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Buying Amendments? Lobbyists' Campaign Contributions and Microlegislation in the Creation of the Affordable Care Act

When do campaign contributions matter? This article advances the claim that a group that gives campaign contributions to US Members of Congress is more likely to achieve legislative success when (1) a single legislator can deliver to the group (2) a private benefit (3) without attracting negative attention. Using an original data set based on the written comments of nearly 900 interest groups lobbying the US Senate Finance Committee on health reform legislation in 2009, I link group requests to corresponding legislation. The analysis shows a significant relationship between lobby groups' campaign contributions and their legislative success, and at distinct units of analysis—the group, the side, and the group-senator dyad. The relationship is particularly strong in predicting senators' amendments in committee. The rare data presented here offer compelling evidence that interest groups' legislative victories are sometimes connected to campaign contributions in a way that previous studies could not identify.

A long line of research provides surprisingly little evidence that interest groups consistently use money to secure policy outcomes. A major reason for this failure is the lack of observable data. Campaign contributions and lobbying disclosure reports do not go far enough to expose relationships between groups' political spending and actions taken by legislators. It is quite challenging, for example, to link donations from individual Washington lobbyists to the interest group clients these lobbyists represent. Moreover, specific details about what lobby groups want, as well as the contents of what I call microlegislation—small pieces of bill drafts and amendments that benefit a narrow set of interests—are quite difficult to come by (Burstein 2014). The constant drive for reelection makes politicians risk averse, and as such they assiduously avoid the appearance of corruption. For lobbyists, their

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reputations are paramount, and their continued access to politicians requires sharing legislators' political concerns. As a result of these technical and intentional challenges, identifying relationships between contributions and legislators' actions on contributors' behalf is notoriously difficult (see literature reviews by, e.g., Baumgartner and Leech 1998; Smith 1995; Stratmann 2005).

However, consideration by the US Congress in 2009 of the health reform legislation that became "Obamacare" presents a unique opportunity to analyze data that link campaign contributions and legislative actions more closely than is usually possible. In deliberate contrast to the exclusive way in which Bill and Hillary Clinton's health reform proposal was drafted in 1993, congressional Democrats and Barack Obama pledged to write health reform legislation in a transparent, collaborative way. This commitment, along with a new law requiring registered lobbyists to report directly to the House and Senate their *personal* federal campaign contributions (in addition to long-required disclosure of contributions from political action committees or PACs), yields an exceptional opportunity to evaluate documents and information about possible links between lobby groups' preferences, legislative actions, and lobbyists' contributions.

Having generated quantitative data from uncommon data sources, I model the data at multiple levels of analysis while controlling for important alternative factors. The results are consistent with the theory advanced that lobbyists' contributions and legislative favors are more likely to be related when a legislator can offer to a group a private benefit under minimal scrutiny. Specifically, the data suggest that (1) lobbyists who make contributions to senators on the key committee writing health reform legislation tend to have a greater proportion of their requests satisfied in the bill; (2) contributing lobbyists are more likely than other lobbyists to persuade senators to introduce their preferences as amendments to the bill; and (3) contributions are better predictors of senators' willingness to introduce group-requested amendments than contributions are in explaining groups' level of success more generally. These results go significantly further than previous research to explicitly link lobbyists' influence attempts to corresponding actions by legislators.

Theory

The ability of interest groups to influence legislation is not absolute, if it occurs at all. Lowery (2013) offers a dozen

explanations for why researchers so seldom find evidence of the influence of interest groups and their money on policy decisions, including the possibility that groups actually have little influence over politicians. Yet even in that case, Lowery identifies a factor on which influence is conditioned: issue salience (2013, 17). Alternatively conceived of as the visibility or ideological content of a proposal, issue salience has often been studied as an important variable in explaining policy outcomes and interest groups' roles in them. Some scholars focus on decision-making processes in which public visibility is expected to be low, such as in the bureaucracy (Drope and Hansen 2004; Haeder and Yackee 2015) or behind closed committee doors (Evans 1996; Schroedel 1986). A small body of research directly tests the effects of issue salience on interest groups' ability to influence policymaking (Fellowes and Wolf 2004; Jones and Keiser 1987; Neustadt 1990; Witko 2006). The present study's contribution is to specify several conditions—including public visibility—under which influence is more likely to occur and to test these hypotheses using particularly fine-grained data. The exclusive rather than broad nature of the legislative benefits, and the ease with which they can be given, are also important predictors of a tighter relationship between political money and policy outcomes. I theorize more specifically that interest groups that financially support legislators are more likely to be successful in legislation when (1) the lobbyist seeks a private policy good, (2) from a single legislator, (3) without attracting public attention. These three factors are discussed next.

Private Benefit

A private benefit is one that is narrowly tailored to highly specific interests. The microlegislation found in one-page or even one-sentence amendments offered by committee members writing the Affordable Care Act is replete with rent seeking and other private benefits. For example: “include geriatricians in the definition of primary care providers for the purposes of the primary care bonus”; “reinstate reimbursement for dual energy x-ray absorptiometry (DXA) and vertebral fracture assessment (VFA)”; “increase the Medicare payment rate for nurse-midwives for covered services from 65% of the rate that would be paid were a physician performing a service to the full rate”; “adjust the Puerto Rico Medicare inpatient hospital rate to 100% of the national payment rate.” These rewards are clearly directed at narrow populations.

We know empirically that lobby groups place great value on private benefits (Alexander, Mazza, and Scholz 2009; Drope and Hansen 2004; Richter, Samphantharak, and Timmons 2009). Godwin, Ainsworth, and Godwin, in their sample of Fortune 1000 firms, found, for example, that when a proposed policy afforded private benefits to a firm, the firm was eight times as likely to lobby for it as when the policy afforded a policy good that benefited many firms. Moreover, when the potential profit was greater, so was the likelihood that the firm would lobby (2012, 356). Thus, lobbyists pursue most vigorously those policy goods that supply a clear benefit to the lobbying group. Since more intense lobbying is likely to involve making campaign contributions (Ansolabehere, Snyder, and Tripathi 2002), the literature supports the theory that campaign contributions from lobby groups flow to legislators willing to deliver private policy benefits to current or potential donors.

Single Legislator

In offering an amendment, senators are able to take positions (Mayhew 1974) without having to negotiate. Every senator on the Finance Committee can offer multiple amendments to a bill, and an interest group that wants a particular amendment must convince only one committee member to introduce it. The introduction of amendments at this stage is not subject to the approval of the chair or whole committee. By contrast, getting an amendment into the final committee report requires the assent of the chair or a majority of the committee, and advocates must pass countless veto points before securing a preference in an adopted law. The unilateral nature of amendment offering provides a rare chance to observe individual legislators delivering private policy goods. Even if the amendment is not later adopted into the bill, for an individual lobbyist, having written proof that he or she made progress in committee can be valuable in retaining clients. Other studies have found amendments to be among the benefits legislators can deliver to interest groups (Evans 1996; Hall and Wayman 1990).

