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The Paths and Consequences of Obtaining Legislative Allies: The Cases of the LGBT, Environmental and Labor Movements in Chile

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The Paths and Consequences of Obtaining Legislative Allies: The Cases of the LGBT,  
Environmental and Labor Movements in Chile

DISSERTATION

submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements  
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in Sociology

by

Rodolfo Antonio López Moreno

Dissertation Committee:  
Professor Edwin Amenta, Co-Chair  
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2019



## **DEDICATION**

To my mother, Ilse Moreno

and

My sister, Daniela.

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## **ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION**

The Paths and Consequences of Obtaining Legislative Allies: The Cases of the LGBT, Environmental and Labor Movements in Chile

By

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Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology

University of California, Irvine, 2019

Professors Edwin Amenta and David Snow, Co-Chairs

There is a widespread consensus in the literature about the positive effects of having allies in congress for the legislative consequences of social movements. However, social scientists know little about the dynamics associated to this kind of interaction. Scholars have attempted to unravel the nature and consequences of these alliances, but they remain a black box because of the use of theoretical proxies. A growing body of literature realizes the limitations of this approach and has started to advocate for a more focused and detailed analysis that pays attention to the interactions and perceptions of the activists and legislators involved in an alliance. I contribute to this area of inquiry by examining the interplay of activists and their allies in congress following a grounded approach, using the case of the Chilean environmental, LGBT and labor movements. By interviewing activists and their allies in congress, I could obtain detailed data on the perceptions, motivations, and extent of their interactions.

As part of this dissertation, I develop a nuanced theoretical understanding of the motivations and exchange patterns involved in the alliances activists forge with members of congress. Then, I analyze different strategies social movement organizations can adopt to establish that kind of tie with a legislator. Finally, I assess the consequences of having an ally in congress for the achievement of activists' demands. I find that an alliance between activists and legislators is a complex kind of social relation motivated by different rationales of action that shape the contours of their interaction, and that having these allies has a positive effect for the leverage of activists throughout the lawmaking process. These findings contribute to the theoretical and methodological analysis of the alliance between activists and legislators, opening a debate about how their interaction and cooperation brings about policy and social change.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND THEIR ALLIES IN CONGRESS**

“[About an equal marriage law] I don’t agree with it...I think we have a long way to go, but I also have the feeling that Chilean society is not ready to embrace this kind of proposal.”

Oswaldo Andrade, President of the Chilean Socialist Party<sup>1</sup>

“[the legislative debate on equal marriage] lacks seriousness and coherence...days ago I talked on the phone with Andrade and I proposed him to join a panel discussion to move the marriage reform forward extending it to homosexual couples and he agreed.”

Rolando Jimenez, President of the Movement of Homosexual Integration and Liberation (Movilh)<sup>1</sup>

The first quote above belongs to Oswaldo Andrade, then president of the Chilean Socialist Party, and marked a public rift between his party and the Chilean LGBT organizations. The newly elected head of the largest leftist part in the country declared in an interview with one of the most important national newspapers that he did not consider the passage of equal marriage as a priority. His strife with sexual minorities continued over the years, as in 2015 he introduced an amendment to the bill regulating civil unions which put obstacles for stepparents to gain the custody of their children. This amendment was initially approved and then repealed by congress and sparked an outraged reaction from LGBT leaders like Rolando Jimenez.

The distance and animosity between this important legislator and movement activists is counterintuitive based on the literature on the political consequences of social movements. Leftist parties are generally considered sympathetic to the demands of progressive social movements (Schlozman 2015, Kriesi 1995), making the Chilean Socialist

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<sup>1</sup> August 2, 2010. “Movilh pide seriedad a parlamentarios para tratar el tema de matrimonio homosexual”. La Tercera

Party and its president the natural supporters of LGBT policy goals. Moreover, the literature tends to assume that parties with programmatic and ideological affinities with social movements are not just supporters but also *allies*.

