

American Social Welfare Policy: A Pluralist Approach

Chapter 8

The Making of Governmental Policy

Technical Aspects of the Policy Process

- Public policy in the United States is made through a deliberative process
 - Involves the two bodies of elected officials that make up a legislature
- There are several critical junctures in a proposal's passage into legislation
- The federal budget process

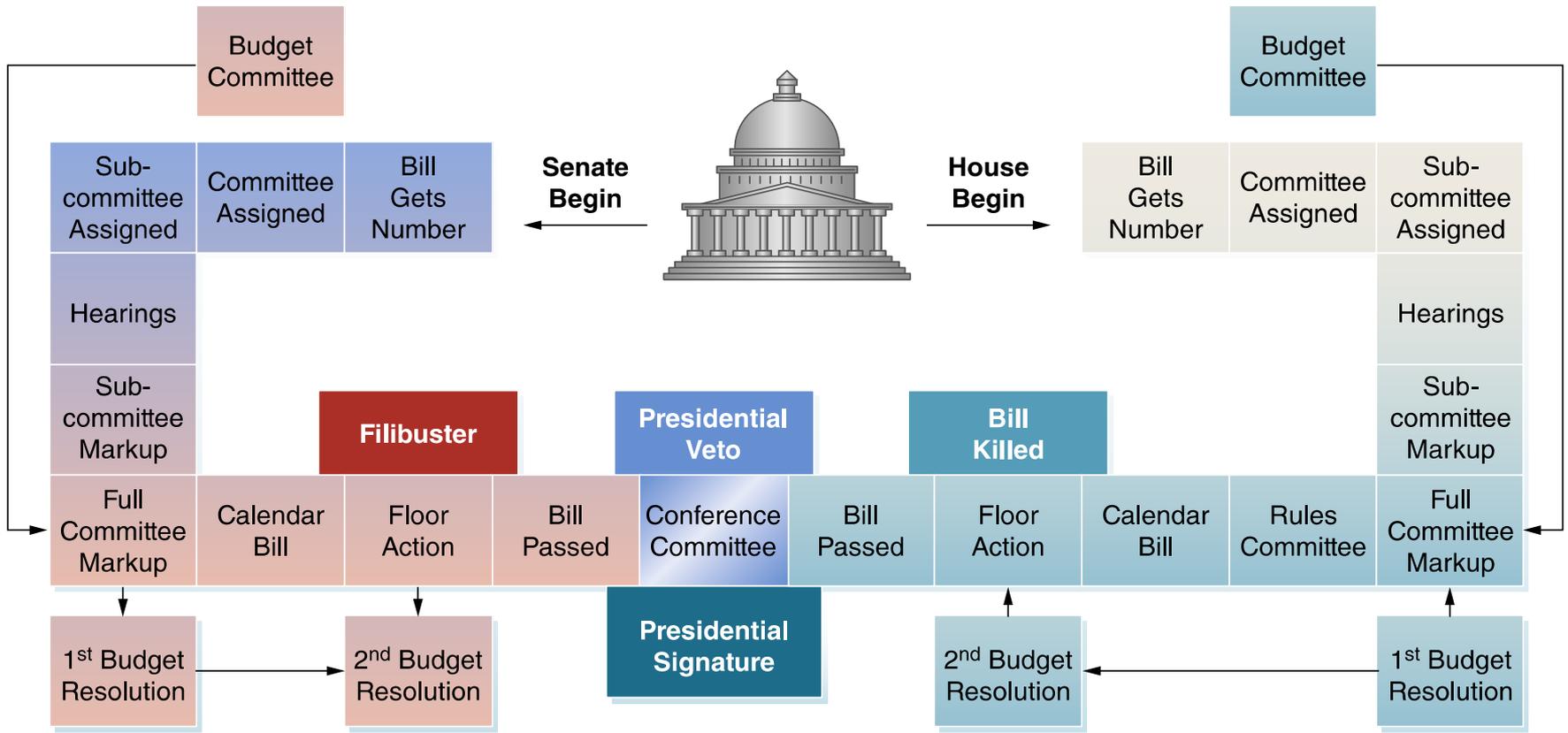


FIGURE 8.1 The Steps Necessary to Get a Policy Proposal Enacted into Law

A Critical Analysis of the Policy Process

- The public policy process often proves frustrating for social activists
- The policy process consists of a series of discrete decisions
- Institutional conception of social welfare
- Residual conception of social welfare
- Bureaucratic & market rationality