Low Visibility

Politicians face competing incentives to do things that encourage lobbyists to contribute to them while avoiding doing things that might raise ethical questions. Influence is therefore more likely to be observed when visibility is lower. Fellowes and Wolf,

for example, found evidence that business interests influenced congressional votes—but only for technical regulatory or tax legislation, and not for appropriations. They argue that this distinction is evidence of legislators’ desire to be helpful to contributors without risking “an embarrassing quid pro quo” (2004, 315).

The literature provides numerous examples of microlegislation that allows legislators to provide private policy benefits outside of public view. Distributive earmarks appear in committee reports without ever having been voted on (Lazarus 2010; Lazarus and Steigerwalt 2009). Directives to agencies from Congress accompany legislation instead of being written into law (Evans 2004). Tax breaks for specific firms are obscured in details about the year and location in which the firm was chartered (Bartlett and Steele 1988, cited in Richter, Samphantharak, and Timmons 2009). The common theme is that legislative favors to special interests are intentionally hidden in low-visibility microlegislation.

Amendments offered in committee are prime examples of the microlegislation that lobby groups seek. As Hall and Wayman note, the “less public, often informal nature of committee decision-making suggests that members’ responsiveness to campaign donors will receive less scrutiny” (1990, 801). Within a committee, visibility is lower for amendments than it is during the initial drafting stage or the final report stage of consideration of a bill. During the Finance Committee’s consideration of health reform legislation in 2009, only 20% of the introduced amendments were discussed in markup, and just 14% received a roll-call vote.¹ Yet some of these undiscussed amendments nonetheless appear in the committee report and, ultimately, in the adopted law, indicating that senators pushed them through without attracting public attention. In short, the low-visibility, private benefits that a single legislator can bestow on a lobby group creates the conditions under which we should see a statistically significant positive relationship between campaign contributions and greater legislative success.

The Case

Committee consideration in Congress is at least among the most important opportunities for lobbyists to influence the content of bills (Berry and Wilcox 2018; Evans 1996; Hall and Wayman 1990; Hojnacki and Kimball 1998; Wright 1990). In their landmark 1990 article, Hall and Wayman argue that scholars looking for interest group influence should examine what goes on in congressional

committees. By focusing on the energy members put into legislation in committee—efforts such as attending committee hearings and meetings, speaking at those meetings, offering amendments, and working behind the scenes—the authors find a positive and significant relationship between members’ legislative effort in committee and the PAC contributions they receive from groups interested in the legislation. The present study builds on Hall and Wayman’s seminal research by testing similar questions but with micro-level data not available to Hall and Wayman (1990). In particular, I link the groups’ highly specific individual requests to the collective and personal contributions lobbyists make to committee members. The conclusions of this article are quite similar to those of Hall and Wayman’s (1990).

As one of the most significant pieces of legislation in decades, the Affordable Care Act has been the single focus of several empirical studies in political science (e.g., Dinan 2011; Joondeph 2011; Skocpol and Jacobs 2010), though none of these have focused on the lobbying surrounding the legislation. Given that numerous scholars have argued that the influence of money is more likely to be seen when issue salience is lower (Fellowes and Wolf 2004; Godwin, Ainsworth, and Godwin 2012; Witko 2006), the high salience surrounding health reform legislation provides a strong test of the theory that interest group money affects policy outcomes.

Transparency and Counterfactuals

While no study of the effects of money on policymaking can prove a causal link, the design used here allows for significant inferences to be made in several ways: by identifying very similar language in lobbyists’ written preferences and the amendments offered by senators in committee, by testing hypotheses at three different units of analysis, by including a wide variety of control variables, and by employing a number of robustness checks.

The Data

Three decisions coincided that led to unusual transparency in consideration of the US health reform bill in 2009. First, the Senate Finance Committee, deluged by lobbyists requesting meetings with committee staff, created an email address so that groups could send in written comments on the proposals promulgated by the committee. These comments were retained by the committee

and provided to me; they were not made public. This is important because researchers seldom have access to detailed data about what groups want (Lowery 2013), and as a result, US interest group scholars have rarely analyzed the content of lobby groups' arguments to legislators (Burstein 2014, Chap. 6).

In a second act of transparency, the committee published online all of the 564 amendments proposed by committee members, which it had never done before.² The staff and senators who wrote these amendments, then, were in the habit of writing for an audience of other committee members and staff—and they may not have considered that the amendments would become publicly available.

Third, the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act of 2007 required registered lobbyists to submit for the first time the details of all federal contributions from their *personal* accounts, as well as contributions from any PACs the lobbyist controlled. The first report was due in the summer of 2008. The newness of this requirement may have kept lobbyists from realizing how closely their contributions could be linked to their lobbying activities. Indeed, compliance with the law increased markedly between 2008–09 and 2009–10.³ And because the data must be downloaded, collated, cleaned, and string-matched to other data to find relationships, this article is among the few that have used it (exceptions being Koger and Victor 2009; McKay 2018).

Stages of Legislative Development

The method of comparing policy drafts before and after interest group lobbying has been advocated as an ideal way to detect groups' influence (Lowery 2013). While numerous studies of governments' open consultations with the public have been conducted in the European Union (e.g., Klüver 2011; Quittkat 2011; Rasmussen and Alexandrova 2012; Rasmussen and Carroll 2014) as well as in US federal agencies (Golden 1998; Yackee and Yackee 2006), written comments to congressional committees have never before been analyzed in political science publications (but see Burstein's 2014 analysis of witness testimony in congressional committees). Yet doing so is likely to yield significantly different conclusions about the ability of lobbyists to secure their policy preferences: "It's too hard to try to locate the precise policy concessions that each interest group is looking for; these can be quite specific and won't necessarily show up in aggregate measures of

policy” (Fourinaies and Hall 2017). I use the multiple stages of bill development to test the hypothesis that campaign contributions are more likely to matter under conditions of low visibility in which private benefits are provided unilaterally (relative to conditions of higher visibility, more diffuse benefits, and multilateral agreement).