Research on the political consequences of social movements consistently mentions the presence of elite allies as a relevant condition for enhancing the effects of social movements on policy (e.g. Amenta, Carruthers and Zylan 1992; Amenta, Caren and Olasky 2005; Della Porta and Rucht 1995; McCammon, Campbell, Granberg and Mowery 2001). Moreover, authors like Tarrow (1989) consider the presence of political allies as the principal variable of political opportunity structure theory. However, the theorization about this concept remains elusive. As a starting point, there is not a consensus on what a legislative ally is, since scholars usually use the terms supporter and ally interchangeably. Also, it is still unclear how activists form a close bond with elected officials, or how can allies matter for the success of social movements. Scholars' awareness about this gap has increased over time, along with the calls for a more detailed analysis (Zald 2000, Skrentny 2006; Vasi, Strang and Van de Rijt 2014; Wouters and Walgrave 2017) on areas such as what can social movements do to achieve proximity with a legislator, and what are the consequences of having those powerful institutional allies.

This project aims to fill this gap by answering three related questions about the relation between activists and their allied legislators using the cases of the LGBT, environmental, and labor movements in Chile: what are the motivations and dynamics orienting their interaction? What can social movements do to build an alliance with a legislator? and what are the consequences for social movements' policy goals to have an



ally in congress? In doing so, I extend the sociological analysis of the interplay of activists and legislators by dialoguing with research from the field of legislative studies in political science, and also by including the perspectives of legislators, which is uncommon in the study of the political alliances between activists and legislators.

In this introductory chapter, I first provide an overview of the theory and research dealing with the emergence of legislative allies. Then, I introduce the cases used to explain the interplay of activists and legislators. Finally, I briefly outline the content of the substantive chapters to follow.

## **Legislative Allies and Social Movements**

The literature generally sees the alliance between activists and elite allies as involving a means-oriented cooperation (Kadivar 2013, Tarrow 2005, Van Dyke and McCammon 2010). Participants in an alliance share an overlapping interest on an issue which make them coordinate their actions and share mutual resources for the sake of a common goal. However, when it comes to the analysis focused on the alliance between activists and legislators, most research emphasizes their practical expressions and what they can do for the movement. For instance, according to political mediation arguments elite allies can amplify the influence of social movements (Soule and Olzak 2004, Soule and King 2006, Cress and Snow 2000) by sponsoring and/or voting in favor of legislation that reflects the movements' interests, protecting activists from state repression, or providing access to advanced stages of the lawmaking process. However, this account does not cover

fundamental dimensions, such as what brings these activists together and what are the terms of their coordination.

### *Defining Who Becomes a Legislative Ally*

The most common understanding in the literature considers that legislators holding ideological or biographical affinities should be considered social movement allies. Considering the tendency of this line of research to study progressive movements, legislators coming from left-leaning parties are usually considered the natural and immediate allies of most social movements. For example, in the U.S. the Democratic Party is invariably identified as an ally of the labor (Schlozman 2015), environmental (Johnson, Agnone and McCarthy 2010; Olzak, Soule, Coddou and Munoz 2016), or homeless movements (Cress and Snow 1996, 2000). Similarly, biographical factors such as the race (Steil and Vasi 2014) or the gender (Soule and Olzak 2004) of a legislator are supposed to contribute to the supportive stance of a legislator for gender or racially driven movements. This perspective does not look at the interplay of the participants of the alliance in detail and seems to assume an automatic support based on shared attributes.

The use of partisan proxies as a measure of alliances suffers from one major shortcoming. Research in political science consistently shows that political parties struggle to enforce discipline on their legislators. Political parties are not monolithic blocks but organized groups with internal ideological differences. Therefore, not all legislators from the same party will agree on the solution of a social problem or how to vote on the floor (McCarty 2001, Carey 2002). Moreover, the best strategy would be for activists to push for

the legislative discussion of their demands once activists gain control of congress. However, research shows social movements struggle to achieve all their demands even in the presence of sympathetic political agents (Amenta 2006).

### *Mechanisms Explaining the Proximity of Social Movements and Legislators*

Other scholars have focused more directly on the alliances between activists and legislators, examining the effect of individual variables at explaining how they establish close and direct interactions. These analyses make a stronger case for considering the needs and interests of legislators, and ultimately show that the capacity of social movement organizations to provide relevant resources is crucial in the alliance formation process. Research shows there are two pathways that seem conducive to building an alliance.

