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"Buying the Backyard": Evaluating Lobbying Efforts' Association with Housing Policy Success in Colorado

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ABSTRACT

Organized interest groups play a central role in shaping legislation, yet little research has examined how lobbying mobilization intensity relates to outcomes within a high-salience policy area. This study examines the association between organized interest mobilization and legislative outcomes in Colorado housing legislation from 2021 to 2025. Analyzing 126 Colorado housing bills introduced across both chambers—105 of which became law and 21 of which did not—this study uses lobbying data from the Colorado Secretary of State's disclosure database to calculate a support ratio, an opposition ratio, and a derived net support score for each bill. Mann-Whitney U tests and point-biserial correlations, corrected with the Benjamini-Hochberg False Discovery rate procedure, compared these measures between bills that became law and bills that did not become law. Bills that became law had significantly higher support ratios and net support scores, and significantly lower opposition ratios, than bills that did not become law, with opposition mobilization showing a marginally stronger association than support mobilization. An exploratory measure incorporating lobbyist amending activity showed a similar pattern. These findings extend prior binary measures of lobbying mobilization by showing that ratio-based measures of mobilization intensity are meaningfully associated with legislative success, though the study's observational design precludes causal claims. Implications for housing advocates, policymakers, and future research are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

Behind the legislation that shapes the lives of most Americans, there is a mobilized network of lobbying efforts that seeks to influence and shape that policy. Professional lobbying can be considered as an effort by organized interest groups to influence a piece of legislation. More specifically, lobbying is the act of influencing government decision making through written or oral communication. Lobbying can be achieved in an array of ways. One of the most popular ways to achieve this is through professional lobbying, where firms are hired to represent the interests of clients by directly communicating with legislators and policymakers (Drutman, 2015). This process has been linked to the outcome of several pieces of legislation that got debated. The effectiveness of this influence has been widely debated within the political science field as seen in a 2022 study done by Daniel Butler and David Miller titled "Does Lobbying Affect Bill Advancement? Evidence from Three State Legislatures" (Butler and Miller, 2022).

This question particularly becomes important in high-salience policy subjects such as housing. For example, in Colorado, housing has been a highly contested point of debate. This is primarily due to the housing crisis Colorado has faced which was a result of low housing supply and rapidly rising costs of homes (Colorado Health Foundation, 2025). Despite the urgency of these issues, questions remain about what role organized interest groups play in shaping the outcome of housing legislation relative to public need, given the high salience of the subject. Current literature has not yet explored the impact organized interest groups have on the outcome of legislation within the high-salience context of housing legislation. Unlike existing large-N studies that use thousands of bills and measure them as binary positions, this paper introduces an original ratio that measures support and opposing mobilization which highlights lobbying activity on a piece of legislation.

Therefore, this study examines the extent to which organized interest mobilization is associated with legislative outcomes in Colorado housing legislation in both chambers from 2021–2025. This task is accomplished through a quantitative analysis of 126 Colorado housing bills from the 2021 to 2025 legislative sessions. Lobbying data from the Colorado Secretary of State database are used to calculate the share of active lobbyists supporting and opposing each bill and a derived net support score. These measures are then compared across bills that became law and bills that did not.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Because organized interest groups are widely thought to play a role in shaping legislation that affects American lives, an examination of how lobbying operates within the legislative process is warranted. A book by Anthony Nownes in 2006 titled "Total Lobbying What Lobbyists Want (and How They Try to Get It)" divides lobbying into three types: public policy lobbying, land use lobbying, and procurement lobbying. Procurement lobbying is where lobbyists attempt to influence a government to purchase something. This tends to happen when a lobbyist is hired to help their client secure lucrative contracts with the government regarding the purchasing of the client's goods and services. Public policy lobbying, one of the most common types, is where lobbyists attempt to influence whether bills become law at the federal, state, and local level. Land use lobbying occurs more commonly at the local level, where lobbyists work to influence a government's regulation of land use such as planning and zoning laws. (Nownes, 2006). Public policy lobbying and land use lobbying are of particular relevance to this study because Colorado housing legislation sits at the intersection of both, involving the laws that directly regulate land use and zoning at the state level. Given the context of the different types of lobbying, it is important to understand how lobbyists are able to influence things such as public policy, land regulation and government purchases. A study done by Richard L. Hall and Alan V. Deardorff in 2006 titled "Lobbying as a legislative subsidy" answers this by arguing that lobbying isn't done by buying votes or changing the minds of legislators. It's more often done by working on the piece of legislation itself. Since legislators are often occupied, many rely on lobbyists to acquire expert knowledge on the topic of a piece of legislation. This allows lobbyists to have more influence over the outcome of the legislation. With this