In late April 2009, before committee consideration of the bill began, Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus publishes the first of three sets of proposals called the Options for Health Reform, written by him and his specialist staff. In September (Stage 1), Baucus releases his first draft Chairman’s Mark based on the Options and feedback from lobby groups and others. Eight days later (Stage 2), committee markup begins, and committee members submit written amendments to the draft with the encouragement of particular interest groups. At this stage, the three conditions of our theory are met: visibility is low, since the full set of amendments is never discussed on the record; specific groups benefit, as amendments are narrowly tailored and do not regard the major tenets of the bill; and the threshold for success is lowest, since any senator can offer an unlimited number of amendments without the approval of any other committee member or even the chair. A fraction of the introduced amendments is discussed during markup; other amendments appear in the Chairman’s Mark draft without being discussed. In October, a majority of the committee approves the amended legislation (all committee Democrats plus one Republican) (Stage 3). The Chairman’s Modified and Amended Mark is what I call the Report, which technically is conceptual language that is sent to the Legislative Counsel office to put into legislative language. (The Finance Committee does not require that members vote on the legislative language, only the conceptual language.) The bill that would become the Affordable Care Act then goes on to the full Senate, where in December it is passed by a 60-vote, filibuster-proof majority.⁴

Table 1 summarizes the three conditions: visibility, the scope of benefits, and the number of veto players, along with my expectations about the effects of these on the extent to which contributions may matter at different stages of legislative development.

Levels of Analysis and Variables

To create a detailed picture of lobbying on the bill in the committee that authored it, the analysis proceeds at three levels—the

TABLE 1
The Presence of the Hypothesized Conditions Across Stages of
Legislative Development

Conditions	Stages of Legislative Development		
	Stage 1: The Mark	Stage 2: Amendments	Stage 3: The Report
Visibility	Medium	Low	High
Scope of Benefit	Broader	Private	Broader
Veto Players	Chairman	Individual senator	Majority of committee
<i>Expectation</i>	Contributions matter least	Contributions matter most	Contributions matter somewhat

lobby group, the group-senator dyad, and the side of a legislative proposal.

Level 1: The Group as the Unit of Analysis

Analysis of success at the level of the group allows us to test the hypothesis that variation in the hypothesized conditions of visibility, scope of benefit, and agreement threshold across stages of legislative development help explain variation in whether a group's campaign contributions influence its success. The definition of success, our dependent variable, varies across stages. In Stage 1, *success in the mark* describes the proportion of a group's "asks" that appear in the chairman's mark document. In parallel fashion, in Stage 3, *success in the report* indicates the proportion of a group's requests that appear in the committee's final version of the bill.

To estimate groups' success in the Mark and in the Report, I used the Options books to create a codebook spreadsheet with proposals as the variables and letter submitters as the observations. First, my research associates and I coded the outcome of each proposal (i.e., whether it was adopted in the Mark and in the Report). Doing so was straightforward, since the Chairman's Mark comprised the same structure as the Options and used largely identical text, and since after Markup, committee staff circulated an Amended and Modified Chairman's Mark that used "tracked changes" to highlight the differences between it and the original Mark.

We then read through the letters and coded each mentioned request as 1 (if the group supported the option) or -1 (for

opposition). We also created new variables for requests that were made by multiple groups that did not appear in the Options. Since groups' letters typically use bullet points or concise paragraphs to present the Options they wish to comment about, alongside their preferred outcome for each, it was a simple matter to code whether the group approved or disapproved of each proposal mentioned. After coding the letters, I changed outcome codes from 0 to -1 (leaving 1s alone), so that when multiplied by each group's request (1 or -1), a success indicator was generated that was either 1 if the group's preference was adopted or 0 if the group's preference was not adopted. Each group then had a series of 1s or 0s indicating whether it realized its preferred outcomes for each provision it mentioned in its letter in both the Mark and in the Report. The number of successes was then divided by the number of requests made in each letter to yield two proportions: *success in the mark* and *success in the report*.

In Stage 2, the group is successful if any of its requests are found in a microlegislative amendment offered by any committee member to the chairman's mark. I generated *success in getting an amendment offered* using, at first, a broad approach because of the likelihood that senators and congressional staff intentionally deviate from the language of groups' requests as they wrote amendments.

In eight cases, a senator (Jeff Bingaman, D-NM) explicitly listed specific groups as having endorsed the amendment. For all other amendments, I employed plagiarism software to find instances of sequential words that appear in both sets of documents, as others have done (Kroeger 2015; Wilkerson, Smith, and Stramp 2015). Specifically, I used wCopyfind, varying its parameters (number of imperfections, length of matches) in an inductive way until I had identified all possible matches between the 564 amendments (as a corpus) and each group letter. Each of these was checked to discard the many nonsubstantive matches (e.g., "Department of Health and Human Services" or language that appeared verbatim in the Options).

As a secondary route to amendment matching, I chose key phrases from each amendment that distinguish it from similar proposals based on my understanding of the content of the legislation (these phrases are available on request). I then used the EasyFind search application to search the comments for the key phrases, and I checked all of these to distinguish substantive matches from coincidental language.

Turning next to the generated list of all possible matches, I identified in each letter the language that was most similar to the language of the amendment, reading the entire letter to make sure that the language that was pulled from it is representative of what the group wants. When multiple groups proposed language reflected in a single amendment, it suggested that either the groups were working together (as with a trade association) or that the request appeared in the Options. So I identified in the Options language that closely matched the request, if any. I counted an amendment as matching the group's request only if the group affirmatively made a request that was *not* already in the Options because only these are requests for private benefits (i.e., the group, not the committee staff, originated the provision). I then reviewed the three columns of (1) interest group language, (2) amendment language, and (3) Options language (if any) and evaluated whether the amendment and letter were a definite or probable match. Matches were only definite if I determined that the group's requests and the amendment were *almost certainly* describing the same proposal. Table 2 offers some examples of the definite and probable matches produced by this procedure.

Using this process, I identified 159 possible matches and 131 definite matches between an amendment and a group. Since many amendments were proposed by multiple senator-sponsors, and keeping only the definite matches, the number of senator-group dyads in which there was an amendment was 186. Importantly, identifying matches of group requests and offered amendments was blind to interest groups' campaign contributions.

Following Papke and Wooldridge (1996; also see Baum 2008), I used a generalized linear model to model the proportion of groups' success in the mark and success in the report. This method makes a logit transformation of the dependent variable and then applies a binomial distribution, since the variance of a binomial distribution approaches 0 as the mean approaches either 0 or 1. The dichotomous *success in getting an amendment offered* is estimated using logistical regression. In all three models, fixed effects are used for senators in lieu of controlling for variation between senators. Each organization that submits comments and each organization listed on the letterhead of a coalition is included in the sample, for a total of 866 organizations. Models control for correlation within coalitions by using errors clustered on the coalition. (If groups belonged to more than one coalition, errors were clustered on the highest-revenue coalition to which it belonged.)

