

10.7 Understanding Interest Groups

Government and Politics

Essential question for this unit

- *What is the role of the people in Government?*

Review public opinion and polling

- ways to measure public opinion
 - elections/voting
 - interest groups
 - the media
 - voice of the people
 - polling
- scientific polling most reliable

What are interest groups

Another way that people are able to connect/link with government is through an interest group.

An interest group is a collection of people who share certain views on public matters and work to shape public policy to their benefit. They try to persuade public officials to respond to their positions favorably.

What are interest groups

They look to influence the making and content of **public policy** - **all of the many goals that a government pursues in all the areas of human affairs**

A positive aspect of interest groups is that they help stimulate interest in public affairs.

What are interest groups

These private organizations provide one of the most effective ways in which Americans can get government to react to their needs and wants. In other words they put 'pressure' on the government (lobbyists)

Examples:

economic - National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)

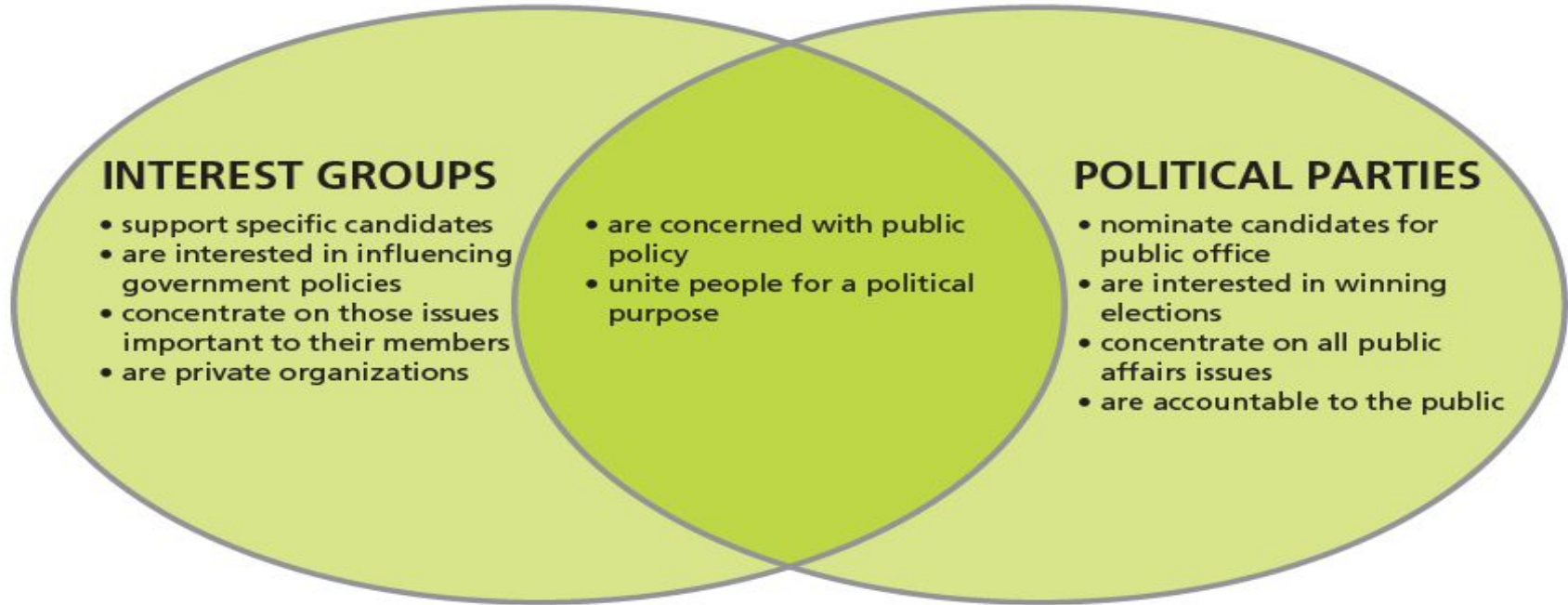
public interest - Human society

religion/ideological - christian coalition

civil rights - (NAACP)

single issue - National Rifle Association (NRA)

Interest Groups v. Political Parties



Political parties and interest groups have more differences than similarities. Based on the information shown, why do you think interest groups are sometimes criticized?

Processes Used By Interest Groups—The Direct Approach

LOBBYING IN ACTION

2 LOBBYING BEGINS

- interest groups **in favor** build support for clean energy
- interest groups **opposed** build support for protecting natural wildlife



1

PROPOSAL IS MADE



- electric company announce plans for **wind farm**
- area is **upscale vacation homes**
- promoted as **non-polluting** form of energy

3

GOVERNMENT DEBATES/ LOBBYISTS PRESSURE

- project requires approval from **State** and **Federal** government agencies
- **government agencies** consider all impacts, such as to the electric power industry and the environment
- **interest groups** try to influence agencies

APPROVED

APPROVED

4

DECISION IS REACHED

- agencies issue **rulings** on project
- rulings may require **legislative action**



An electric company announces plans for a wind farm, and competing interests work to influence government policy on the plan. How might interest groups exert their influence?

Review/Reflection

- Review interest groups