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**Influence Through Diversity and Size:
The Success of Racial Minority Interest Groups
(RMIGs) Lobbying Coalitions**

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Influence Through Diversity and Size: The Success of Racial Minority Interest Groups (RMIGs) Lobbying Coalitions

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Abstract:

Many scholars argue that business groups and other wealthy, elite interests dominate the American lobbying system. Racial minority interest groups, or RMIGs, are organizations that primarily represent the interests of marginalized racial communities that have fewer resources to contribute to organizational lobbying and who have very little political power. From this perspective, RMIGs should have little or no influence on policymaking. Is this empirically true? Under what conditions can RMIGs and similarly situated interest groups influence policymaking? I argue that race's high saliency in American politics has set RMIGs on a different path than traditional interest groups and has shaped their resources and strategies. Using this idea as a starting point and an original dataset of over 250,000 California bill analyses from 1997 to 2018, I show that RMIGs' ability to influence politics dramatically increases when they can build large and diverse lobbying coalitions.

Introduction

The formation and rise of new interest groups representing racial minorities have dramatically affected the role of lobbying as a method for voicing the demands of marginalized racial minority communities (Strolovitch 2007). Since the 1960s, groups kept out of the political system are now integrated as interest group participants in the policy-making process.

Organizations advocating for marginalized communities like the poor, women, racial minorities, and other disadvantaged segments of society became more prevalent over time as they found firmer footing in the lobbying world (Wilson 1974). Groups representing specifically racial minority interests that I call *racial minority interest groups*, or RMIGs, play a crucial role in representing their respective racial groups by raising the concerns of their communities and

working to pass policies that benefit them. If anything, the “Pluralist Heaven” criticized by Schattschneider (1960), where groups represent all interests of society, should be much closer today than it was in the past. However, one can intuitively sense that equal representation in lobbying is not the reality.

Though thousands of voices are heard in Congress and state capitals across the country, it is evident that the majority and the loudest primarily come from elite, wealthy parts of our country like those of major corporations, industries, or powerful professional groups. Therefore, it is necessary to evaluate the state of lobbying and representation in the United States by analyzing the behavior of weaker groups, like RMIGs, and assessing whether they are successful in the lobbying arena. For example, are RMIGs, representing politically marginalized racial minority groups, shut out of the legislature, or can they compete on par with other powerful interests?

In this paper, I argue that RMIGs are more successful in influencing policy when they engage in a strategy of building large and diverse coalitions. I theorize that such strategies help RMIGs exert a more substantial influence in the policy process. Before showing that RMIGs are adept at creating large and diverse coalitions, I evaluate the impact of coalitional diversity and size on legislative bill outcomes. Large and diverse lobbying coalitions pierce through the fog of uncertainty facing legislators' decisions. These coalitions act as cues for legislators and help limit uncertainty, especially regarding issues outside their purview. RMIGs are successful representatives of marginalized racial minorities through these ways.

How can RMIGs be politically influential in lobbying? I show that the twin mechanisms of diversity and size of coalitions significantly affect the passage rate of a bill. Phinney (2018)

demonstrates that coalitional diversity can increase lobbying influence for marginalized communities through a formal signaling model and a case study. Lorenz (2020) shows that coalitional diversity affects the chances of a bill receiving committee consideration in Congress. Building on these ideas, I test the effects of diversity mechanisms on bill passage while also including coalitional size as an important additional factor with my data on bill outcomes and interest group positions in the California legislature from 1997 to 2018.

My analyses show that increasing coalitional diversity and size positively and significantly affect bill outcome and that RMIGs' endorsements of candidates can also sway survey respondents' vote choice. Larger coalitional size and higher coalitional diversity can break through legislators' uncertainties to influence voting decisions. Increased coalitional diversity and size of a bill lead to a higher likelihood of bill passage. Interest groups with fewer financial resources, less political power, and who represent marginalized communities like RMIGs can be more successful in lobbying if they engage in building large and diverse coalitions. Through these findings, I argue that RMIGs can be an effective source of representation for marginalized racial communities. My results show that RMIGs can be effective vehicles of representation for their communities despite severe constraints. Hence, the main implication of this study is that racial minority groups should pursue lobbying as a valuable avenue for voicing policy grievances.

RMIGs as a Distinct Category of Interest Groups

I propose a theory of why RMIGs are distinct from our traditional understanding of interest groups and how they can effectively lobby in a biased political system toward elite interests. The main distinction between RMIGs and conventional interest groups is that RMIGs

primarily advocate for the interests of a racial group. This racial distinction cannot be taken lightly because it shapes the obstacles and resources available to RMIGs. RMIGs' actions are evaluated through racialized views and stereotypes. For example, they often must overcome racist views of whether specific policies are deserving, like in the case of welfare reform (Gause 2022).

On the other hand, racial identity can be a source of strength. Linked-fate, a phenomenon described by Dawson (2004), in which racial minorities feel connected through their racial identity, is much stronger and more prevalent than other identities. A shared sense of linked-fate allows RMIGs to mobilize and cooperate more easily and often than other groups. These resources and barriers are distinct to RMIGs, and they navigate a lobbying environment that is wholly different from classic interest groups. Finally, RMIGs' road into political incorporation as participants in lobbying was shaped by their experiences in social movements, which helped these groups develop strategies based on cooperation and coalition-building. These experiences and their trajectory from social movements shaped their behavior as formal lobbying organizations in legislatures.

I argue that RMIGs can successfully compete against powerful groups and win policy battles because they can more easily create large and diverse lobbying coalitions. The historical development of RMIGs has created a general inclination towards cooperative lobbying. RMIGs lobby in coalitions and send informational signals rather than campaign contributions or lobbying alone. The unique character of RMIG, honed through the social movements for civil rights, political access, and equality, makes them more inclined to cooperate with other organizations. Transitioning from protest politics to formal legislative politics allowed RMIGs to practice the collaborative and coalition-building skills they developed in their days as social

movement organizations. As a result, RMIGs are better at tapping into more profound connectedness between groups to create winning coalitions than traditionally wealthy groups like firms or industries. For example, scholars note the characteristic ability of RMIGs like the NAACP to forge partnerships with like-minded organizations like the ACLU, churches, and other racial groups to maintain and enhance their political influence (McAdam 1982; Pinderhughes 1995). Smith (1996) also notes that the NAACP, after the civil rights movement and as a full RMIG, continued to rely on a coalition of labor, Latinx, and public advocacy organizations. This evolution and coalition-building strategy suggest a continuation of tactics and the drawing of resources that served them well as a social movement organization. The strategic advantage of coalition-building reinforces this characteristic. Large and diverse coalitions increase lobbying capabilities and reduce informational uncertainty among legislators. RMIGs can compete and pass policies that matter to marginalized racial minority communities through these ways. Building on the classic social movement literature on resource mobilization, I contend that RMIGs' growth and impact are shaped by the types and levels of resources available to them at their formation—most of which occurred during the civil rights movement and other outsider movements—and have been built into their organization (McAdam 1996; McCarthy and Zald 1977).