TABLE 2
Examples of Letters Matched and Not Matched to Amendments

Excerpt from Letter	Excerpt from Amendment
<p><i>Definite Matches</i></p> <p>[The organization] recommends developing additional HCBS enhanced matching options, including a 5-year period for improving the HCBS/institutional care balance, with greater enhanced matching for new HCBS beneficiaries in the least balanced states initial expense, and reduced matching for states that fail to meet balancing targets</p> <p>[We] urge that the Committee specifically include in this policy option the reduction or elimination of cost-sharing for all vaccines recommended for older Americans by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)</p> <p>[We] urge that the credit be structured so that it could be applied against the payroll taxes paid by both for-profits and non-profits.</p> <p>Maintain the 15.1% Medicaid outpatient drug rebate percentage for plasma protein therapies, while also excluding these therapies from the expansion of such rebate liability to drugs provided through managed care organizations (“MCOs”)</p> <p>[The organization] urges that the legislation expressly preempt State laws requiring disclosure of relationships with physicians</p>	<p>This amendment provides a modest, targeted, 5-year-limited increase in federal matching payments (FMAP) for Medicaid covered home and community based services (HCBS)</p> <p>plans could charge no cost-sharing (e.g., deductibles, copayments) under Medicare for all USPSTF recommended preventive care services and immunizations recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)</p> <p>Non-profit entities that meet the eligibility requirements of the small business credit would be eligible to receive the credit</p> <p>Makes a technical change to the Chairman’s Mark to exempt drugs purchased through the 340B Program from being subject to rebates collected on behalf of Medicaid Managed Care Organizations (MCOs)</p> <p>This amendment would preempt any state (or political subdivision of a state) physician payment disclosure law or regulation to prevent the unnecessary need to potentially comply with potentially 51 different disclosure requirements</p>

(Continues)

TABLE 2
(Continued)

Excerpt from Letter	Excerpt from Amendment
<p>While the options paper indicates the need for limits on the use of CER findings, we urge you to specifically bar this research from being used to make coverage decisions by Medicare, Medicaid or any other public program</p>	<p>the Secretary of Health and Human Services-- (1) shall not use data obtained from the conduct of comparative effectiveness research, including such research that is conducted or supported using funds appropriated under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-5), to deny coverage of an item or service under a Federal health care program</p>
<p><i>Probable Matches (used only in robustness checks)</i> The absence of an out-of-pocket limit for low-income individual must be addressed as the committee moves forward. ... we would agree that premium costs in excess of 10% of income are unaffordable for most consumers Many employers, particularly small employers that lack human resources staffs and multiple employee benefit program vendors, may choose health insurance products that specifically include wellness programs. Such employers should be able to take a tax credit for the portion of their health insurance premium that is specifically attributable to a qualified wellness program, with the remainder of the premium subject to the usual tax deduction</p>	<p>Would limit total out-of-pocket spending to 7.5% for those under 200% of poverty (\$44,050 for a family of four), 10% for individuals between 200 and 400% of poverty (\$88,200 for a family of four), and 12.5% for all individuals above 400% of poverty Under the option, a tax credit would be allowed for 50% of the costs paid by an employer for providing a "qualified wellness program" during a taxable year. The amount of the credit would be limited to an amount not exceeding \$200 for each employee not exceeding 200 employees, plus \$100 for each additional employee in excess of 200 employees. Only employees generally working more than 25 hours per week are taken into account ... another option would apply all of the criteria described above as well as provide employers with 50 or fewer employees with a credit limited to \$400 per employee</p>

(Continues)

TABLE 2
(Continued)

Excerpt from Letter	Excerpt from Amendment
<p>[The organization] supports approaches to increase access to Medicaid home and community-based services, but contends that merely prohibiting states from using waiting lists or increasing the number of persons under the cap would not sufficiently increase access to Medicaid HCBS. There are other concerns that exist, including the availability of HCBS options constrained by state limitations. HCBS options are also impacted by the long term care workforce shortage and need for culturally sensitive education about programs available. We urge the committee to explore proactive measures to address these issues as a core strategy for expanding access to Medicaid HCBS</p>	<p>The amendment modifies the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) section in the Chairman's Mark to increase the total ADRC authorization to a total of \$727 million for the years 2010 through 2020 years. This funding expands the Mark's current proposal to allow for full national implementation of the ADRC pilot project</p>

Level 2: The Group-Senator Dyad as the Unit of Analysis

The amendment stage is the only point during committee consideration in which individual senators are directly linked to their specific policy preferences. Therefore, in the second level of analysis, all groups that submit requests are paired with every senator on the committee, making the unit of analysis 19,052 lobby group-senator dyads. Evaluating dyads avoids selecting on the dependent variable by including every possible instance of contributions made and amendments offered to see if these are significantly linked. The hypothesis tested is that lobby group-senator dyads that contain a contribution are more likely than other dyads to also contain an amendment. The dependent variable, *dyad amendment*, indicates whether or not the senator in the dyad offered an amendment that reflects a request made by the lobby group in the dyad.

Level 3: The Side as the Unit of Analysis

In a final level of analysis, I acknowledge that advocacy efforts on opposite sides of a policy proposal (i.e., for and against) tend to cancel out, as groups on both sides of a proposal make contributions and control resources (Baumgartner et al. 2009). To distinguish sides with more money from sides with more or stronger advocates, the data are reshaped so that the unit of analysis is the 259 legislative proposals commented upon by interest groups (75% of which appear in the Options). Lobbying expenditures and revenue are not included in the side-level analysis because the advantage in lobbying expenditures is correlated with *contributions advantage* at 0.84, and the advantage in revenue is correlated with *numeric advantage* at 0.80. I test the hypothesis that the side that contributes more is more likely to win, using two dependent variables: whether the *proposal appears in the mark* and whether the *proposal appears in the report*. Amendments are not a part of the side-level analysis because unless a group was involved in proposing an amendment, it would likely have no knowledge of what was contained in them before they were offered.

Key Explanatory Variable

The key explanatory variables in all three levels of analysis are the campaign contributions made from groups that submitted

comments to senators on the Finance Committee in 2009 or 2010. These contributions may be from the group's PAC or, for the first time, they may be from any of its in-house or contract lobbyists. Federal campaign contributions in 2010 were limited to \$2,400 for individuals, and \$5,000 for PACs, per candidate election. In the models, I aggregated contributions from in-house lobbyists, firm lobbyists, and PACs into a single dichotomous variable. In supplementary analysis (shown later in Figure 2), I treat them separately.

At the group level, *campaign contributions* = 1 if any contributions are made to any committee member in 2008–10 from the group's PAC, in-house lobbyists, or hired contract lobbyists; otherwise, contributions = 0. At the dyad level, contributions = 1 only if the group in the dyad contributes to the senator in the dyad (via the PAC or any lobbyists for the group). Models using dollar amounts instead of a dichotomous variable are illustrated in Figure 2.

The data to be matched come from several sources. Data from the Senate Office of Public Records describe lobbyists' disclosures as required by the Lobbying Disclosure Act and lobbyists' contributions as required by the 2008 law, and data from the Federal Elections Commission describe PACs' contributions.⁵ At the sides level, the key explanatory variable is the net contributions dollars from the proponents of the provision as a proportion of the total contribution dollars from proponents and opponents. In calculating *contributions advantage*, I made sure not to double-count contributions from a single lobbyist on behalf of multiple clients on the same side of an issue.

