

The Legislation Process

- Step one: getting the issue out
- Interest groups (factions)
 - organizations that share a common political goal and work to influence public policy. Cite one.
- Interest groups have several duties:
 - they **represent the interests** of their organization in Congress
 - they **educate** both Congress and the public on issues
 - they **monitor** how legislation is carried out and whether or not it is effective
 - and they provide a way for **citizens to get involved** in the political process

Political Actions Committees (PACs)

- PACs
 - Legal way interest groups influence with money
 - collect and distribute money for interest groups
 - A large chunk of the money raised in political campaigns comes from PACs
 - PACs
 - formed by businesses groups or large companies, or Labor Unions in order to sponsor legislation that would benefit them
 - Super Pacs
 - Unlimited \$ for elections, no coordination with campaigns

Lobbying

- Lobbyists
 - Hired by interest groups to “sell” the legislation to Congress
- Some duties of lobbyists
 - include meeting with politicians
 - educating the public
 - contributing money to campaigns
 - identifying supporters of the legislation or bill
 - researching the issues

An example...

- Think about the Curfew; the current curfew allows little leeway and is a bit unrealistic for teenagers. Teenagers want to fight to have the ban lifted.
- Could Teenagers, on their own, influence the community to change the policy? Why or why not?
- What could Teenagers in the community do to change the policy?
- What other groups might want to join the Teenagers in their cause? What groups might support legislation to improve conditions for Teenagers?

My bill died...now what can I do?

- State alternatives: voters can petition to get the measure on a state referendum or initiative and vote directly on the issue themselves.
- Judicial route: take it to the courts
- Change the constitution: 2/3 of BOTH the House and the Senate must deem it necessary; 3/4 of all states must approve the change
- Executive order: the president can clarify a law set by Congress. Example: President Clinton passed an executive order regarding homosexuals in the military (“don’t ask, don’t tell” policy)