RMIGs, in particular, are better at engaging in these strategies because they have natural allies. Histories of shared discrimination and struggles for representation have created a sense of commonality among RMIGs. Kaufmann (2003) shows that individual Blacks and Latinxs cooperate more when they have a higher recognition of common disadvantages than Whites. Hero and Pruehs (2013) show that the social context of inter-group elite relations (at the RMIG level) in the broader national arena facilitates more robust recognition of shared disadvantages

among Blacks and Latinxs relative to Whites. This sense of commonality, I argue, makes RMIGs more predisposed to working together. Beyond commonality, RMIGs still have an over-arching incentive to build coalitions in a resource-driven lobbying environment. McCarthy and Zald (1977) put forward the notion that resources are critical to the success of social movements. Organizations pushing for social change are strategic in maximizing their resources to reach their goals. Therefore, RMIGs must coalesce in coalitions to exert more decisive influence. The coalition-building strategy is particularly significant to marginalized groups because their constituencies comprise small portions of the general public. However, their numbers enormously increase when they work with others.

In essence, the unique character of RMIGs and their practice of coalition-making during their formative social movement years make them predisposed to cooperation which is reinforced by the strategic advantage of coalition-building, granted by the fact that they represent visible constituencies. Moreover, this sense of mutual trust is strengthened over time as they engage in cooperative lobbying and log-rolling.

Models of Diversity and Size

Phinney's (2018) simple signaling model of coalition formation establishes the fundamental interactions and mechanisms of how diversity influences legislators' voting behavior. A signaling model highlights the conditions of informational asymmetries that legislators and interest groups operate under and, in doing so, illustrates the intuition behind the role of coalition diversity. The critical assumption is that interest groups have information that a legislator values but cannot access. For example, such information can be the likelihood of a policy outcome, constituents' preferences, or technical expertise on the policy. We can isolate

how interest groups and legislators interact through a signaling game. For example, an interest group has a solid incentive to mislead legislators toward a decision that only benefits them.

A signaling game requires two players: a signaler of information and a receiver of information. The signaler is an interest group, while the receiver is a legislator (Ainsworth 1993). The signaler (interest group) aims to make the receiver (the legislator) act in their interest, like enacting a policy change that benefits them. Within the confines of this game, the legislator is uninclined to enact the policy change that the signaler wants. The legislator, however, will only do so if there is a high or credible likelihood that the benefit of enacting the policy change outweighs its costs to the legislator. The signaler's job is to convince the legislator that passing their preferred policy would be more beneficial than costly by sending information. The signaler “sends” these signals through writing position letters, testifying in committee hearings, mobilizing constituents, working collaboratively with other groups, and other acts. These signals reveal to the legislator the potential consequences of failing to enact the policy. The legislator, at this stage, must evaluate the quality or trustworthiness of the information signal they see at this stage. Are the informational signals credible? Would enacting the signaler's preferred policy outcome benefit the legislator? If the legislator is convinced by the information signals sent by the signaler, then the policy is accepted or supported. On the other hand, the policy is rejected if the legislator remains unconvinced.

Following Phinney (2018) and other signaling models, an interest group can be labeled as a *low-type* or a *high-type*. In this theory, a low-type group “exists in an environment in which no other groups support the policy p , whereas a high-type group exists in an environment of strong support for policy p across a diverse array of organized interests” (Phinney 2018; 32). Each group's environment defines its type, and both groups would like to signal that the policy enjoys

strong support rather than low support. They want to express that they are a high-type rather than a low-type. The crux of this policy game is whether the signal sent by the group allows the legislator to determine the group's type. The legislator wants to make the right decision by following the recommendations of a high-type rather than a low-type.

However, both low-type and high-types have a strong incentive to convince legislators that they are the high-type regardless of whether this is true or not. For example, Phinney's (2018) theory presents a diverse coalition as the “separating strategy” signal that legislators use to pick a decision. Only the high-type, in this setup, exists in an environment of broad support for a policy change. Therefore, both types will do their best to build diverse coalitions to convince legislators that they are the high-type. If both types can build diverse coalitions, legislators will be unable to differentiate between the two types. But suppose the two types differentiate in strategy. In that case, the signal of a diverse coalition “provides information to the legislator about the group's true type--specifically, that she is dealing with a high- rather than a low-type group” (Phinney 2018; 32).

The central insight of this model is that two types of groups may separate in their lobbying approaches if the costs of building a diverse or large coalition are higher or if doing so is difficult for the low- and high-types. Costs and difficulty in building coalitions differ across interest group types. Legislators can then infer that the group is a high-type in seeing a diverse coalition. High diversity in a coalition communicates to legislators that the group is a high-type or that there is strong political support for the policy change. My theory on RMIG lobbying argues that the costs of building diverse coalitions are much lower for them and that it is easier for them to do so. Hence, they can send a strong signal that they are a high-type even if it may not necessarily be true. RMIGs' ability to convince legislators through these signals allows them

to compete on similar levels to traditional interest groups, including those with an advantage in political and financial power.

I expand on this model by arguing that the coalition's size sends an even more credible signal and more easily differentiates the signaler as the high-type. A diverse coalition communicates to a legislator that there may be broad support for the policy change being advocated by the signaler. Within this uncertainty, a diverse coalition tells legislators that the policy change may be politically advantageous for them. I argue that the number of groups in the coalition also plays a similar role. A signal that shows that many interested parties care about the policy change shows legislators that the policy issue is highly salient and that there is substantial support for its enactment. This signal is much more effective when the supporting coalition is larger than the opposing coalition on the bill.