The first pathway conducive to an alliance is the capacity of social movements to alter politicians' electoral calculations, expressed in two possible tactics. In one of them challengers willingly forgo their autonomy to gain an insider status in the political system. Examples of this kind of alliance are the inroads of the Tea Party into the Republican Party (Skocpol and Williamson 2016), the labor movement's incorporation into the Democratic Party (Schlozman 2015), or the Nuclear Disarmament Movement into the Labour Party in the UK (Maguire 1995), where organizations from these movements sacrificed their autonomy to be absorbed by partisan structures. The other alternative considers electioneering. According to Amenta et al (1992, 2005) and Vasi et al (2014), movement actors publicly endorse candidates and work for their campaigns and once elected, they monitor how their endorsed candidates vote and decide whether to keep supporting them.

The second pathway addresses the capacity of social movement organizations to provide members of congress inputs they use for their legislative work. Social movement organizations gain political influence by serving as stable partners of legislators, which entails delivering information and that assist their legislative tasks (Andrews and Edwards 2004, Burstein and Hirsch 2007). While this tactic has not been directly linked to the emerge of a tie between activists and legislators, it is conducive to the coordination of actions the literature identifies as constitutive of an alliance between these actors, such as drafting legislation together or accessing committee discussions (Staggenborg 1988, Baumgartner and Leech 1998).

Regardless of these insights, the influence of different tactics on the alliance formation process still needs further research. Social movement organizations rarely deploy tactics in isolation, and usually engage in multiple repertoires of action. Also, the way legislators perceive these repertoires is usually absent from the analysis (for exceptions see Skrentny 2006, Ingram et al 2007, and Wouters and Walgrave 2017), and members of congress may positively evaluate multiple repertoires instead of specific tactics.

### *Policy Consequences of Having a Legislative Ally*

As institutional actors, movement allies in congress are supposed to help activists' goals by providing insider support. These allies shape legislative outcomes by signaling policy issues to public opinion, and convincing other members of congress to vote in favor of a bill or amendment (Meyer 2004, Amenta et al. 2010). Thus, allied members of congress

can become pivotal at building the majorities necessary to pass the demands or goals of a social movement.

However, the effect of having legislative allies shows inconclusive evidence (Soule et al 2016). Research using the partisan or biographical approach has found that allies have no effect on facilitating the approval of social movement demands (Soule and Olzak 2004, Olzak and Uhrigh 2001, Burrell 1995), while other scholars have found the opposite (Cress and Snow 2000, Agnone 2007). I argue in this research that these mixed results obey to two main reasons.

First, researchers conflate the actions of a diverse collective of legislators when they consider an entire party as a social movement ally. As the previous section mentioned, political parties are not homogenous, and it is possible to find within them factions for an against a policy. Therefore, using a proxy variable can overshadow the impact of specific allied legislators. Second, most research uses laws to evaluate the effect of social movement allies on legislation, which is a high bar considering that most bills introduced to congress barely move beyond the initial committee discussions. Therefore, the study of the consequences of having legislative allies should operationalize these actors more precisely and expand the range of assistance they can provide beyond the approval of a law they introduce.

### **Case Selection: the LGBT, Labor and Environmental Movements in Chile**

This research analyzes the emergence, dynamics and consequences of the alliances between activists and members of congress using the cases of the Chilean LGBT, labor and environmental movements. These three cases emerged in different historical movements, granting them different resources and access to the political system. Moreover, since most research on the consequences of social movements takes place in the United States, it is sociologically relevant to expand research and theory testing in other polities (Uba 2009, Wouters and Walgrave 2017).

The labor movement emerged in the early twentieth century and has been an active social and political actor ever since. It was directly involved in the foundation of the Chilean Communist Party, and was a key player in the political platform of Chilean parties throughout most of the century (Ulloa 2003). In fact, political parties have had a constant presence in the leadership of the main national unions until the present (Drake 2003). Although most labor activism and organization were banned during Pinochet's dictatorship, the labor movement reemerged and had an important role in the social protests advocating for a democratic transition. Once democracy was restored, the main national unions recovered part of their grasp as major social players.

Contrary to the labor movement, the environmental and LGBT movements emerged much later in history and did not develop partisan connections to the same degree. The organizations that enabled the emergence of the environmental movement have their origins in the later times of the dictatorship, and that juncture favored the creation of interpersonal linkages between activists and future party leaders and government officials. However, those connections were not equally distributed across the organizations and the

environmental movement did not develop partisan connections to the same extent as the labor movement. The LGBT movement emerged in the 1990s but was not gain relevance by the political establishment until the late 2000s (Contardo 2011). Therefore, it was historically much more isolated from partisan, governmental and congressional instances than the other two movements.