Control Variables

To control for the possibility that effective lobbying, rather than campaign contributions, is actually influencing senators, I include in the models the group's reported *lobbying expenditures* in 2009 and 2010. These are the dollar amounts reported by lobby groups every quarter for a given client. Lobbying expenditures have been used in previous studies to help separate the effects of campaign contributions from the effects of lobbying activity alone (Hojnacki and Kimball 1998; Wright 1990). These data come from the Senate Office of Public Records, but I use the cleaned versions provided by the Center for Responsive Politics.⁶

In addition, *revenue* is an important variable, since we know Senator Baucus sought to please large organizations in an effort to avoid losing, the way Democrats had lost on health reform in the 1990s (McDonough 2011). This control variable comes from federal sources, including the IRS form 990 for tax-exempt organizations, the Securities and Exchange Commission's 10-K and 8-K forms, and, failing those sources, the group's own website. *Revenue* is logged because the raw numbers are unwieldy but still produce the same significance for the key explanatory variable. Due to missing data, *revenue* is imputed in 4.6% of cases based on a regression of revenue on lobbying expenditures, PAC contributions, lobbyists' contributions, and whether the organization represents business. (Dropping the observations with missing revenue data does not change the results.) The total *number of requests* made is controlled for so that we may evaluate whether there are diminishing—or increasing—marginal returns to scale on lobbyists' requests. (If we exclude from the model the number of requests in the letter, the results show stronger effects for the influence of money in all four models in the group-level and dyadic analyses.) A final control variable indicates whether the interest group's *headquarters* were in any committee member's state or, in the dyadic analysis, the specific senator's state. This variable stands as a proxy for constituent effects, since we know that legislators favor their own constituents in policymaking (Arnold 1990; Fenno 1978).

The data suggest some senator-specific effects, including, for example, that minority-party members offered more amendments than majority-party members. But since there are only 23 senators on the committee, I instead use fixed effects for each senator so that we are observing variation within senators across groups. Using senator fixed effects necessarily drops one observation, a senator whose amendments could not be linked to any particular interest group. Since the chair does not make amendments and has ultimate control over the content of the legislation, he is also left out of the dyadic analysis. Descriptive statistics for all variables appear in Table 3.

Results

When an interest group or its registered lobbyists contributed to a senator who was drafting health reform legislation in 2009, the group was significantly more likely to be successful in all three stages of legislative development. Contributions activity was most strongly

TABLE 3
Summary Statistics

Variable	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Data Source
Group-Level Analysis (Table 3); $n = 866$					
Success in the Mark	0	1	.29	.35	Author's data
Success in Getting an Amendment Offered	0	1	.11	.31	Author's data
Success in the Report	0	1	.32	.38	Author's data
Group's PAC Contributions to SFC Members	0	250,000	3,513	16,344	FEC & CRP
Group's In-House Lobbyists' Personal Contributions to SFC Members	0	57,500	348	2,811	SOPR
Group's Contract Lobbyists' Personal Contributions to SFC Members (\$1000s)	0	1,638	20	101	SOPR
Whether the Group Contributes to SFC Members	0	1	.29	.46	FEC & CPR
Group's Lobbying Expenditures 2009–10	0	294	1.7	11	SOPR & CRP
Group's Revenue in 2008/09 ($n = 830$; \$ millions)	0	97,400	1,494	7,309	IRS or SEC
Ln of Revenue (with imputation)	0	25	16	3.3	IRS or SEC
Group is from an SFC Member's State	0	1	.29	.46	IRS, SEC, or group's letter
Number of Requests Submitted	0	91	6.5	13	Author's data
Group Is Business-Related	0	1	.37	.48	IRS or SEC
Dyadic Analysis (Table 4); $n = 19,052$					
Member Introduces Group's Amendment	0	1	.01	.098	Author's data
Contributions from Group's In-House Lobbyists to the Senator	0	20,800	9.5	212	SOPR
Contributions from Group's Contract Lobbyists to the Senator (\$1000s)	0	1,010	.44	11	SOPR
Contributions from Group's PAC to the Senator	0	14,000	95	716	FEC & CRP
Group Contributes to the Senator	0	1	.093	.29	FEC & CRP
Group Is from Senator's Home State	0	1	.013	.11	FEC
Proposal-Level Analysis (Table 5); $n = 261$					
Proposal Is Realized in the Mark	0	1	.487	.501	Author's data
Proposal Is Realized in the Report	0	1	.533	.500	Author's data
Supporters' Contributions Advantage	-1	1	.382	.599	Author's data
Supporters' Numeric Advantage	-1	1	.365	.724	Author's data

associated with interest group success during the amendment stage. In fact, in many cases the language in the amendment is the same as language in the group's written comment—which, given the demonstrated difficulty of identifying the influence of interest groups in lawmaking (Lowery 2013), represents something of a smoking gun.

For example, one letter from a vaccine manufacturer “strongly supports the Committee’s emphasis on prevention services, on a first dollar basis” and requests that the bill “include a specific reference to ‘recommended vaccines ... and immunizations recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)’” (Lobby Groups 2009). An amendment to provide “first dollar coverage for prevention-related ... immunizations recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP).” (US Committee on Finance 2009) was offered by a senator who represented the company’s state and who received a \$2,000 contribution from the PAC of the company that wrote the letter.

Another letter is from a nonprofit group that says it “has a long history of promoting improvements in healthcare quality and safety, and has been instrumental in raising the bar of quality standards ... since its inception in [year more than five years ago].” It requests that the bill create a “center or institute” that “be a not for profit entity in the private sector; have demonstrated competencies in understanding the factors that contribute to successful quality improvement and patient safety initiatives; possess the resident knowledge and expertise to fulfill the above five objectives; have a demonstrated track record of broadly engaging relevant stakeholder groups; and have the capacity to leverage quality improvement and patient safety change across the care continuum” (Lobby Groups 2009). An amendment put forth by a senator describes “a non-profit organization or organizations that have at least five years of experience in developing and implementing the [five] new strategies; have operated such programs ... to improve patient safety and the quality of health care ... working with a variety of institutional health care providers, physicians and other health care practitioners” (US Committee on Finance 2009). The group requested \$35 million be allocated to this center; the amendment contains “a mandatory appropriation of \$25 million per year for FY10, FY11, and FY12” (US Committee on Finance 2009). Lobbyists representing the group gave a total of \$5,000 to the senator in 2009.