The net number of support, in this case, takes into account potential large opposing coalitions as well. It might be the case that a bill has massive opposition. Taking the difference between supporting and opposing coalitions gives us a clearer picture of how coalitional size affects lobbying. The ability to build large coalitions also varies among groups, and the group type will determine its costs. Having both a large and diverse coalition, in these ways, can further differentiate interest groups as the high-type. The credibility of the signaler is maximized. Phinney's (2018) model predicts that a diverse lobbying coalition will lead to stronger influence on legislators' behavior. This result is the case because it would signal to the legislator that they are a high-type, increasing the probability that the legislator will choose the policy change. I expand on this model by arguing that the size of a coalition also plays a role in showing legislators that the signaler is a high-type. To test the ability of diverse and large coalitions to influence policy change, I present the following hypotheses:

H1: Bills with a larger net supporting coalition will pass out of the legislature more often than those supported by a smaller net supporting coalition.

H2: Bills supported by lobbying coalitions with a high diversity of group types will pass out of the legislature more often than those supported by less diverse coalitions.

The presence of a very large and diverse coalition will lead to the most successful policy success. Having both strengths in size and diversity magnifies the credibility of the signal sent to legislators. It is the most effective in convincing legislators to pick the signaler's policy change. Hence:

H3: Bills supported by large lobbying coalitions with high diversity will be the most successful in passing out of the legislature.

This paper attempts to test the causal mechanisms of size and diversity in influencing legislators' policy decisions. A simple signaling model shows legislators' dilemma: they must decide on accepting a policy choice based on the signals they received in a situation of high uncertainty. Coalitional diversity and, in extension, its size work best to convince legislators that they can trust an interest group's policy preference. I use this model within the framework of my theory on RMIG lobbying to show that even though they are politically and financially weaker than their competitors, RMIGs can be successful because they can send these two signals more efficiently. Suppose the twin mechanisms of coalitional diversity and size play an outsized role in convincing legislators. In that case, it is unsurprising that RMIGs can win just as often as their more affluent counterparts.

Date and Design

I test hypotheses **H1** to **H3**, which predict that large and diverse coalitions lead to more bill success by relying on a novel dataset of California bill analyses from 1997 to 2018. The data contain all bills presented to the California state legislature over twenty years and record instances of lobbying by interest groups. Specifically, it lists the name of interest groups that have registered their support or opposition to a bill. Most studies on lobbying in American politics rely primarily on data made available by the Lobbying Disclosure Act (LDA) of 1995 (Baumgartner and Leech 2001; LaPira and Thomas 2017; Bertrand, Bombardini and Trebbi 2014; Vidal, Mirko and Fons-Rosen 2012; Furnas, Heaney and LaPira 2019). The LDA data begin with lobbying reports filed in 1998 and continually accrue. Though a clear and valuable source of data, they are often incomplete. LDA reports rarely contain clear information on the lobbying activities of these organizations. More importantly, it does not record organizations' position on a bill, limiting researchers' ability to assess groups' influence over legislative outcomes (Kim 2017; Kim and Kunisky 2021; Lorenz 2020). Such limitations of available data often stymie empirical studies of interest group participation.

More recently, Lorenz (2020) introduced lobbying data compiled by a non-profit organization called MapLight. This dataset is unique in that it records instances of organizations taking a clear position on Congressional bills from 2005 to 2018 for about 16,000 organizations. Most of these positions come from public statements made by the organizations through their websites, open letters, press releases, and other publicly available sources. However, there are concerns related to selection bias in this dataset. For one, MapLight does not fully capture every instance of interest group activity, but only around twenty percent of bills were introduced during this period (Lorenz 2020). In addition, the MapLight data fails to randomly sample or select bills to research but depends on the salience of the bill. There is also a possibility that

MapLight may not be able to locate positions for the bill adequately or might claim a position that is in error. As Lorenz (2020) states, “Either issue could introduce sample selection problems into MapLight's data collection process, hampering the data's potential for generating descriptive or causal inferences.”

I address these concerns by compiling an original dataset of California bill analyses from 1997 to 2018. The data contains 310,033 bill analyses for 33,176 legislative bills proposed to the California Assembly and Senate. The data record every instance of a proposed bill. The data generating process relies on the formal rules of proposing legislation. Every bill proposed is assigned a number, keyed to a committee, and sent to be analyzed by committee staff. From its introduction to its final vote, staff members must create and update an analysis of the bill at every stage of the legislative process. The data drawn from these analyses are a comprehensive survey of all policy considered and how it has morphed through the legislative process.

These bill analyses contain information about the bill's topic, the author, a description of the proposed change, the date of submission, and a listing of organizations that formally sent letters supporting or opposing the bill (see appendix). By law, the bill's title must substantively reflect its proposed changes. The bill's title gives researchers a clear idea of the topics of the proposed bills. More importantly, the listings of organizations formally supporting or opposing a bill record an act of lobbying. When an organization sends a letter, they signal its approval or disapproval of a policy idea to the legislator. Legislators and their staff see these signals all through the legislative process. It is a clear indication of an attempt to lobby or sway the legislature. These listings allow researchers to map and track the types of policies that civic and private groups care about and provide a sense of their policy agendas. Using these listings, I identify and analyze the bills that RMIGs signaled their support and opposition on to give a clear

indication of the types of issues that these organizations care about and describe the lobbying trend of RMIGs.

The creation of this dataset offers several significant contributions to the study of interest group lobbying. First, the thousands of observations detailing the lobbying positions of interest groups over many years and the plethora of information can answer many different types of questions concerning lobbying influence, interest group networks, representation, and more. For example, one can use the unique names of the interest groups, their positions on bills, and legislators sponsoring the bill to more precisely create ideal point measures that reflect the latent ideological leanings of interest groups (Crosson, Furnas, and Lorenz 2020). Second, researchers can use this data to compare, tabulate, and analyze RMIGs activity over 20 years. Finally, leveraging this data allows me to observe RMIG lobbying proclivities and the coalitions they form in their activities.

Using this data, I count the number of groups that sent in letters of support and opposition on every bill to measure the size of the coalitions for each side of a bill. A coalition is a partnership among interest groups that pursue a common goal. From this perspective, groups on the same side of an issue are a coalition. Hence, coalitional size is the total number of groups on either support or opposed side of a group. I also calculate a measure of coalitional diversity. It is a simple Hefindahl-Hirschmann Index (HHI) calculation of each bill's coalition. In economics, the HHI is commonly used to measure market concentration, and it can measure diversity in political science. To determine the type of groups signaling on each bill analysis, I hand-coded 3000 groups along 13 dimensions, ranging from business organizations to hospitals, based on prescribed definitions (See Appendices). These classifications are adapted from Schlozman and Tierney's (1986) classification system, where interest group types are identified by their

constituency and policy interests. I then used an unsupervised method to code the rest of the roughly 91,265 unique groups that sent a letter during this period. I randomly administered quality spot-checks to ensure precision. To ensure reliability, a team of ten trained undergraduate researchers went through line-by-line each organization's name and machine-coding to verify that the group is precisely verified.