knowledge, lobbyists sometimes propose amendment ideas to legislators that are in the lobbyists' favor. By providing research, drafted speech, and other resources to legislators, it allows lobbyists to dictate what gets on the agenda of policy makers (Hall and Deardorff, 2006). If lobbyists influence the outcome of legislation by directing resources towards the legislators, then the scale of the mobilization may be an important factor associated with lobbyist success. Baumgartner et al. (2009) argue that when one side of a legislative debate becomes more mobilized, then the side with more mobilization efforts tends to prevail. Baumgartner et al. (2009) further argue that despite the side pushing for the status quo to remain the same having one of the strongest advantages, when one side of an issue is significantly more active and funded than the other, the side that has more resources is the side that tends to win, although cases like these are deemed rare because oftentimes in legislative debates, wealth competes with wealth on the opposing side so the money cancels itself out, leading to the side that pushes for the status quo to remain the same to prevail. This highlights the importance of resources in the lobbying field, whether it be in legislative labor or the amount of money invested.

Among these resources, campaign contributions and financial investments have been a significant point of debate among scholarly sources on their influence on legislative outcomes. Given this debate, there are researchers that argue that money is the primary driving force in influencing legislative outcomes. A study done by Thomas Stratmann in 2002 titled "Can Special Interests Buy Congressional Votes? Evidence From Financial Services Legislation" argues that changes in campaign contribution directly determines changes in roll call behavior on legislation. Given the influence of financial incentive, Stratmann acknowledges that while contributions from opposing sides can cancel each other out, the result of the legislative debate still comes down to which side invested more resources. Stratmann believes the investment of resources to be most effective especially when younger legislators, who are more responsive to financial mobilization, are targeted. Building on Stratmann's findings, Matter, Roberti, and Slotwinski (2019) provide empirical evidence for the vote-buying hypothesis that money influences legislative decisions by analyzing how the timing of contributions from Political Action Committees (PACs), the primary vehicle through which organized interests make campaign contributions, correlates with specific legislative actions. Matter et al. used a more granular data set to show the financial shocks that occur right before high stakes voting. This is especially true in particularly narrow, technical issues that lack high visibility from the public, which makes legislators less informed and more undecided. Lobbyists target these legislators who are more responsive since they are undecided and use financial rewards from lobbyists as an incentive to shift their political positioning. However, not all scholars agree that financial incentives can determine the roll call votes on a piece of legislation.

Scholars like Daniel M. Butler and David Miller argue that lobbyists are successful not because they use money to buy votes but because they control what's on the agenda of legislators and what bills make it to roll call voting. In Butler and Miller's 2022 study titled "Does Lobbying Affect Bill Advancement? Evidence from Three State Legislatures," Butler and Miller do a quantitative analysis of legislation from three states: Colorado, Nebraska, and Wisconsin. Butler and Miller look at over 26,000 bills from all 3 states from 2005 to 2014. This study also analyzes the lobbyists that were active on these bills and what sides they were on. By tracking the progress of these bills, from the introduction to the final passage,