The Policy Process

- Social Stratification
 - Differentiate groups with influence from those lacking
- Formulation
 - Institutions have begun to specialize in providing the social intelligence

The Policy Process

- Legislation
 - Much public policy work is conducted by federal legislators
 - Lobbying and campaign contributions
 - Social advocacy groups usually rely on volunteer lobbyists

The Policy Process

- Implementation
 - The fact that a policy has been enacted does not necessarily mean it will be implemented
- Evaluation
 - Spawned a veritable industry in program evaluation

The Policy Process

- Marginalization
 - The governmental policy process poses problems for administrators and practitioners

TABLE 8.1 Social Stratification of the Population

Name of Group	Examples	Characteristics
The wealthy	Upper elites, the independently wealthy, large stockholders	Ownership of resources is the main source of power; control over goals is very high, but control over means is through executives.
Executives	Top administrators in business, government, the military	Organizational solidarity facilitates effective policy implementation; some control over goals and a high degree of control over means.
Professionals	Middle-level managers, technical experts, private practitioners, community leaders	Environment encourages limited solidarity; control over means is high, and goal setting can be influenced if collective action is undertaken.
Organized workers	Semiskilled workers, civic and political clubs, social action organizations	Environment encourages solidarity; groups have some control over the means by which goals are realized.
Working/welfare poor	Temporary and part-time workers earning minimum wage and who use welfare as a wage supplement	A subjugated position with no control over the environment; frustration is shared and irrational, explosive behavior results.
Underclass	Unemployables and illiterates; disabled substance abusers; itinerants, drifters, migrant workers	A subjugated position with no control over the environment; a sense of failure coupled with limited mobility reduces social interaction and leads to retreatism.

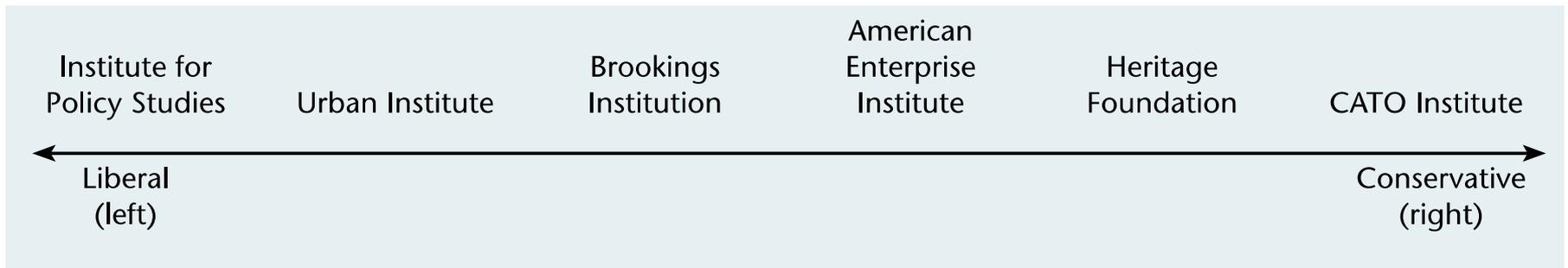


FIGURE 8.2 Place on the Ideological Continuum of Six Policy Institutes

TABLE 8.2 Top Spenders, 1998–2012

U.S. Chamber of Commerce	\$901,195,680
General Electric	\$278,470,000
American Medical Assn	\$277,757,500
American Hospital Assn	\$229,264,136
Pharmaceutical Rsrch & Mfrs of America	\$228,433,920
AARP	\$220,332,064
National Assn of Realtors	\$204,335,133
Blue Cross/Blue Shield	\$196,908,552
Northrop Grumman	\$184,925,253
Exxon Mobil	\$179,292,742
Edison Electric Institute	\$169,526,789
Verizon Communications	\$168,877,933
Boeing Co	\$167,959,310
Business Roundtable	\$166,920,000
Lockheed Martin	\$161,930,008
AT&T Inc	\$149,019,336
Southern Co	\$141,200,694
National Cable & Telecommunications Assn	\$136,500,000
General Motors	\$133,054,170
National Assn of Broadcasters	\$129,600,000