I measure the diversity of each coalition, both in support and opposition of bills, by calculating its Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (HHI) number. HHI is calculated by summing the squared market share of each competing firm in a market:

$$HHI = s_1^2 + s_2^2 + s_3^2 + \dots s_n^2,$$

where S_n is the market share percentage of firm n expressed as a whole number. The closer a market is to a monopoly, the higher the market's concentration and the less competitive or diverse that market is. Building on this idea, I calculate the coalition diversity score by squaring each group type's share of the coalition for a bill and summing it:

$$Diversity\ Score = \frac{g_1^2 + g_2^2 + g_3^2 + \dots g_n^2}{1000},$$

where g_n is the coalition share percentage of group type n expressed as a whole number.

The diversity score for each supporting and opposing side of a bill is calculated using this formula. We scale it by dividing the score by 1000 to create a diversity score of 0 to 1. A coalition with a score closer to 1 is dominated by only one type of interest group signaling support or oppose on a bill, while one closer to 0 indicates many different groups engaged in signaling. If, for example, there was only one type of group in support of a bill, then its diversity

score would equal 1, indicating no diversity in its coalition. This is the case because only one type of group is signaling support. Conversely, a score of 0 would indicate complete diversity for the coalition signaling on a bill.

Finally, I combine this data with the official historical records of the California legislature to include the outcome of the bill. Bill success is determined by whether it can pass out of both houses of the state legislature. The three hypotheses can be modeled as logistic regression models with year-fixed effects. A logit model can be used to investigate the relationships between multiple explanatory variables and a binary outcome variable. It is appropriate when the response takes one of only two possible values, like success or failure. Hypothesis **H1** can be expressed as the following equation:

For bill i in year t ,

$$\Pr(\text{Bill Passage}_{it}) = \text{logit}^{-1}(\beta_0 + \beta \text{Net Coalition Size}_{it} + \epsilon_{it}),$$

where Bill Passage_{it} is the dependent variable indicating whether bill i passed out of the legislature in year t , and $\text{Net Coalition Size}_{it}$ is the net number of interest groups supporting bill i in year t . Our key explanatory variable is $\text{Net Coalition Size}_{it}$, which is calculated by subtracting the number of groups opposing bill i from the number of groups supporting it. Finally, ϵ_{it} is the residual in each observation not explained by the explanatory variables and fixed effects combined.

I can further express the effects of the presence of a RMIG with coalition size by interacting the term indicating RMIG support for a bill with the term expressing the net size of the supporting coalition:

For bill i in year t ,

$$\Pr(\text{Bill Passage}_{it}) = \text{logit}^{-1}(\beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Net Coalition Size}_{it} + \beta_2 \text{RMIG Support}_{it} + \beta_3 (\text{Net Coalition Size}_{it} * \text{RMIG Support}_{it}) + \epsilon_{it}),$$

where $\text{Net Coalition Size}_{it}$ is interacted with RMIG Support_{it} , indicating whether there is any RMIG supporting the bill. The interaction term captures the differential effect of coalition size in the presence of a RMIG in the coalition.

Hypothesis **H2** is analogous to **H1** but primarily tests the diversity of a coalition on bill passage. It replaces the net number of supporting organizations for a bill with the diversity of the coalition supporting it. The relationship can be expressed as: For bill i in year t ,

$$\Pr(\text{Bill Passage}_{it}) = \text{logit}^{-1}(\beta_0 + \beta \text{Coalition HHI}_{it} + \epsilon_{it}),$$

where $\beta \text{Coalition HHI}_{it}$ is the Herfindahl-Hirschmann measure of diversity for the supporting coalition of bill i in year t .

I also interact the main explanatory variable of coalitional diversity with the presence of a RMIG in the supporting coalition: For bill i in year t ,

$$\Pr(\text{Bill Passage}_{it}) = \text{logit}^{-1}(\beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Coalition HHI}_{it} + \beta_2 \text{RMIG Support}_{it} + \beta_3 (\text{Coalition HHI}_{it} * \text{RMIG Support}_{it}) + \epsilon_{it}),$$

where the main explanatory is the interaction term. These four models allow me to test the independent effects of coalitional size, coalitional diversity, and presence of RMIG support for Hypotheses **H1** and **H2**. Finally, I address Hypothesis **H3** by modeling bill passage as a function of the interaction between coalitional size and coalitional diversity. The model can be

expressed as: For bill i in year t ,

$$\Pr(\text{Bill Passage}_{it}) = \text{logit}^{-1}(\beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Net Coalition Size}_{it} + \beta_2 \text{Coalition HHI}_{it} + \beta_3 (\text{Net Coalition Size}_{it} * \text{Coalition HHI}_{it}) + \epsilon_{it}).$$

The expectation is that bills with both high coalitional diversity and large coalitional size would be most likely to pass out of the legislature.

Findings: Large and Diverse Coalitions are Likely to Lead to Legislative Success

The bill analyses data provide compelling evidence that large and diverse coalitions lead to more policy success. In support of Hypothesis **H1**, bills with a large support coalition are more likely to pass out of the legislature and end up at the governor's desk. Considering the opposing coalition, bills with lots of organizations supporting them pass at higher rates than those in smaller support coalitions. Figure 1 presents the results of the logit model on the relationship between a bill's net coalition size and bill passage out of the legislature. It shows a substantial increase in the predicted probability of passage out of both houses of the legislature for bills with lots of net support.