A third letter requests that “healthcare-associated infection[s]”, as measured by the] prevention metrics and targets

TABLE 4
 Predicting Group-Level Legislative Success for Interest Groups at Different Stages of Senate Finance Committee Consideration of Health Reform Legislation in 2009, with Senator Fixed Effects

	Stage 1: Success in the Mark (GLM)	Stage 2: Success in Getting an Amendment Offered (Logit)	Stage 3: Success in the Report
Whether (1) or Not (0) the Group or its Lobbyists Contribute to an SFC Member	.643 (.143)	1.619 (.284)	.577 (.143)
Lobbying Expenditures, 2009–10	.051 (.027)	.029 (.050)	.021 (.026)
Group's Annual Revenue (\$ millions)	-.001 (.002)	-.002 (.006)	-.000 (.003)
Group Is Headquartered in a State Represented by an SFC Member	-.168 (.151)	-.743 (.328)	-.137 (.162)
Total Number of Requests Made	.051 (.009)	.062 (.012)	.059 (.009)
Constant	-2.304 (.512)	-3.922 (.835)	-1.680 (.510)
Observations	866	866	866
Number of Coalitions for Clustering	310	310	310
Scaled Dispersion	.607		.690
Scaled Deviance	521.771		593.226
McFadden Pseudo-R ²		.236	
Probability > χ^2	.000	.000	.000

Note: The three models present group success at three stages of legislation. All models contain fixed effects for the senators, so no variables related to the senator are included. The first and third models contain generalized linear model (GLM) coefficients with errors clustered on the highest-revenue coalition to which the group belongs (if any). The second model displays logit coefficients with errors below clustered on the group. Annual revenue (logged) is regression imputed in 4.6% of cases. Success in the mark and success in the report range from 0 to 100% of requests realized. Success in getting an amendment offered is dichotomous. Significant coefficients (at $p < .05$) are indicated in bold.

TABLE 5
 Effect of Lobbyists' Contributions to Each Committee Member on the Likelihood that *that Member Offers*
in Committee an Amendment the Lobbying Group Wants

	Odds that the Member Offers an Amendment the Group Requests (with fixed effects for senators)
Whether (1) or Not (0) the Group or its Lobbyists Contributes to the Senator in 2009–10	1.512 (.250)
Lobbying Expenditures, 2009–10 (\$ millions)	-.001 (.004)
Annual Revenue (logged)	-.010 (.038)
Group is Headquartered in Senator's State	.665 (.499)
Total Number of Requests Made	.044 (.005)
Constant	-4.834 (.695)
Groups	866
Senators	21
Observations	18,186
McFadden Pseudo-R ²	.162
Probability > χ^2	.000

Note: Cells contain logit coefficient estimates of the probability that a senator offers an amendment that contains a request the group made in its com-
 ments to the committee. The unit of analysis is the group-senator dyad, where every group that submits comments to the Senate Finance Committee
 on Health Reform is paired with every member of the committee except the chairman, who did not offer amendments. The contributions indicator
 variable describes whether the group's PAC or its registered lobbyists contributed to the senator. Errors are clustered on the lobbying group. Two sena-
 tors were dropped for sponsoring no interest group amendments. Significant coefficients (at $p < .05$) are indicated in bold.

[, as] established in the Department of Health and Human Services' HHS Action Plan To Prevent Healthcare-Associated Infections or any successor plan" be included in the bill's proposed Medicare value-based purchasing. Such a change would create a significant incentive for hospitals to test Medicare patients for hospital-acquired infections before discharge. It was requested (Lobby Groups 2009) by the company that made possible the first two-hour test of multiple patient specimens for multiple infections simultaneously (previous tests required several days). Virtually identical language (except as indicated by the brackets) appears in an amendment (US Committee on Finance 2009) by a senator representing the state in which the company is located—a senator who received the maximum allowed contribution from the firm's PAC.

The striking similarity of language between these three letters and the corresponding amendments suggests that the authors of each read, or at least communicated about, each other's language. The contributions from the group to the senator only buttress the apparent connection. And these group-requested amendments are not merely senators' empty gestures to appease groups: group-requested amendments are more than twice as likely to be accepted into the bill relative to other amendments. We can conclude that senators treat seriously the group-requested amendments and work behind the scenes to secure their place in the bill.

Analysis at Level 1 (the Group): Predicting Group Success at Different Stages of Legislation

Lobbyists' personal and PAC contributions are significantly related to lobbyists' probability of success at all three stages of legislative development, and the effect is strongest during the middle stage, as expected. The first model in Table 4 shows that contributions from the group's lobbyists or PAC are significantly and positively associated with greater success in the mark. When a group or any of its registered lobbyists contribute to a member of the committee, the proportion of the group's requests found in the chairman's mark almost doubles, from 22% to 41%. The third model shows a significant association between contributions from a group or its registered lobbyists and the proportion of the group's requests that are found in the report: when a group's lobbyists make any contributions to any Finance Committee member,

the predicted probability of success in the report moves from about 26% to about 43%—an increase of 74% over the lower number.

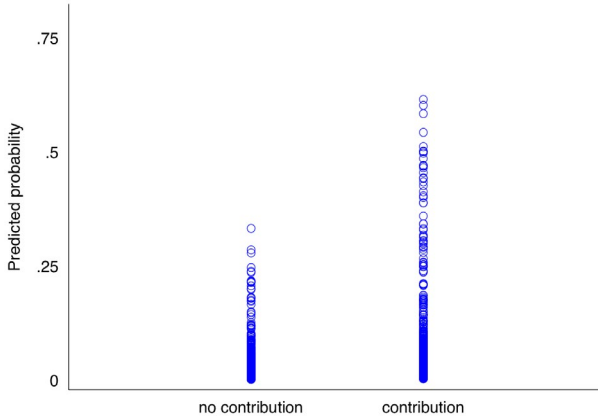
In the middle stage of committee consideration, the low-salience, low-hurdle, private-benefit amendments sought by lobby groups are even more strongly associated with contributions relative to Stages 1 and 3. The predicted probability of success in getting an amendment offered is more than four times larger for groups that contribute, relative to groups that lobby the same legislators on the same issue but do not contribute. The predicted probability of securing an amendment moves from 5% to 22% when the group contributes to any member of the committee. The magnitude of this relationship between lobbyists' contributions and *success in getting an amendment offered* is considerably stronger than the relationship between lobbyists' contributions and either *success in the mark* or *success in the report*.⁷

Regarding the control variables, the models show that having greater revenue has a positive but modest effect on a group's success in the mark. Predictive margins indicate that groups with logged revenue amounts at the 75th percentile typically see an increase of about 1%–3% of their requests realized in the mark relative to those at the 25th percentile. As expected given Chairman Baucus's intention to appeal in the beginning to larger interest groups (McDonough 2011), a group's revenue has the strongest effect on success during the mark stage. Lobbying expenditures in millions of dollars have no clear effect on the group's success when controlling for contributions. (In alternative analyses, logged lobbying expenditures are positive and significant, however, and contributions are still positive and significant.) A greater number of requests is associated with greater group success in all of the models, especially in the mark and the report. And whether the lobby group was located in any Finance Committee member's state is not a positive and significant predictor of success in any of the models when controlling for whether the group contributes.

