

SS.7.C.2.10

Examine the impact of media, individuals, and interest groups on monitoring and influencing government.

SS.7.C.2.10 Benchmark Clarification 1: Students will identify the methods used by interest groups to monitor and/or influence the government.

Interest groups use their **First Amendment** rights to peaceable assembly, free speech, and petition to monitor and influence the government. Interest groups are groups that form because of a common goal. They attempt to influence people by working together for their goal.

Political Action Committees, which are often connected to interest groups, can raise money and contribute to the campaigns of candidates that they support.

Interest groups can work with members of **Congress** or with other elected legislators to get laws passed. This is usually referred to as **lobbying**.

An interest group can also educate its members on issues it wants the group members to support. For example, interest groups ask their members to vote and give money to candidates that the interest group supports.

Congress - the national legislative body of the U.S., consisting of the Senate, or upper house, and the House of Representatives, or lower house

First Amendment - an amendment to the U.S. Constitution prohibiting Congress from establishing a religion, and from interfering with freedom of religious exercise, press, speech, assembly, or petition

interest group - a group of people who are concerned with a particular issue and who try to influence legislators to act in their favor, also known as a special interest group

lobbying - participating in activities in order to influence government officials

political action committee - an independent political organization that promotes the cause of a particular interest group, usually through raising money and campaigning to elect candidates who support the group's views