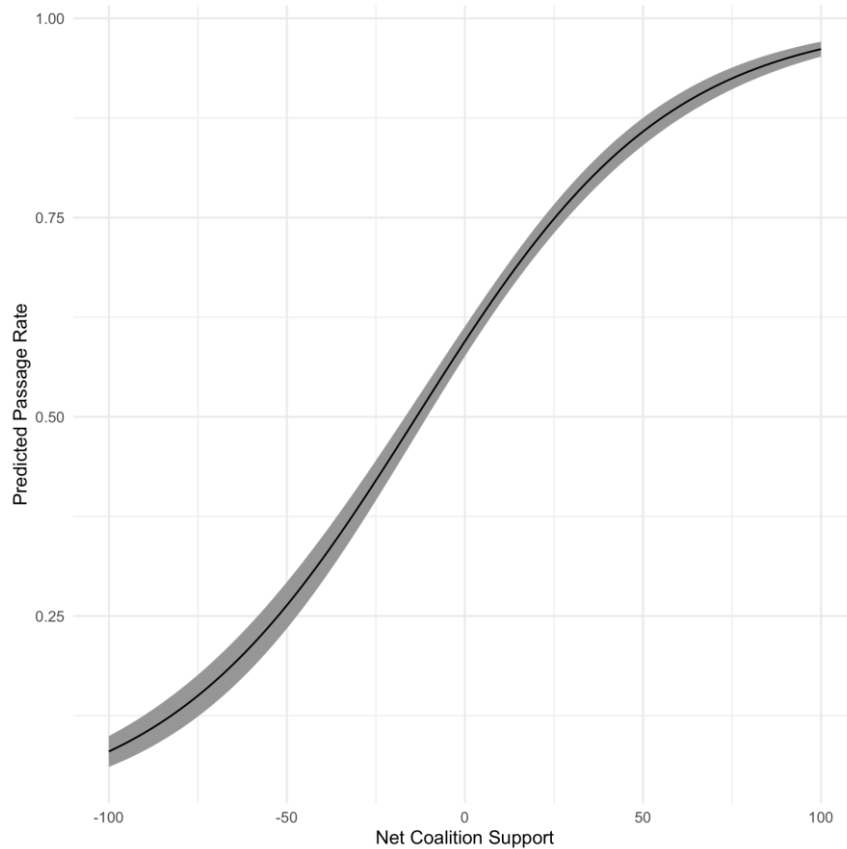


Figure 1. Predicted Probability of Bills Passing Based on Net Coalition Size in Support of a Bill.

“Net support,” again, refers to the overall number of organizations supporting the bill minus the number of organizations opposing it. As Figure 1 shows, bills with much opposition are more likely to fail, while those with many supporting organizations dramatically increase the bill’s chance of passing. The model shows that moving from a net coalition of zero to 100 increases the likelihood of passage by about 30%. The size of a coalition is a statistically significant predictor of bill passage. Altogether, the results are strongly consistent with Hypothesis **H1** and my theory that coalition size strongly influences bill success. To expand on Phinney’s (2018) and Lorenz’s (2022) theory and work on the influence of diverse coalitions, I find that the size of the coalition also matters to bill passage. This new evidence of the effect of

coalition size on policy success reinforces the idea that RMIGs and weak groups can be successful, regardless of financial constraints and marginalizing barriers if they can leverage their unique ability to create large coalitions.

I further explore the role of RMIGs and group size by interacting the presence of a RMIG on a bill with net coalition size. Does having a RMIG in a support coalition affect bill passage, given net coalition size? In other words, do RMIGs improve or hinder bill passage rate given a very large support coalition or a tiny one? Figure 2 shows the predicted probabilities of a bill passing based on net support coalition size given the presence of a RMIG in the coalition. When RMIGs signal support on bills with outnumbered support, or fewer organizations supporting than opposing it, the bill is much more likely to pass than those with non-RMIGs on the bill. However, as net support becomes positive, the presence of a RMIG supporting the bill does not add more to the likelihood that the bill will pass. Bills with more organizations supporting than opposing them do not gain extra benefit from having a RMIG supporting them. This finding suggests that bills with small supporting coalitions would greatly benefit from having a RMIG on its team. Though surprising, this finding fits in with the general theory of RMIGs' role in maintaining legitimacy and being able to mobilize support from racial minority communities. Having this asset is particularly important when one goes up against larger opposition. Altogether, it is evident that coalition size matters to the success of a bill and that its makeup also has important effects on bill passage. Having a RMIG, for example, in a small coalition can be very helpful.

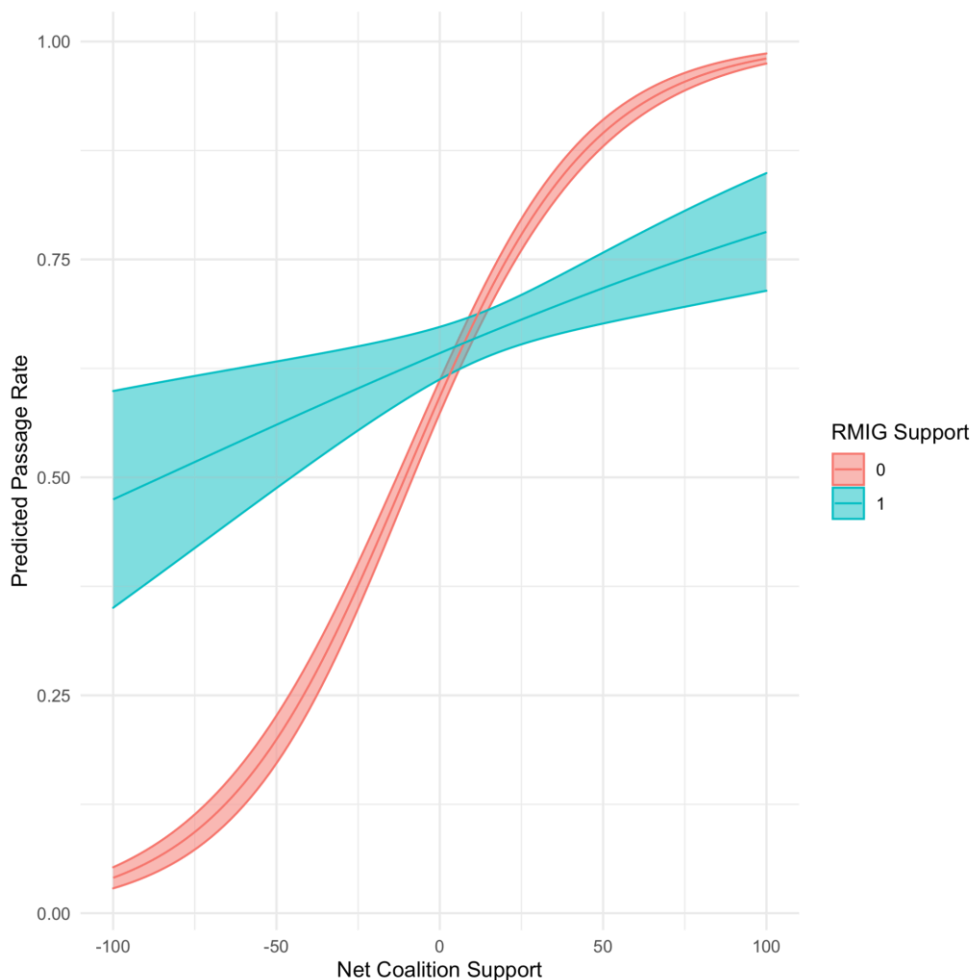


Figure 2. Predicted Probability of Bills Passing Based on a Net Coalition Size and Presence of a RMIG in Support of a Bill.