TABLE 8.3 Top 10 Lobbying Firms, 1998–2012

Firm	Total
Patton Boggs LLP	\$474,947,000
Akin, Gump et al	\$384,095,000
Cassidy & Assoc	\$356,922,100
Van Scoyoc Assoc	\$302,228,000
Williams & Jensen	\$217,704,000
Ernst & Young	\$185,126,737
Holland & Knight	\$171,414,544
Quinn Gillespie & Assoc	\$159,548,500
Hogan & Hartson	\$154,633,907
Brownstein, Hyatt et al	\$148,480,000

Source: U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, "Top 10 Lobbying Firms, 1998–2012," <http://www.house.gov/oversight/committees/ogfr/ogfr-top10-lobbying-firms-1998-2012>.

TABLE 8.4 Top 20 Political Action Committee (PAC) Contributors to Federal Candidates, 2011–2012

PAC Name	Total Amount	Dem Pct	Repub Pct
National Assn of Realtors	\$2,886,331	45%	54%
National Beer Wholesalers Assn	\$2,721,000	41%	59%
Honeywell International	\$2,671,659	39%	61%
Operating Engineers Union	\$2,486,110	81%	19%
Intl Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	\$2,298,850	97%	3%
American Assn for Justice	\$2,264,000	96%	3%
AT&T Inc	\$2,235,050	34%	65%
American Bankers Assn	\$2,217,950	20%	80%
Plumbers/Pipefitters Union	\$2,007,000	94%	6%
Northrop Grumman	\$1,984,400	40%	60%
American Fedn of St/Cnty/Munic Employees	\$1,974,725	99%	0%
Every Republican is Crucial PAC	\$1,971,000	0%	100%
Lockheed Martin	\$1,950,500	40%	60%
National Auto Dealers Assn	\$1,894,000	28%	72%
Credit Union National Assn	\$1,859,650	49%	51%
American Crystal Sugar	\$1,776,000	57%	42%
International Assn of Fire Fighters	\$1,748,100	85%	15%
New York Life Insurance	\$1,736,750	45%	55%
Boeing Co	\$1,700,000	40%	60%
Machinists/Aerospace Workers Union	\$1,688,500	97%	2%

TABLE 8.5 Top Contributors to 527 Committees, 2012 Election Cycle

Committee	Receipts (\$ millions)	Expenditures (\$ millions)
ActBlue	11.6	10.2
College Republicans	9.2	9.7
National Com. Citizens United	8.1	7.9
EMILY's List	7.7	6.1
SEIU	6.1	7.4
Plumbers/Pipefitters Union	4.7	3.9
Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund	3.8	3.9
GOPAC	3.3	3.3
New Conservative Coalition	3.0	2.7
Intl. Brotherhood Elec. Workers	2.8	3.2

TABLE 8.6 Top 10 Super PACs

Group	Expenditures (\$ millions)	Ideology
Restore Our Future	142.6	Conservative
American Crossroads	99.6	Conservative
Priorities USA Action	67.5	Liberal
Majority PAC	37.4	Liberal
House Majority PAC	30.7	Liberal
Freedomworks for America	19.1	Conservative
Winning Our Future	17.0	Conservative
Club for Growth Action	16.6	Conservative
Service Employees International Union	14.9	Liberal
Ending Spending Fund	13.0	Conservative