Butler and Miller conclude that while lobbying in support of a bill has minimal impact on its success, the number of lobbyists who lobby in opposition for the bill is a strong predictor of the bill's failure. The study finds that this primarily occurs not through buying votes or flipping votes but by preventing it from even reaching the voting stage. Lobbyists prevent bills from reaching the voting stage in early stages such as committee approval. In state legislatures such as Colorado, committees play a central role in filtering which bills get into the agenda of voting. If a bill attracts significant opposition from lobbyists, then committees avoid it to avoid controversy and noise. (Butler and Miller, 2022). This idea is further supported by the research done by Scott H. Ainsworth in his 1997 study titled "The Role of Legislators in the Determination of Interest Group Influence," which argues that lobbying power is not just by a single lobbyist but rather by coordinated efforts of lobbyists with their legislative allies. These coordinated efforts strengthen the group's ability to mobilize support and determine a bill's outcome. This study adds that lobbyists strategize to make alliances with other lobbyists to strengthen their mobilization as lobbyists are more effective when working with their allies rather than directly competing against each other. Although Ainsworth points out that in high salience conflicts, competition between lobbyists is more common. Given that Butler and Miller's study draws significantly from Colorado lobbying data, the 2021-2025 Colorado housing sessions in both chambers present a unique opportunity to further examine these dynamics within a specific high-salience policy area.

Before examining the lobbying dynamics of the 2021-2025 Colorado housing legislation, an understanding of the conditions that made 2021-2025 a unique period in the history of Colorado housing policy is warranted. A report by the Colorado Health Foundation in 2025 shows that the 2021-2025 Colorado legislative session was historic because it showed an increase in the volume of legislation being passed, with one of the highest numbers the state has ever seen. From 2021 to 2025 83 bills formally marked as related to housing were introduced, marking the uniqueness of the period. However, this study expands the scope of analysis to include additional bills that, while not formally categorized as housing legislation by the Colorado state website, still had an effect on the housing market, resulting in a total sample size of 126 bills. There was also a noticeable shift in the state's role in governance as policymakers became more assertive by introducing more legislation that had to do with local zoning control such as land use by the state government and tensions between the local government and the state government over zoning laws leading to debates on power balance. This surge in bills introduced was a direct result of the Colorado housing crisis. In 2020 Colorado was experiencing low housing supply and high prices. A report by the Common Sense Institute in 2025 found that Colorado was ranked 50th in terms of housing competitiveness. More specifically the Denver metro area faced a housing unit deficit of 135,000 homes in 2024. This ultimately led to higher prices which led to the average earner having to work 97 hours per month to afford a mortgage, which is a 94 percent increase from the previous decade. This shows why housing legislation increased over the past years and explains why it's a high-salience issue (Common Sense Institute, 2025).

Despite the significance of this legislative period, existing research does not analyze whether there is a pattern between interest group mobilization and legislative outcomes in high-salience environments such as the 2021-2025 Colorado legislative sessions on housing policy. Daniel Butler and David Miller's paper

"Does Lobbying Affect Bill Advancement? Evidence from Three State Legislatures" provide patterns between strong mobilization of lobbying opposition and a bill's failure, with Colorado being one of the states that provided these patterns. However, this study is a broader study that analyzed 26 thousand bills and included all types of legislation from all kinds of topics. In Bent Flyvbjerg's 2006 paper titled "Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research," he finds that broader studies provide breadth, but not depth. Essentially, while large-N studies can identify general patterns across several states and topics, context-specific knowledge like understanding how mobilization acts as a predictor in high-salience issues requires a different approach. No existing study has measured mobilization using ratios and applied it within a high-salience legislative environment. Existing studies such as Daniel Butler and David Miller's paper measure lobbying mobilization in a binary scale with lobbying being categorized as either in favor of a bill or opposed to it. No existing study has measured lobbying mobilization using ratios that show the intensity of lobbying activity per bill. The 2021-2025 Colorado legislative session on housing policy is the ideal context to fill in this gap due to its high salience and high legislative activity.

Therefore, this study hypothesizes that organized interest mobilization will be significantly associated with legislative outcomes in the 2021–2025 Colorado legislative session on housing policy, measured through a support ratio, opposition ratio, and a derived net support score, with the opposition ratio expected to show a stronger association than the support ratio. During the course of analysis, the possibility that lobbyists' amending activity might also relate to legislative outcomes was identified and is examined separately, as an exploratory extension of the net support score, in the Methods and Data Analysis sections below.