I evaluate Hypothesis **H2** through a logit model of the relationship between support coalition diversity and bill passage out of the legislature. My key predictor is the diversity of a supporting coalition on a bill, as measured by the HHI score of a bill coalition. An HHI score close to zero expresses high diversity while a score close to one expresses little diversity in coalitional makeup. My analysis shows that, following Phinney (2017) and Lorenz (2022), coalitional diversity has a significant and robust effect on bill success. Figure 3 is consistent with

Hypothesis **H2**. It shows that highly diverse support coalitions are more likely to pass bills than less diverse ones. The predicted passage rate of a bill decreases as the HHI score of their supporting coalition increases or, in other words, a less diverse coalition supports the bill.

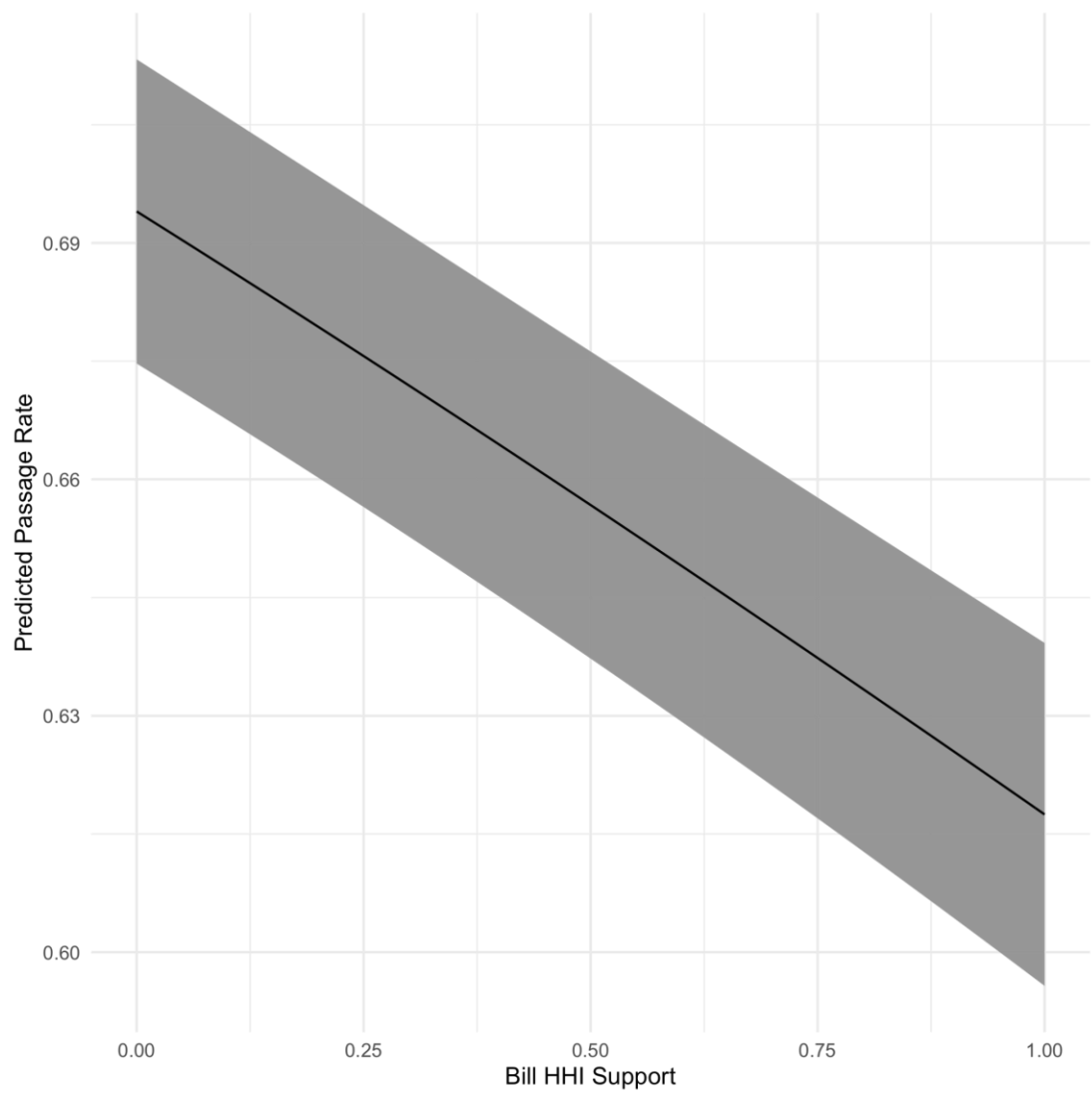


Figure 3. Predicted Probability of Bills Passing Based on Support Coalition Diversity.

The analysis results give credence to a central insight of my theory: the diversity of coalition partners allows influence in the legislature. Diversity in lobbying coalitions means that a coalition contains organizations representing different interests. Bringing diverse actors in support of a bill increases the credibility of the information sent to legislators about the bill's potential consequences and its urgency. Hence, those who quickly and easily create or be on diverse coalitions will be more successful. I argue that RMIGs have this ability. Hence, they can win policy victories more often than expected, given their marginalized positions.

By expanding the model to include the interaction of the measure for supporting coalition diversity and the presence of a RMIG in the coalition, I show that bills with more diverse supporting coalitions and include RMIGs do less well than those with diverse coalitions and no RMIG support. The presence of a RMIG does not seem to help bill passage, as long as bills have more diverse supporting coalitions, as shown by Figure 4. The wide confidence intervals of Figure 4 mean that I cannot draw firm conclusions from this model. But it offers evidence to support that RMIGs do worse at passing bills out of the legislature when lobbying independently or with fewer types of groups. RMIGs seem to pass fewer bills when they go it alone or cannot build very diverse coalitions. Conversely, RMIGs are much more successful when they are on diverse coalitions.

