbyists. The final conflict-related survey item read, "Generally, the policy area(s) in which this organization works is (are) marked by consensus on the appropriate means for achieving policy objectives." One-quarter of respondents felt this statement was a good description, compared with 22 percent of registered lobbyists.

On the whole, the results show relatively low levels of conflict in city policy domains. This finding was not expected, considering the findings of previous studies of state and national policy domains (see Heinz et al. 1993; Nownes 2000). Big city citizen groups, many of which presumably go "head to head" with business groups, report relatively low levels of conflict. Although consensus is far from the

Table 6. Perceptions of Big City Politics

	Percent Responding "Good Description"	
Statement	**Citizen Groups**	**Lobbyists[a]**
Policy area marked by intense conflict (n = 115)	18	34
Policy area marked by consensus (n = 114)	25	21
Conflict erupts often in policy area (n = 114)	32	45
Organization faces same opponents (n = 116)	28	37
Elected officials oppose aims (n = 117)	39	45
Organizations oppose aims (n = 118)	41	56
City agencies oppose aims (n = 116)	25	30
Organization perceives party difference (n = 117)	21	18
Interest groups active in city politics (n = 113)	60	78
City officials need not worry about interest groups (n = 114)	10	7
Business groups get what they want (n = 113)	43	21
Ordinary citizens take little interest in city politics (n = 117)	27	42

Note: Lobbyist data come from Nownes and Giles (2002).
[a]N = 227.

norm, overt, intense conflict is not perceived by many respondents. In addition, far fewer respondents than registered lobbyists perceive conflict in their policy domain(s).

Regarding opposition from specific types of political actors (e.g., elected officials, other organizations, city agencies, and other organizations), the data again suggest relatively low levels of conflict. For example, only 38 percent of respondents say that the following statement provides a good description of city politics: "On most of the policy issues on which this organization is active, some important elected officials oppose its policy aims." Again, this percentage is lower than the percentage of registered lobbyists and much lower than the percentages of state and national respondents who agree that this statement is a good description. Similarly, fewer big city citizen groups than either registered big city lobbyists or state or national lobbyists report facing opposition from other organizations and city agencies.

The data suggest a few key conclusions. First, they seem to support a "niche politics" interpretation of big city politics more than a neopluralist interpretation. Studies of conflict within interest group systems tend to fit into one of two broad perspectives. One perspective (see Browne 1995) maintains that substantial balkanization—marked by low levels of group conflict and interaction—characterizes most policy domains. The other (see Heinz et al. 1993) characterizes policy domains as a large number of groups battling within structured policy networks. The data suggest that the former perspective better describes city politics than the latter. Moreover, the data indicate that a great deal of conflict within policy domains is not between citizen groups and business groups but between business groups and other business groups. This interpretation is based on data that clearly show that citizen groups are less likely than registered lobbyists (most of whom work for business groups) to perceive conflict in policy domains. That is, either citizen groups have a different definition of conflict than do registered lobbyists or citizen groups are involved in less conflict than are registered lobbyists. If the latter is the case, then registered lobbyists must be clashing with each other.

Conclusion

This study offers a number of conclusions about the nature of citizen groups in big city politics. First, although patrons in general and government sources in particular are important sources of income for big city citizen groups, individuals remain the number one source of support. Second, even though material benefits (especially publications) are important, big city citizen groups rely to a large extent on social and nonmaterial benefits to attract and keep members. Third, although big city citizen groups appear to be very similar to other types of groups, they seem to be primarily reactive rather than proactive. They do not seek out policy to influence, nor are they consistently active on a number of fronts. Moreover, they use fewer techniques and monitor and pay attention to fewer bills.

Finally, citizen groups do not appear to be embroiled in as much conflict as might be expected. They do not operate in conflict-free environments, but given the widespread notion that citizen groups inject conflict into policy domains, it is somewhat surprising that they report such low levels of conflict. These findings should prompt further investigations of how, why, and to what extent citizen groups operate at the local level.

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