In terms of resources, the labor movement seems the strongest of the three. Although the unionization rates in Chile have sharply decreased compared to the 1970s, the main unions in Chile (CUT, ANEF, UNT, etc.) still have hundreds of thousands of affiliated members. Along with that massive membership, they have a somewhat stable funding situation based on the contributions of its unionized members, which enables them to create complex bureaucratic structures that should favor their interaction with state institutions. On the contrary, the environmental and LGBT movements lack the massive numbers in terms of membership in the organizations, and their funding situation is quite precarious. Most environmental and LGBT organizations depend on international sources for their basic activities, and international donors have increasingly restrained from channeling resources to Chile because of its economic development, and even more since the country joined the OECD in 2010. That financial instability hampers LGBT and environmental organizations' chances to maintain organizational structures in the long term, shrinks the size of its staff, and consumes valuable time in conducting fundraising activities.

Under this scenario, the labor movement seems to be in an advantageous position to gain salience before legislators and eventually build alliances with them. Compared to the

LGBT and environmental movements, national unions have partisan networks and organizational resources that facilitate their interaction with legislators. However, as the next chapters show, activists from these two smaller movements managed to establish closer and more enduring ties with legislators compared to labor movement leaders.

## **Data Collection**

This research collected data from two different sources. The first involved conducting semi-structured interviews on social movement activists and legislators. The sample criteria for the organizations included depended on their degree of bureaucratization, understood as having an office, staff members, and policy or legislative goals (Staggenborg 1988). Due to previous research on social movements in Chile and the author's knowledge of Chilean society, the final sample comprises 11 environmental, 10 LGBT and 8 labor organizations. From those organizations, I interviewed 66 respondents: 35 from the labor movement (the oldest and largest one in Chile), 16 from the LGBT movement and 15 from the environmental movement. This organization granted anonymity to all respondents.

After concluding the first round of interviews with activists, I conducted 12 interviews with legislators identified by activists as their allies. Three of the respondents are legislators and the other nine are deputies, which combined represent an 8% of all the members of the Chilean Congress. It is important to mention that three of these members of congress were identified as allies by more than one social movement. In those cases, I



asked these legislators about their interactions with each social movement in separate sets of questions.

The second source consisted on doing archival research on four bills activists considered relevant or salient for their social movements in the last ten years (2006-2016). The bills selected are the antidiscrimination (Law 20609), and civil unions (Law 20830) laws for the LGBT movement, the reform to the Chilean Labor Code (Law 20940) for the labor movement, and the reform of the water code (bill 7543-12) for the environmental movement. The information for these bills is available in the institutional website of the Chilean Chamber of Deputies.

## **Dissertation Overview**

This dissertation is laid out in the following way. In Chapter Two, I analyze the motivations and exchange dynamics between activists and their allies in congress. Data come from interviews with leaders from the most relevant LGBT, environmental, and labor organizations in Chile, along with a sample of their allied members of congress. Findings indicate that activists identify two kinds of allies, based on the frequency of their interactions and perceived commitment. These variations nuance the pervasive instrumental motivations guiding the actors' interaction and exchange patterns, complementing them with affective and moral considerations.

In Chapter Three, I study the mechanisms conducive to an alliance between activists and legislators, arguing that a necessary condition in the alliance-formation process is

gaining political acceptance. Social movements obtain this status by building organizational capacities and an empowered leadership. Using qualitative comparative analysis (QCA), findings indicate that the perception of legislators about challengers mediates the kind and effectiveness of repertoires necessary to gain acceptance. Therefore, there are movement-based pathways conducive to the emergence of alliances between activists and legislators.

In Chapter Four, I study the consequences of having social movement allies in congress, focusing on approval of amendments they cosponsor in legislative committees. I used logistic regressions with random effects on a sample of 2,053 amendments presented the four pieces of legislation considered salient by activists. This research finds that the amendments introduced by allied legislators are likely to pass the committee voting and become part of a bill regardless of the stage of the analysis and the chamber where the discussion takes place. Therefore, social movement allies indirectly amplify the influence of activists in advanced stages of the lawmaking process.