METHODS

To examine the extent to which organized interest mobilization is associated with legislative outcomes in Colorado housing legislation in both chambers from 2021–2025, this study uses a non-experimental, quantitative explanatory approach. Colorado was picked because the setup of Colorado's lobbying disclosure laws and website makes acquiring lobbying data on the high-salience housing issue uniquely accessible. This can be seen in Thomas Rotering and Dorie Apollonio's 2022 study titled "Cannabis industry lobbying in the Colorado state legislature in fiscal years 2010–2021". In this study, Rotering and Apollonio used Colorado's publicly available lobbying disclosure data to conduct their analysis of industry influence in state legislation. This demonstrates that the state is a unique laboratory for lobbying research as also seen in Butler and Miller's paper "Does Lobbying Affect Bill Advancement? Evidence from Three State Legislatures".

Sample bills were identified through the Colorado General Assembly's Official Bill Search Database (Colorado General Assembly, 2026). The term "housing" was used to identify candidate legislation introduced in either the House or Senate from 2021–2025. For the purposes of this study, a bill was included if it directly addressed housing affordability, land use, zoning, tenant rights, regulations on

residential properties, housing-related tax credits, fair housing protections, homelessness support services, or housing finance and funding programs, reflecting the housing-policy categories identified by the Urban Institute in 2022. The state's response to the housing crisis gained momentum beginning in 2021, which is why bills were collected no earlier than that year. A bill was coded as meeting a category if housing was a primary or named subject of the bill's text — for example, appearing in the bill's title, short title, or a central operative provision — rather than an incidental or peripheral reference within a broader piece of legislation. For example, a bill allocating general state funds that included a minor housing-directed appropriation was included only if the housing allocation was one of the bill's stated purposes, not a line item within an unrelated appropriations bill. At the time the study was conducted, outcomes for the 2026 legislative session were not yet complete, so the sample ends in 2025. Applying these criteria resulted in a final sample of 126 bills. Two authors independently reviewed all bills returned by the 'housing' keyword search against the inclusion rule described above and reached identical conclusions on all 126 bills, including the 43 not formally marked as housing legislation by the state. In cases where a bill's connection to housing was not immediately apparent from its title, the full bill text was reviewed to determine whether housing met the primary-subject threshold above.

Each measure captures a different aspect of mobilization intensity: the support ratio reflects the concentration of favorable lobbying relative to all registered activity on a bill, the opposition ratio reflects the concentration of unfavorable lobbying in the same way, and the net support score captures the net direction and strength of mobilization by combining the two into a single balance measure. To measure lobbying activity surrounding each bill, data were collected from the Colorado Secretary of State's lobbying disclosure database (Colorado Secretary of State, n.d.). For each bill, the year, chamber, and bill number were entered into the database to identify registered lobbying activity. The database reported the number of lobbyists registered as supporting, opposing, amending, monitoring, or having no stated position on each bill, as well as the total number of lobbyists associated with the legislation. Because these records were originally collected and published by the state government and were analyzed retrospectively for this study, the analysis uses archival administrative data drawn from primary government records.

The 126 bills were organized using a case-ordered meta matrix to permit structured comparison across cases. Miles and Huberman describe case-ordered matrices as a method of organizing multiple cases side by side to compare variables and outcomes. In this study, the matrix functions as a data-organization tool rather than as a separate qualitative stage of analysis. Each bill serves as one row. The columns include the bill number, chamber, year, short title, total number of active lobbyists, number supporting, monitoring, registered as "n/a," amending, and opposing, as well as the support ratio, opposition ratio, amendment ratio, net support score, legislative outcome, number of amendments, and legislative session. Legislative outcome was coded as 1 if the bill became law and 0 if it did not, consistent with the binary outcome coding used by Butler and Miller. Bills coded as 0 encompass several distinct legislative paths, including bills postponed indefinitely, bills that died in committee without a vote, and bills vetoed after

passage. These paths were not distinguished in the binary outcome variable because the study's hypotheses concern whether a bill ultimately became law, not the procedural stage at which it stopped. The matrix was then used to organize the data for statistical comparison of lobbying mobilization and legislative outcomes.