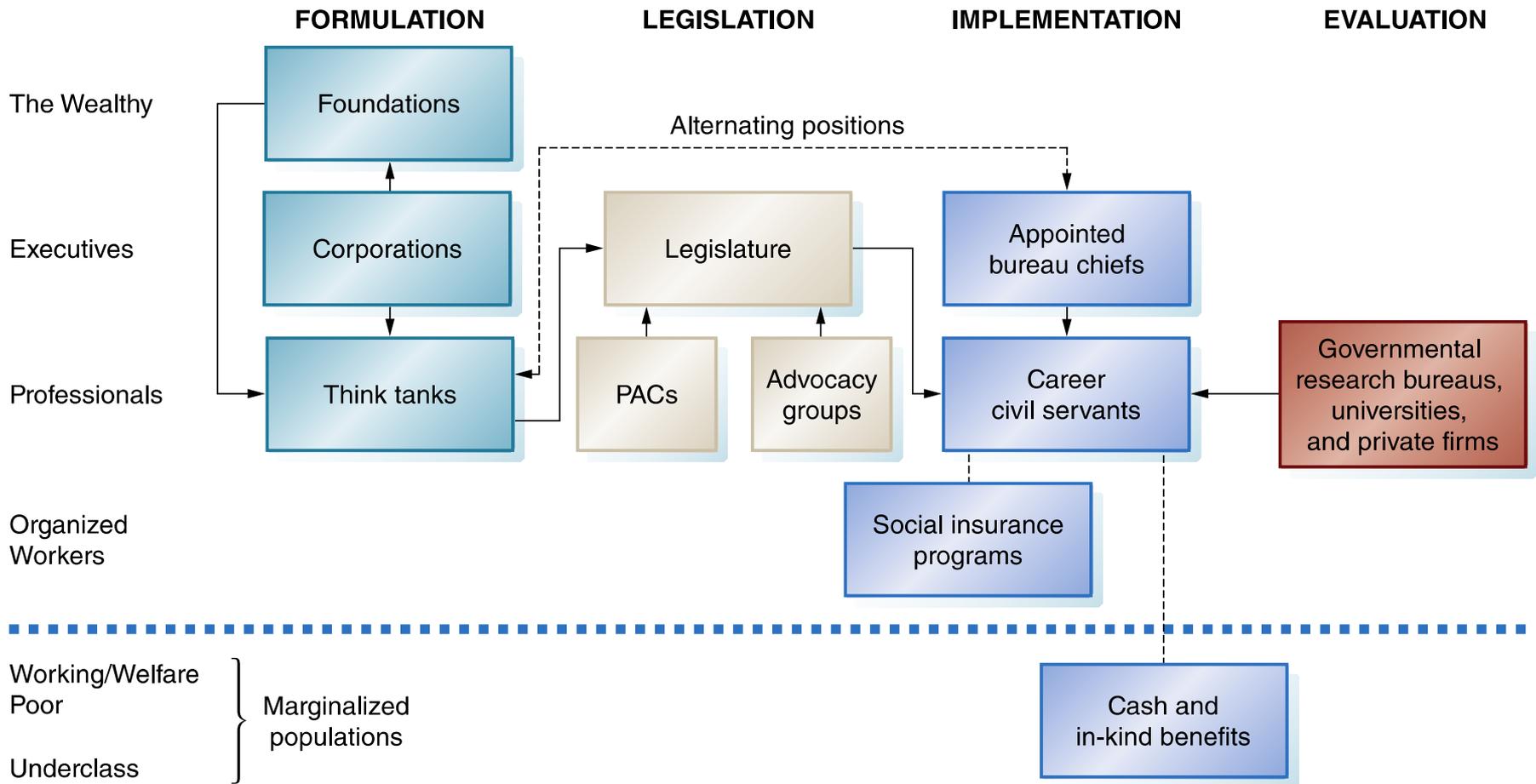


FIGURE 8.3 Stratification and the Public Policy Process

Primary Values and Voting Clusters

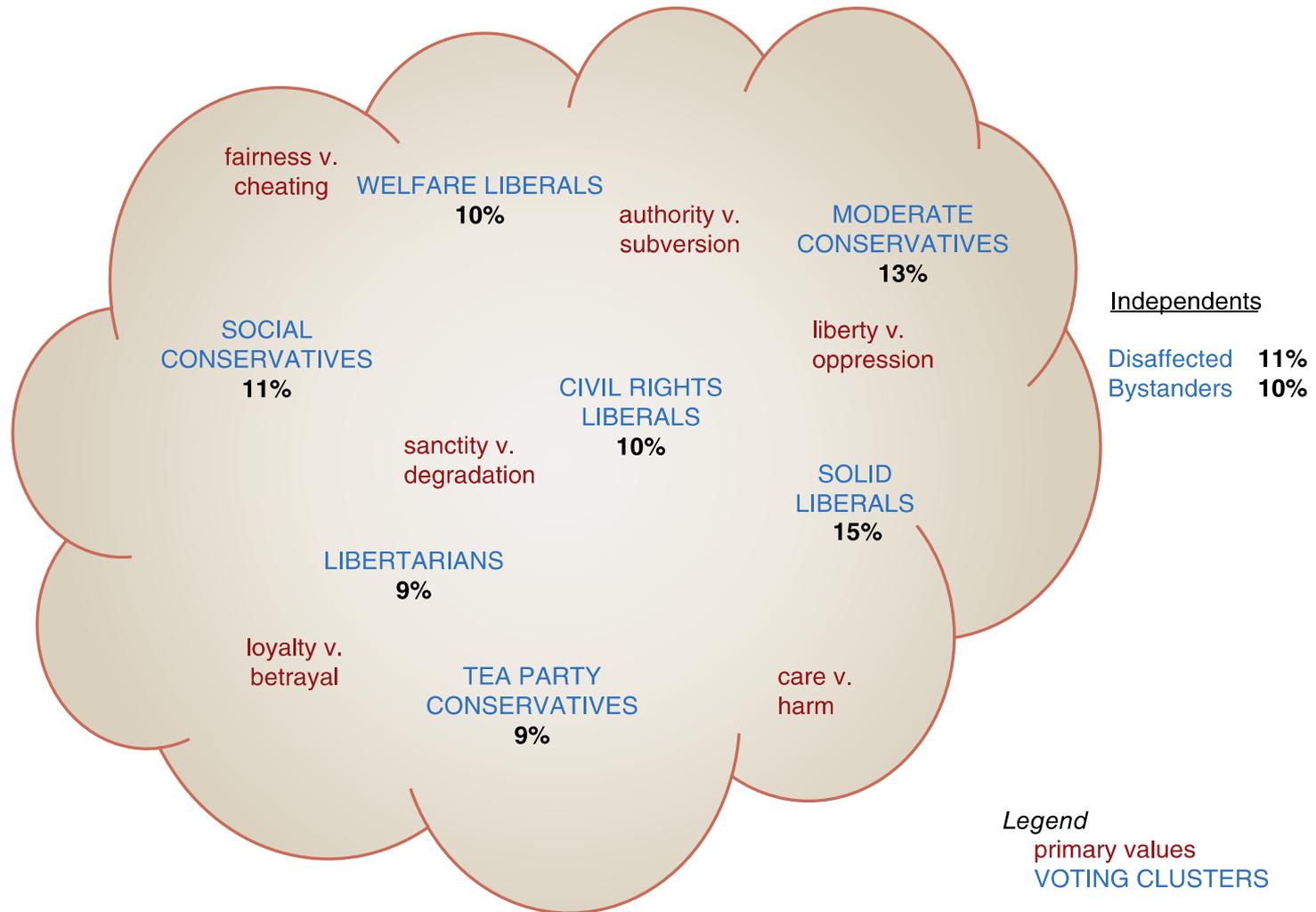


FIGURE 8.4 Primary Values and voting clusters

Social Work and Advocacy Organizations

- Indicators of good social policy
- The rebuilding of a role for social workers in social policy
- Advocacy Organizations and the New Policy Institutes
 - Children's Defense Fund

Social Work and Advocacy Organizations

- The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP)
- Economic Policy Institute (EPI)
- Institute for Women’s Policy Research (IWPR)
- New America Foundation
- Center for American Progress

Political Practice

- The capacity of social workers to reassert their role in social welfare policy
 - Willingness of individuals to consider public office as a setting for social work practice
- Social work elected officials
 - Most found their social work education instrumental in their public service

Conclusion

- Best indicator of social work's potential future influence on social policy:
 - The local level
- Social workers disinclined to engage in high-visibility activities
- The cultivation of practice skills in the political arena at the local level