Chapter 5 concludes this dissertation with a summary of its main findings, implications, and suggestions for future research.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **DEFINING AN ALLIANCE BETWEEN ACTIVISTS AND LEGISLATORS**

#### **Introduction**

Although a relevant part of political opportunity structure theory (Meyer 2004, McAdam 1996), the study of the alliances between activists and legislators remains largely understudied (Skrentny 2006, Vasi et al 2014). Because of the lack of a theoretical framework to analyze the alliance between activists and legislators, is not a clear account of the motivations guiding their interaction, or what sort of exchange patterns sustain their relation over time.

This lacuna is surprising considering that the cooperation between both actors is not immediately apparent. An alliance between two or more actors entails sharing resources and coordinating actions for the sake of a common goal (Kadivar 2013, Van Dyke and McCammon 2010). However, legislators ponder different considerations before deciding to cooperate with another social and political actor, and activists are in a peripheral position. Challengers can demand a clear policy goal, but elected officials usually focus their attention to their close circle of constituents (Andre et al 2014), considering at the same time the salience of their ideological interests, the goals of their party, and the advancement of their careers.

As a social relation involving an elected official, the study of clientelism can provide some insights to the study of the alliances between activists and legislators. Traditional views in this field see the interaction between these actors as a rational and instrumental relation exchanging votes for goods in election periods (Hicken 2011). Recent

theorizations, however, argue that frequent and sustained interactions give way to more nuanced rationales, such as the emergence of emotional bonds between the participants (Auyero and Benzecry 2017). Taking this as a reference, the constant interactions between activists and legislators may lead to a social relation combining instrumental and affective motives, which shape the terms of their exchange, expectations of cooperation, and length of their bond.

This article attempts to fill this gap by analyzing the interactions of activists and their allies in congress, focusing on their motivations and exchange patterns. The main argument is that the motivations and terms of exchange between these actors presents variations according to the length and commitment of legislators, who as the most resourceful actor in the dyad has leverage over its dynamics. Therefore, the alliance between activists and legislators is not a monolithic concept but a layered social interaction with internal variations and nuances. To examine this theorization, this article uses the cases of the labor, environmental, and LGBT activists in Chile.

## **Two Theses on the Interests and Exchange Dynamics of Establishing an Alliance**

What are the dynamics activists and legislators establish in the context of an alliance? Although relevant for understanding the interaction of social movements and legislators, research has remained silent about this issue (Skrentny 2006, Vasi et al 2014). Drawing on research in sociology and political science, I derive two approaches to

understand the interaction between activists and legislators: the instrumental and the moral/affective theses.

### *The Instrumental Thesis*

This thesis sees the interaction of activists and legislators as instrumentally motivated, where both actors establish an alliance based on the potential benefits of their association. Research usually observes the actions of challengers as following an instrumental motivation when they pursue social and political changes (Klandermans 1997, 2013). That is, challengers organize around a specific goal that elected-authorities have the prerogative to concede, circumscribing their mobilization and efforts to contact authorities to the achievement of a core policy demand.

Although ideological motives also orient the action of activists and legislators and is argued to be conducive to the emergence of alliances (Cress and Snow 2000, Kriesi 1995), more focused research on their interaction emphasizes the instrumental and transactional considerations. Social movements strategically use different tactics and resources to attract the attention of lawmakers. For instance, organizations engaged in lobbying provide inputs that contribute to the legislative work of members of congress (Clemens 1995, 1997), and those electioneering render votes or social legitimacy to politicians pursuing a seat in congress (Goldstone 2004, Amenta 2006, McVeigh et al 2004). Activists provide these resources inasmuch the targets of their support deliver or at least attempt to achieve their demanded goals. Therefore, the interaction between both actors lasts the time it takes for activists to persuade policymakers and achieve their goals or exhaust their resources.

Parallely, legislators are also described as strategic actors with two main sets of interests orienting their action. One is securing their seats in consecutive elections (O'Brien and Shomer 2012), while the other is ideologically shaping the content of legislation (Fenno 1973, Mayhew 1974). While assessing these considerations, members of congress are also attentive to the opinions and directions of their party, since it can help advance or curtail their political future (Andre et al 2014). Thus, members of congress have incentives to instrumentally assist activists, since the resources social movement organizations provide can help them further their careers in congress. For instance, Vasi et al (2014) explain the legislative influence of Tea Party organizations in the US as an exchange between activists and candidates; grassroots groups electorally support certain Republican candidates expecting these politicians to support the movements' agenda once in congress.