Analysis at Level 2 (the Dyad): Modeling a Group's Success in Getting a Particular Senator to Offer a Request as an Amendment

In the dyadic analysis, shown in Table 5 and illustrated in Figure 1, the predicted probability that a senator offers an amendment that is very similar to a request made by the group is about

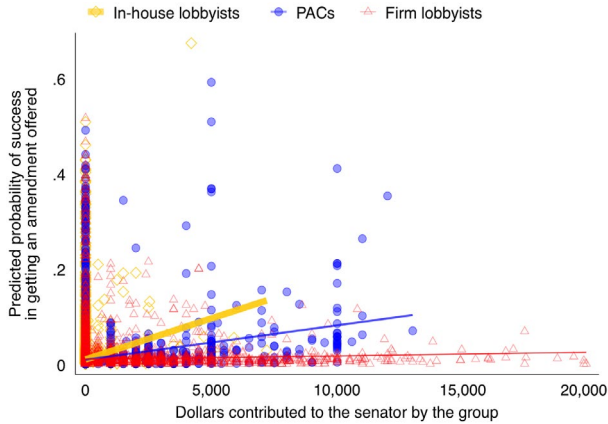
FIGURE 1
Predicted Probability that the Senator Offers an Amendment Requested by the Group



five times greater if the group contributes to the senator: the predicted probability of securing an amendment increases from 0.7% to 3.5% when the group or any of its lobbyists donates to the senator. The use of fixed effects for senators means that the *same* senators are more likely to offer amendments requested by groups that contribute to them relative to groups that do not. The significance of the relationship between contributions and amendments holds while controlling for a group’s wealth or size (as captured by its annual revenue), constituent effects (as proxied by whether the group was headquartered in the senator’s state), and lobbying activities (its lobbying expenditures and the number of requests the group made).

Figure 2 shows that the type of donor—contract (firm) lobbyist, in-house lobbyist, or PAC, as well as the amount donated—are associated with differential *success in getting an amendment offered*. The effect of the amount of money on the predicted probability of securing an amendment is positive for all three donor sources, and it is significant for PACs. The slope is sharpest for in-house lobbyists, who provide the least money but most directly lobby senators. Firm lobbyists contribute the most, but because they represent numerous clients, members may not link firm lobbyists’ contributions with the preferences of particular groups.

FIGURE 2
Relationship Between Groups' Campaign Contributions
to a Senator and the Predicted Probability that the Senator
Sponsors an Amendment Requested by the Group, by Source of
Contribution



PACs supply more money than in-house lobbyists but less than firm lobbyists, and their effect size is between those of the other two kinds of donors.

Analysis at Level 3 (the Side): Modeling Side Success as a Function of Advantages

At the third and final level of analysis, the models suggest that even while controlling for the preference of the majority of lobby groups, there may still be an advantage to the side that contributes more. As shown in Table 6, both *contributions advantage* and *numeric advantage* are positively associated with the probability that the provision appears in the mark and in the report. As the contributions are changed from all on the “anti” side to all on the “pro” side, the predicted probability that the proposal is adopted moves from 36% to 54% for the mark and 34% to 61% for the report.

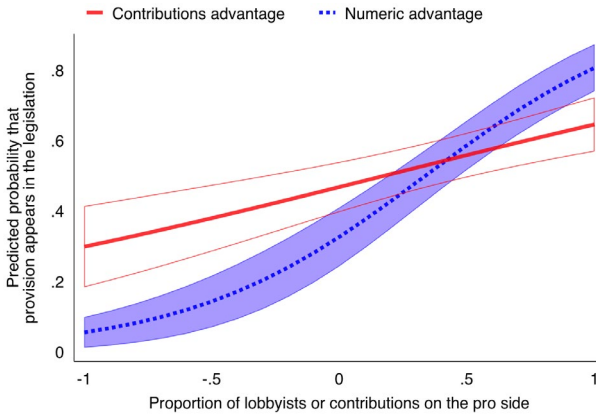
Most of the time (82%), the side that has more lobbyists is also the side that makes more contributions. In the 46 cases the majority of lobbyists do not provide the majority of contributions, the majority side wins 78% of the time and the money-advantaged

TABLE 6
 Predicting Success for Specific Proposals Within the Health Reform Legislation

	In the Mark	In the Report
Contributions Advantage of Proposal Supporters (supporters' contributions minus opponents' contributions)	.402 (.125)	.451 (.138)
Numeric Advantage of Proposal Supporters (number of supporters minus number of opponents)	18.361 (8.425)	19.103 (8.566)
Constant	.377 (.080)	.455 (.093)
Observations	261	261
McFadden Pseudo-R ²	.208	.234

Note: The table depicts logit models predicting whether individual legislative proposals appear in the mark and in the report during Senate Finance Committee consideration of health reform legislation in 2009. Cells contain logit coefficients with errors below in parentheses. Significant coefficients (at $p < .05$) are indicated in bold.

FIGURE 3
 Comparing Numeric to Contributions Advantages in Predicting Legislative Proposal Success



side wins 22% of the time. Figure 3 illustrates that as the differential between the number of advocates or contributions grows in favor of the “pro” side, so too does the probability that the proposal is adopted. And when the majority oppose a proposal (on the left), money is more helpful than when the majority approve of it.

Discussion and Conclusions

Following previous examples set by Hall and Wayman (1990), Evans (1996), Denzau and Munger (1986), Baumgartner et al. (2009), and Hall and Deardorff (2006), this article seeks to understand the conditions under which interest group lobbyists' campaign contributions are associated with the decisions of US Members of Congress to advance microlegislation preferred by donors. The study builds on previous work by providing evidence that contribution-legislation relationships are especially likely to be seen in amendment offering, a phenomenon that is a perfect storm of low visibility, unilateral action, and private benefits.

The group-level analysis suggests that the predicted probability that a group is successful in getting requested microlegislation introduced in a senator's amendment is more than four times greater for groups that contribute to committee members relative to groups that lobby the same legislators on the same issue at the same time but do not contribute. This relationship between lobbyists' contributions and legislative success is stronger in getting low-visibility, unilateral, microlegislative amendments offered than it is in either the earlier mark stage or the later report stage, though it is present in all three stages. A group that contributes increases its predicted probability of success from 22% to 41% in the mark and from 26% to 44% in the report.

Further, the dyadic analysis suggests that when a group—or any of the lobbyists employed by or representing the group as a client—contribute to a committee member, the odds that the specific senator offers an amendment desired by the specific group are five times larger than if no contribution occurs in the dyad. The greater estimated magnitude of the relationship between contributions and amendment offering in the dyadic analysis as compared to the group-level analysis is evidence that individual lobbyists' contributions may have an interpersonal effect on senators' willingness to provide the lobby group with microlegislation. This is a less benign interpretation than the conclusion from the group-level analysis that groups that donate to senators are generally more legislatively successful.