To measure lobbying mobilization on each piece of legislation, the primary analysis uses three measures: the support ratio, opposition ratio, and net support score. The opposition ratio is calculated by dividing the number of lobbyists registered in opposition to a bill by the total number of lobbyists active on that bill.

$$Opposition\ Ratio\ =\ Lobbyists\ Opposing \div Total\ Lobbyists$$

The support ratio is calculated by dividing the number of lobbyists registered in support of a bill by the total number of lobbyists active on that bill.

$$Support\ Ratio\ =\ Lobbyists\ Supporting \div Total\ Lobbyists$$

The net support score represents the overall balance between supporting and opposing mobilization and is calculated by subtracting the opposition ratio from the support ratio.

$$Net\ Support\ Score\ =\ Support\ Ratio\ -\ Opposition\ Ratio$$

For all three measures, the denominator (total lobbyists) includes every lobbyist registered as active on a bill, regardless of position — including those registered as monitoring, amending, or having no stated position (n/a). As a result, the support and opposition ratios are partly shaped by non-directional lobbying activity rather than by support or opposition alone. This means two bills with identical numbers of supporting or opposing lobbyists can still receive different ratios depending on how much additional monitoring or amending activity surrounded each bill. This denominator was chosen because it reflects the overall lobbying salience of a bill: by normalizing against total registered lobbying activity rather than only the directional subset, the ratios capture relative mobilization intensity — how concentrated support or opposition was, given the total attention a bill received — rather than simply the raw count of supporters or opponents. The consequence of this choice is that ratios are sensitive to how much non-directional activity (monitoring, amending, or n/a) surrounds a bill: a bill with only a few supporting or opposing lobbyists will show a low support or opposition ratio if it also attracts a lot of monitoring or amending activity, even though that non-directional activity says nothing about which side is winning.

This tradeoff was accepted because the total-lobbyist denominator is the only measure in the dataset that reflects how much overall attention and engagement a bill drew from the lobbying community, which this study treats as the best available proxy for mobilization intensity.

These ratio-based measures account for differences in the overall amount of lobbying activity across bills. An amendment ratio was also calculated by dividing the number of lobbyists registered as amending by the total number of lobbyists.

$$Amendment\ Ratio = Lobbyists\ Amending \div Total\ Lobbyists$$

$$Net\ Support\ Score\ (with\ amendment\ ratio) = Support\ Ratio + Amendment\ Ratio - Opposition\ Ratio$$

Because the potential importance of amendment activity was identified only after the primary results were examined, amendment activity is treated as exploratory and is not incorporated into the primary net support score or used to evaluate the study's original hypotheses.

To determine whether lobbying mobilization differed between bills that became law and bills that failed, Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted for the support ratio, opposition ratio, and net support score. The Mann-Whitney U test compares the distributions of a continuous or ordinal variable between two independent groups, which in this study are bills that did and did not become law. The test was selected because it does not require the mobilization measures to follow a normal distribution and is therefore appropriate for the skewed lobbying data and presence of outlying observations.

To measure the strength and direction of the relationship between mobilization ratios and legislative outcomes, a point-biserial test was conducted on each mobilization ratio and the net support score. This test was selected because it was designed to measure correlation between a continuous variable and a binary variable which matches the structure of this study's data.

As an exploratory analysis, both the Mann-Whitney U test and the point-biserial correlation test were also applied to the net support score incorporating the amendment ratio. Because the relevance of amendment activity was identified only after the primary results were examined, this measure was not used to evaluate the study's original hypotheses and is reported separately, and clearly marked as exploratory, in the Data Analysis section below.

To account for the increased risk of false-positive findings from conducting multiple statistical tests, the Benjamini-Hochberg False Discovery Rate correction was applied to the p-values from the Mann-Whitney U tests and point-biserial correlation tests. The procedure controls the expected proportion of false discoveries among statistically significant results, reducing the likelihood that significant findings are produced simply because multiple comparisons were conducted.