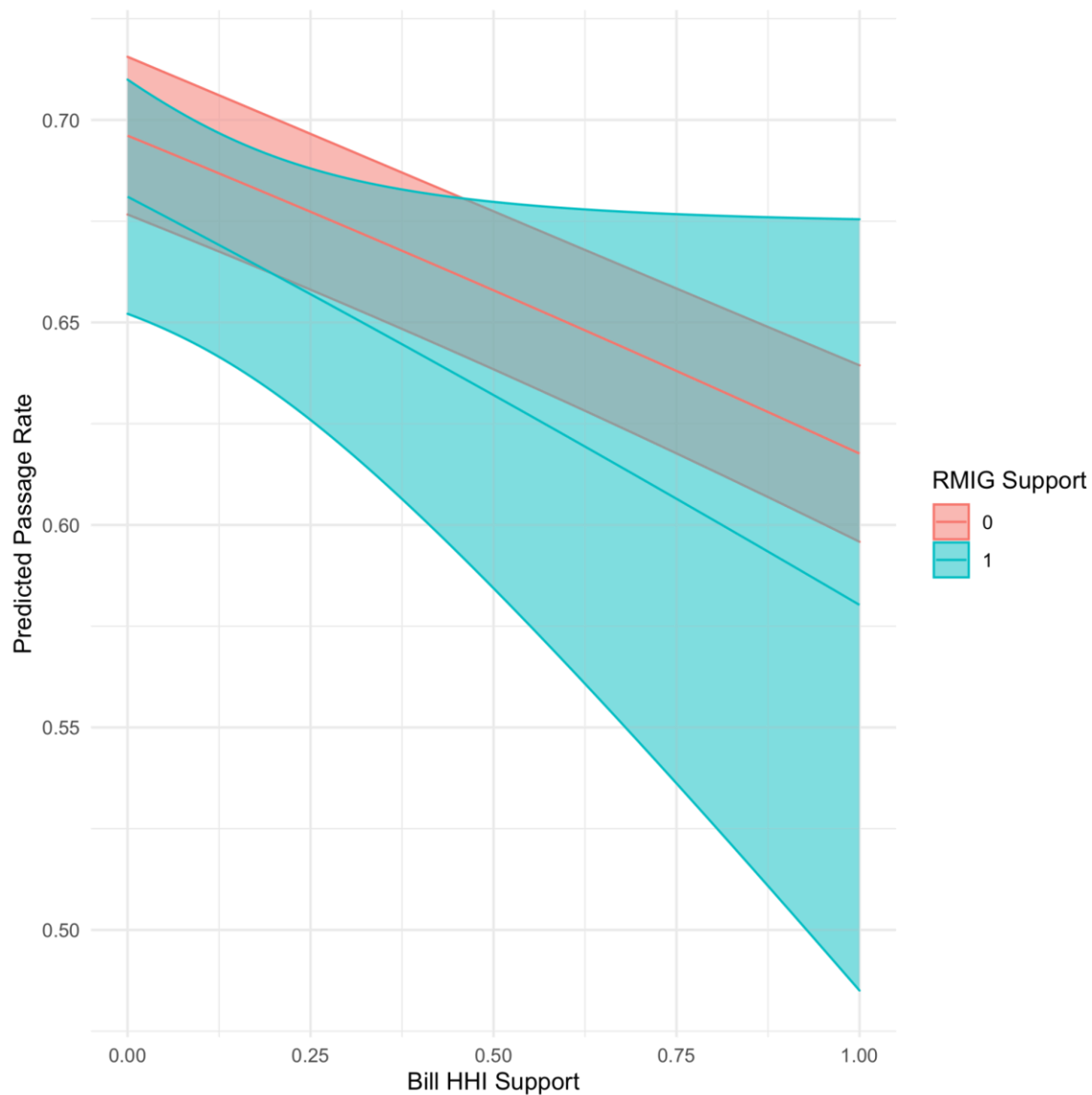


Figure 4. Predicted Probability of Bills Passing Based on Coalition Diversity and RMIG Presence in Support of a Bill.

Finally, combining net support coalition size and support coalition diversity, the data present some support for Hypothesis **H3** and fascinating patterns on the effects of coalition size and diversity. Figure 5 shows the predicted probability for bill passage at various levels of diversity and net coalition size. The heat map visualizes the interaction of two continuous variables, with

bill diversity on the x-axis and net coalition support on the y-axis. The shading of the area shows regions that correspond to predicted bill passage rates at different cut-points. The lighter shading refers to higher predicted passage rates, while the darker shading reflects lower expected passage rates.