### *The Moral/Affective Thesis*

This thesis argues that recurring interactions between activists and allied legislators decrease their distance and role divisions, moderating instrumental motivations and enabling the irruption of moral and affective motives. This thesis does not contest the strategic nature of an alliance. Social movements have policy goals to accomplish, and legislators seats in congress to keep. However, the acquaintanceship and trust bond activists and legislators forge over time morphs and adds complexity to the utilitarian origin of their contacts.

Multiple theoretical approaches support the claim that repeated contacts transform the initial dynamics of a social relation or interaction. To social network theory, the

redundancy and proximity of contacts favors the emergence of multiplex relations, which happens when individuals are linked by more than one kind of relation in a network (Ferriani, Fonti and Corrado 2013; Kuwabara, Luo and Sheldon 2010). For example, the close interaction of colleagues may lead to a friendship outside of the workplace. From a social exchange perspective, repeated exchanges and interactions reinforce solidarity, trust, and cohesion (Lawler 2001; Molm, Collett and Schaefer 2007). Thus, continued contacts have the potential to trigger affective dispositions among the participants (Kollock 1994), which objectivate their interaction (Berger and Luckmann 1991 (1966)) and facilitate stable and cohesive relations (Lawler et al 2000).

Recent theorizations from a cultural approach also reflect the impact of recurring contacts at layering the interaction between elected officials and constituents. Auyero and Benzecry (2017) examine clientelism as an everyday phenomenon embedded in the routines of individuals, where the actors involved interact beyond the traditional transactional approach limited to election periods. Over time, clients regularly interacting with their patrons develop cognitive and affective dispositions guiding their interactions, such as declared commitments, loyalties, and emotions.

Therefore, the recurring interaction of activists and legislators in the context of an alliance has the potential of instilling expressive motives in the participants, lessening the utilitarian motivations that originally justified their contacts. This change in the motivations has consequences in the content of their interactions and reciprocity expectations, diversifying the sort of behaviors and rationalities associated with an alliance between activists and legislators.

## **Exchange dynamics**

Activists and their allies in Congress bring different resources into their interactions, but the literature has mostly omitted analyzing their exchange dynamics. For instance, research assuming the alliance between social movements and members of congress based on ideological affinities tends to overlook this aspect (Cress and Snow 2000, Soule and Olzak 2004). There are two main exchange patterns in the literature, one stressing spaced reciprocity and other suggesting a more continuous interaction between the participants.

The first usually takes place in studies analyzing the effects of electioneering on alliance formation. Activists endorse a candidate who, in return, promotes the movement's agenda in Congress or votes in favor of a movement's demand at some point during their term (Amenta 2006, Vasi et al. 2014, Schlozman 2015). The second considers social movements simultaneously as challengers and interest groups (Baumgartner and Leech 1998, Burstein and Linton 2002, Andrews and Edwards 2004). Here, social movement organizations work as long-term purveyors of information to members of congress, who continuously use these inputs in their legislative work (e.g. drafting bills, justifying policy standings, etc.).

These two exchange dynamics have some important similarities. Activists and legislators have a general understanding of their terms of exchange, although there is uncertainty about the timing and content of their transactions. For instance, activists can endorse or lobby a legislator who only ended up voting in favor of their agenda but never introduced a bill reflecting the movement needs. The asymmetries in the positionality of



both actors, along with the complexity of the lawmaking process, limit the capacity of social movements to demand specific actions as retribution for their support.

This section proposes that we need to evaluate the exchange patterns between legislators and activists as a direct reciprocal exchange forms (Molm, Peterson and Takahasi 1999; Molm 2003; Molm et al. 2007). Direct reciprocal exchange assumes that reciprocity grows over time as a series of contingent and individual acts. Participant actors assist or advice each other although there are not explicit negotiations establishing whether, when or to what degree there will be mutual exchanges. Thus, one actor can start exchanges that are not immediately reciprocated by the other party with the same quantity or frequency. However, the party acting as the main receiver eventually reciprocates in ways that fulfil the expectations of the sender. Consecutive exchanges build trust between the actors, understood as the notion that one of them will not take advantage of the other (e.g. not reciprocate), and those notions of trustworthiness allow sustaining interactions over time and extend the forms of cooperation. With higher risks of exploitation, notions of trustworthiness and predictability between the participant actors increase if the structurally powerful party reciprocates.

