

MS Thesis
Department of Environmental Science and Policy
College of Science
George Mason University

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Defense Date and Time: October 30, 2024 at 10:30am

Defense Location: David King Hall, Room 3006

Title: The Influence of Political Action Committee Contributions and Public Demand on U.S. Congressional Roll-Call Votes for a Pro-Environmental Policy

Thesis Director: Dr. Younsung Kim

Committee: Dr. Robert McGrath and Dr. V. Al Sample

ABSTRACT

Previous studies have underscored the substantial impact of Political Action Committee (PAC) contributions on congressional policymaking, yet it remains unclear how political contributions might affect Senate voting behavior regarding environmental policies. To address this gap, this study collected data on PAC donations, public sentiment, and Senate votes on a selected pro-environmental bill. The results reveal a declining trend in PAC contributions over the past decade. Additionally, no correlation was found between PAC contributions and Senate votes, while issue salience showed a significant positive effect. This research sheds light on the complex interplay between political contributions, public interest, and legislative actions.