RESULTS

The analysis of the 126 housing-related bills from the 2021–2025 Colorado legislative sessions revealed statistically significant associations between lobbying mobilization and legislative outcomes. Of the 126

bills included in the study, 105 became law and 21 did not become law. Bills that became law averaged a support ratio of 36.7 percent, compared with 21.1 percent among bills that did not become law. Bills that became law averaged an opposition ratio of 5.6 percent, compared with 14.6 percent among bills that did not become law. Bills that became law also averaged a net support score of 31.2 percent, compared with 6.5 percent among bills that did not become law.

As an exploratory measure, bills that became law also averaged a net support score of 41.4 percent when the amendment ratio was included, compared with 12.0 percent among bills that did not become law. Because this measure was identified after the primary analysis was conducted, it is treated as exploratory rather than confirmatory (see Methods).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Mobilization Variables by Legislative Outcome

	Bills that Became Law	Bills that Did Not Become Law
Support Ratio	0.367	0.211
Opposition Ratio	0.056	0.146
Net Support Score	0.312	0.065
Net Support Score with Amendment Ratio (exploratory)	0.414	0.120

Note. The amendment-ratio measure was identified after the primary analysis was completed and was not used to evaluate the study's original hypotheses (see Methods).

The Mann-Whitney U test revealed that the support ratio had a raw p-value of 0.0048 and after the Benjamini-Hochberg False Discovery Rate correction (BH correction) gave an adjusted p-value of 0.0063. This shows that there is a statistically significant pattern between the support ratio of a bill and the outcome. The Mann-Whitney U test (the U test) revealed that the opposition ratio had a raw p-value of 0.0256 and after the BH correction the adjusted p-value was 0.0256, showing that there is a statistically significant pattern between the opposing ratio of a bill and the outcome. The U test further reveals that the net support score (NSS) had a raw p-value of 0.0003 and after the BH correction an adjusted p-value of 0.0005 showing that there is a statistically significant pattern between the NSS of a bill and the outcome.

As an exploratory analysis, the same test applied to the net support score incorporating the amendment ratio showed a raw p-value of 0.0002 and an adjusted p-value of 0.0005 after BH correction. Because this measure was identified after the primary analysis, this result is interpreted as exploratory rather than confirmatory.

The point-biserial correlation test (pb test) revealed that support ratios had an r-value of 0.2537, opposing ratios had an r-value of -0.2800 and NSS had an r-value of 0.3288. All of these passed the BH correction.

This reveals weak to moderate correlation for both support ratios and opposing ratios and moderate correlation for NSS.

In the same exploratory analysis, the net support score incorporating the amendment ratio had a point-biserial r-value of 0.3709, indicating a moderate correlation. Because this measure was not part of the study's original hypotheses, it is reported separately in Table 3 as a supplementary exploratory finding rather than as a test of the primary hypotheses.

Table 2. Mann-Whitney U, Point-Biserial Correlation Results, and BH Correction

Variable	Mann-Whitney U	Mann-Whitney p-value	BH-adjusted p-value	Point-biserial r-value	Raw p-value (Point-biseral)	BH-adjusted p-value (Point-biseral)
Support Ratio	1534.0	0.0048	0.0063	0.2537	0.0041	0.0041
Opposition Ratio	797.5	0.0256	0.0256	-0.2800	0.0015	0.0020
Net Support Score	1661.0	0.0003	0.0005	0.3288	0.0002	0.0003

Note. Benjamini-Hochberg correction was applied separately within each test type (Mann-Whitney and point-biserial), across the three primary hypothesis tests only.

Table 3. Exploratory Measure (Net Support Score with Amendment Ratio)

Variable	Mann-Whitney U	Raw p-value (MW)	Point-biserial r-value	Raw p-value (PB)
Net Support Score with Amendment Ratio	1673.5	0.0002	0.3709	<0.0001

Note. This measure was identified after the primary analysis was completed and was not included in the Benjamini-Hochberg correction applied to the three confirmatory hypotheses (see Methods). Raw p-values are reported without multiplicity correction, consistent with its treatment as a single, independent exploratory test.