The third level of analysis—the side of a proposal—shows that the side that gives more contributions is more likely to win, even after controlling for whether or not it is the majority side. When the majority gives less money than the minority, the money-advantaged side wins in 22% of the cases.

In the case of health reform legislation in 2009, staff members not used to having amendments published online, lobbyists unaccustomed to reporting to the House and Senate their personal contributions, and senators who may not have anticipated that lobbyists' requests would become public might have been more off-guard than they would ordinarily be. The confluence of these circumstances leads to the observation of a connection that is seldom made in the literature.

There are two reasons in particular to be confident in the external validity of this study. First, the results are closely consistent with other quantitative studies of similar phenomena (Evans 1996, 2004; Fellowes and Wolf 2004; Hall and Wayman 1990; Lazarus 2010), all of which show that lobbyists' ability to influence legislators is more likely when the risk is low that outsiders will notice. Second, the high salience of health reform legislation incentivized groups and senators to be especially cautious to avoid drawing attention to the microlegislation they were jointly developing. Under conditions of lower public scrutiny, senators would naturally be equally or *more* likely to exchange legislative favors for contributions, not less likely.

The incidence of group-requested amendments in these data is necessarily low, and this is consistent with the theory. Senators and their staff typically adjust the microlegislation suggested by lobbyists to be consistent with competing demands. For example, legislators may try to merge multiple groups' requests into one solution; they may present a variation on the request that does not go as far as the requester wants; they may use an amendment to reiterate the content of a bill they have sponsored; or they may alter a request to conform with the committee's strict "offset" requirement that all spending legislation be paid for. In fact, if we relax the assumptions and count the probable matches described above as definite matches, the relationship between contributions and amendment offering is even stronger. This suggests that senators and their staffs do not just copy and paste group requests into amendments. Taking ownership of a piece of microlegislation gives senators talking points they can use to help secure reelection, while also obscuring the connection between legislator and lobbyist.

Importantly, I stop short of arguing that the contributions *caused* legislators to offer requested amendments, as this study is not a randomized field experiment (such as that of Kalla and Broockman 2016), and given that, the timing of contributions is

not important: whether a contribution from a group to a senator in the 2010 cycle is made before, during, or after the Finance Committee's September 2009 markup (as are 32%, 7%, and 61%, respectively) is not correlated with whether the senator offers an amendment requested by the group. A contribution that comes after an amendment is offered may be a thank you, or the amendment may have been offered in expectation (or in hope) of a later payment. In any case, the 186 dyads that include 131 instances of specific language found in an interest group letter that corresponds to language in a committee member's amendment, combined with the significantly greater likelihood that the group that requested the amendment makes a contribution to the senator that introduces it, imply that under certain conditions, contributions and microlegislation are related.

By including in the models a variable designating whether the group's headquarters are in the senator's state, I show that contributions matter to group success beyond home-state connections. And the provision-level analysis shows that the side that contributes more tends to win, even controlling for the number of lobby groups on each side. Moreover, the study finds evidence that contributions correlate with members' decisions to take a legislative *action* desired by the contributing group—which is a step beyond members' granting greater *access* to campaign contributors, as found recently (Kalla and Broockman 2016).

This study provides several reasons to question the assumption that low contribution limits obviate their effects. First, contributing is not the norm: almost two-thirds of groups that we know lobbied Finance Committee members about health reform made no identifiable contribution to anyone on the committee in the 2010 electoral cycle, and only 12% of lobby group-senator dyads contain a PAC or lobbyist contribution. From the senator's point of view, then, contributors are special. Second, and relatedly, legislators likely pay more attention to the fact that a group contributes than to how much it contributes, which is consistent with research suggesting that even small contributions can have important effects on legislators' behavior (Langbein 1986; Stratmann 1991). Third, while individual and PAC contribution amounts are limited, a group's contributions can add up. Summing the contributions of each group's PAC and firm and in-house lobbyists, the average amount that a donating group in these data gives to a senator's campaign is about \$5,828. Since in the 2010 electoral cycle, the average Finance Committee member received about \$922,000

in contributions from PACs and individuals in the health sector, it would take only about 158 of these contributing groups to reach the health sector total—and we know that at least 866 groups lobbied the committee on the bill.⁸

The research suggests future lines of inquiry about the effects of money on microlegislation. For example, a history of donating might also be associated with a greater tendency to support legislation requested by a group. However, I found that campaign contributions during the 2008 election cycle were not as closely linked to microlegislation as contributions made in 2009 and 2010. In addition, data about the members' staff and their connections (McCrain 2018) or about how interest groups deploy resources across stages in the legislative—and regulatory—process might also elucidate the opaque, micro-level effects of lobby groups, which a growing body of research is identifying (Haeder and Yackee 2015; Kalla and Broockman 2016). New technological innovations, particularly greater use of text analysis software, may further enhance detection of hidden agreements to provide private benefits. The mounting pressure on governments to be transparent should lead to greater opportunities to document interest group bias in policy-making in the form of microlegislation and bargaining, which are often difficult to observe. The incentives for lobbyists and officials to conceal any quid pro quo relationships require novel data and incisive analysis of these actors' behavior.

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NOTES

1. See transcript from the committee's executive session on October 13, 2009 (<https://www.finance.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/101309.pdf>).

2. According to Chairman Max Baucus as recorded in the transcript, the committee never before had released all submitted amendments to a bill it was considering (see <https://www.finance.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/101309.pdf>).

3. For 2008–09, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) estimated that 72% of those LD-203 reports that included contributions, and 97% of

reports that did not include contributions, disclosed all contributions as required (GAO 2010; the period covered is the second half of 2008 and the first half of 2009). In 2009–10, the comparable numbers were 91% and 98.75% (GAO 2011).

4. For political and procedural reasons, the Finance Committee’s amended bill was then approved *verbatim* by the House as the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act—accompanied by House-requested changes in the form of a companion bill (the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act) that itself was not subject to filibuster. This decision was necessary to avoid a vote in the Senate that, as a result of a mid-term election to replace the late senator Ted Kennedy, had just 59 Democrats. As a result, it is the case that the majority of the adopted law was written by the Senate Finance Committee.

5. I later verified these data using the Center for Responsive Politics’ cleaned and coded versions (<http://OpenSecrets.org>), with thanks to the Center.

6. Available at <http://OpenSecrets.org>.

7. Although the dependent variables vary slightly across models, they all have a minimum of 0 and a maximum of 1; as such, the magnitude of the predicted effect between contributions and legislative success can justifiably be compared across the three models.

8. Committee totals come from the Center for Responsive Politics. See <https://www.opensecrets.org/congcmtes/overview?chamber=S&cmte=SFIN&cmtextml:id=S12&Cong=111&cycle=2010>.

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