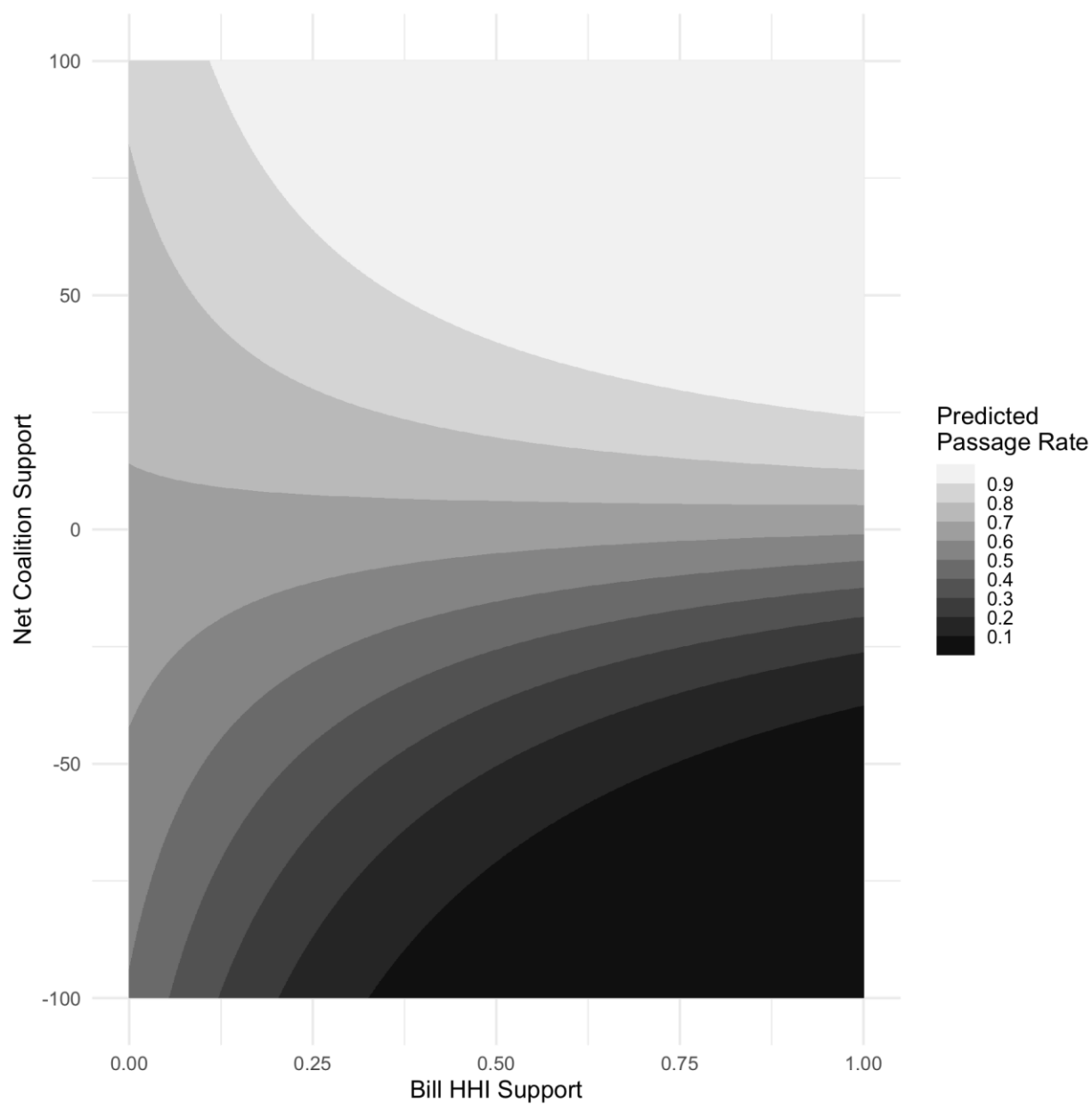


Figure 5. Predicted Probability of Bill Passage at Different Levels of HHI and Coalition Size.

Large and diverse coalitions predict a high probability of bill passage, at around 60\% to 80\%. However, the highest passage rates are in regions with low diversity and large coalitions. This finding is surprising since it suggests that bills with large coalitions can still be successful without having to be diverse. Our analysis would suggest that a bill with a large supporting coalition of only one type of group would be highly likely to pass. For example, a bill with only agricultural groups supporting it but has a net supporting coalition of 100 or more of such groups would be successful.

On the other hand, consistent with my Hypothesis **H3**, the lowest passage rates are in regions where supporting coalitions are less diverse and small. Altogether, the data show that having diverse coalitions is ideal if one faces lots of opposition, as visualized at the bottom edge of Figure 5, but worse if there is a large coalition, as shown by the top edge of the figure. Large coalitions do not need diversity to pass bills.

Do a lobbying coalition's size and diversity influence the passage rate of bills in the legislature? Compared to smaller and less diverse coalitions, the data show that bills with larger and more diverse coalitions tend to pass at higher rates. There are similar patterns when RMIGs are in the supporting coalition. RMIGs help increase the passage rate for bills with smaller net support coalitions, but that influence diminishes as coalition size increases. On the other hand, a RMIG does not strengthen the passage rate as long as the supporting coalition maintains a diverse supporting coalition. RMIGs, on their own, seem to do worse than when non-RMIGs signal support on their own. RMIGs are much more successful when they signal in diverse coalitions.

Conclusion

I show that RMIGs can influence the policy process through coalitional size and diversity mechanisms. Building on the foundational theories of scholars, I test the effects of coalitional size and diversity on the ability of bills to pass out of the legislature. The data show that coalitional size and diversity are significant predictors of bill passage rates. Bills with large support coalitions that outnumber the opposing coalition are much more likely to pass than those with smaller support coalitions. Similarly, bills with more diverse supporting coalitions tend to do better than those with less diverse coalitions. These findings support the theory that the diversity and size of an interest group or lobbying coalition can break through legislators' uncertainties and convince them to vote in line with the coalition's position.

Interestingly, I find that the presence of RMIGs in smaller supporting coalitions that are outnumbered by the opposing coalition has a better chance of passing their preferred bill than non-RMIGs in similar small coalitions. Bills supported by RMIGs pass at higher rates when the size of the coalition is larger. Surprisingly, bills supported by non-RMIGs do much better than those supported by RMIGs when the supporting coalitional size is larger than the opposing coalitional size. If a coalition is already large, having a RMIG does not meaningfully lead to higher chances of success. The size of a supporting coalition seems to be the decisive determinant of bill success. On the other hand, RMIGs in very diverse coalitions do better than RMIGs in less diverse coalitions but not as well as non-RMIGs in similar situations. Non-RMIGs, in general, are more successful on their own.

Further analysis revealed that the highest predicted probability of passing a bill occurs when there is lower diversity but lots of members in the supporting coalition of the bill. At the same time, having very large and diverse coalitions also leads to higher chances of bill passage but not as much as if there is a large and homogeneous supporting coalition. These findings point to bounds of success related to coalition diversity and size, where diversity seems to matter less once a coalition reaches a threshold in their size---around at least 40 to 50 net supporting organizations. Remember that net coalition size refers to the number of supporting coalition minus the opposing coalition. From this perspective, a lobbying coalition can have less diversity in its coalition if it can create a coalition that outnumbered its opponents by 40 or 50 organizations, which is a very tall order and highly difficult.

RMIGs can succeed in smaller coalitions and seem to do better when they can maximize their coalitional size and diversity. These findings point to RMIGs as great conduits of representation for racial minorities because there is a straightforward way for RMIGs to influence policy, given their financial and political weakness. Diverse and large coalitions work to overcome legislator uncertainties and make lobbying signals more credible. The data support this postulate. In my theorization of RMIG lobbying, I argue that RMIGs are much better than their interest group counterparts in creating large and diverse coalitions. Their pathway as organizations protesting on the streets through the many movements for civil rights and political integration and the endemic nature of race in politics have allowed RMIGs to hone their coalition-building strategies and given them an edge in creating large and diverse coalitions. If RMIGs are better at creating large and diverse coalitions, they can competitively lobby on par with more wealthy and powerful interest groups, as shown in this paper. RMIGs can be a powerful vehicle for racial minority representation through these ways.

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