The study's primary hypothesis that organized interest mobilization would be significantly associated with legislative outcomes was supported. The support ratio, opposition ratio, and net support score all remained statistically significant after the Benjamini-Hochberg correction. The direction of each relationship also matched expectations: support ratios and net support scores were positively associated with becoming law, while opposition ratios were negatively associated with becoming law. The absolute magnitude of the correlation for opposition, 0.2800, was slightly greater than the correlation for support, 0.2537. This pattern is consistent with the expectation that opposition would have a stronger relationship

with legislative outcomes, although the study did not directly test whether the difference between these two correlation coefficients was statistically significant.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the extent to which organized interest mobilization was associated with legislative outcomes in Colorado housing policy from 2021 to 2025. Statistically significant associations were identified for all three primary mobilization measures: support ratio, opposition ratio, and net support score. Bills that became law generally experienced greater supporting mobilization and higher net support scores, while bills that did not become law experienced greater opposing mobilization. These findings support the study's primary hypothesis that the balance of organized interest mobilization is associated with legislative outcomes.

The findings of this study are consistent with Butler and Miller's 2022 study, which found that greater opposition mobilization on a bill was associated with a lower likelihood that the bill would become law. The findings of this study show that a similar relationship appears within the high-salience context of Colorado housing policy from 2021 to 2025. This study also finds statistically significant associations between legislative outcomes and supporting mobilization as well as the net balance between supporting and opposing mobilization. More broadly, the findings suggest that ratio-based measures can provide a useful way to compare the intensity of lobbying activity across bills with substantially different levels of total lobbying. However, because this study is observational, these relationships should not be interpreted as evidence that lobbying mobilization itself caused a bill to become or not become law.

The findings of this study carry practical implications for housing advocates, lobbying organizations, and policymakers working within state legislatures. The mobilization patterns identified in this study may help these groups better understand the balance of organized support and opposition surrounding legislation. In particular, the results suggest that low opposition alone does not necessarily characterize successful legislation, because bills that become law also tended to have higher levels of supporting mobilization. However, these findings should not be interpreted to mean that increasing the number of lobbyists supporting a bill will necessarily cause that bill to become law.

It is important to note several limitations of this study. First, the sample is limited to Colorado, which prevents the findings from being generalized to other state legislatures. Each state has different committee structures, zoning laws, housing regulations, political environments, and lobbying disclosure systems that may influence both lobbying activity and legislative outcomes. Second, because this is an observational study, it cannot establish that lobbying mobilization caused the legislative outcomes observed. Lobbyists may be more likely to mobilize around bills that already have a greater or lower likelihood of becoming law, and other factors such as chamber, legislative session, sponsorship, political support, or characteristics of the bill itself may affect both lobbying activity and legislative success. Third, the ratios

used in this study measure mobilization through the number of registered lobbyists but do not capture differences in financial resources, organizational influence, or lobbying expenditures. Finally, some lobbyists in the database were listed as "n/a," meaning they participated in lobbying activity surrounding a bill without specifying whether they supported or opposed it. Their unobserved positions could affect the measured balance of mobilization.

Further studies can replicate this study in states like Nebraska and Wisconsin, which have strong lobbying disclosure laws. Testing this study in other states would verify whether results are dependent on state government factors. Further studies can also replicate the study in other high-salience topics such as education, to test whether mobilization patterns are unique to housing policy.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A.

The full 126 table including each piece of legislation used, the chamber it passed from, the year it was passed, the total number of lobbyists, the number of supporting lobbyists, the number of monitoring lobbyists, the number of amending lobbyists, the number of opposing lobbyists, the number of lobbyists who did not specify their status (n/a), the opposing ratio, the supporting ratio, the amending ratio, the net support score, the net support score including the amending proportion, the outcome, the number of amendments, the session, and the inclusion reason (why the bill was included in our study, whether it was formally marked or fit another one of our inclusion criteria) can be found at this link: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1XAtmITNobPpSCS0AUoI2giV9t-MzJ9EM39DbSpam9l8/edit?usp=sharing