In contexts of unequal structural power, such as the one between legislators and activists, the risks of unfulfilled reciprocity are greater than in contexts of equal power as binding agreements are not possible. Nevertheless, the potentially morally-based motivations of legislators to assist the movement eases the pressures for clear terms of exchange with activists. For example, activists can support their allied member of congress during the discussion of a bill (e.g. lobbying) even when there is not an immediate or

tangible retribution and their ally's effort may be fruitless. Thus, activists contribute to the extent necessary to sustain the efforts of the ally in Congress. Regardless of the uneven exchange, the tokens of retribution in the long term cement a sense of trust between the actors that facilitate their coordination in the future.

Given the lack of explicit terms of exchange, there is also space for innovation in their transactions. As the moral/affective thesis argues, ties can evolve thanks to the frequency of interactions between two actors. As the nature of their relation becomes more complex, activists and legislators may change their expectations about what they accept as compensation for assisting the other.

### **The Continuous Activism of Chilean Social Movements**

Since the goal of this article is to unravel the dynamics activists establish with legislators as part of their alliance formation process, it is important to focus on social movements active over an extended timespan. Although most research considers the interplay of activists and legislators over specific campaigns or episodes of contention, challengers can remain active over several related projects and policy claims (Clemens 1997, Whittier 1997). Throughout the years, this continued activism increases the chances of activists to interact with members of congress and build a relationship.

This research analyzes the dynamics of the alliance between activists and legislators using the cases of the LGBT, environmental, and labor movements in Chile. These cases share two relevant attributes that ease the study of the close interactions they establish with people in congress. First, the organizational field in each movement shows stability

throughout the years. That is, most of the organizations remain active after several years of activity (some even after decades), and so does their leadership. These two factors ease building an organizational reputation in congress and the emergence of a personal level of acquaintanceship with legislators. Second, these organizations have been advocated and mobilized over several policy issues, which has given them experience over legislative affairs and how to contact elected officials.

The Chilean labor movement presents a combination of relatively strong unions and centralized national-level confederations that facilitate their coordination as a coalition. The most important of these overarching confederations is the Central Workers Union (CUT) active since 1953, while other two smaller confederations, CAT and UNT, emerged after splintering from CUT in 1995 and 2004, respectively. The existence of these confederations does not its constitutive unions to advocate for policies of their interest. For instance, the Association of State Employees (ANEF), regularly addresses government officials and legislators for annual wage increases.

The leadership of these unions remains consistent throughout many years regardless of the periodic elections they hold to renew their boards. For instance, the head of ANEF was in that position for 20 years at the time of the interviews, and most of the leaders of the other unions have been reelected in internal positions of power ascending to the top. Thus, as these union leaders continue their careers, they gradually assume more responsibilities that make them known to political authorities. At the policy level, these organizations have been active participants in the discussion of salient movement demands, such as the reduction of number of hours of the workday in 2001 (Law 19759),

the implementation of labor courts (Law 20022), or the more comprehensive reform to the Labor Code of 2016 (Law 20940).

The Chilean environmental movement also shows an important degree of organizational continuity. Although it lacks centralized interorganizational infrastructures, most non-territorial based organizations have been active since the 1990s, such as Terram, Chile Sustentable, or the Latin American Observatory of Environmental Conflicts. The heads of these organizations have also been long-term leaders of the movement, building a personal reputation as activists and policy experts before political authorities.

The participation of these organizations in legislative debates is broad, since they have specialized in a broad range of environmentally-related policy issues. These environmental groups developed organizational expertise on energy production, waste and water management, conservation, biodiversity, state regulations, and sustainability practices in diverse economic sectors (e.g. mining, agriculture, fishing). Therefore, they have advocated in congress for the creation of environmental agencies (Laws 19300 in 1994 and 20417 in 2010), electric distribution (Law 20936 in 2016) or the reform of the Chilean Water Code.

The Chilean LGBT movement presents a higher level of organizational change. It includes groups actively promoting rights for sexual minorities since the early 1990s, such as Movilh and Mums, and newer organizations such as Iguales and OTD. As it is the case for the other movements, the leadership of the LGBT organizations has been continuous over time and has assumed the role of social and political speakers of the movement. Although these organizations participated in several salient legislative discussions

(decriminalization of sodomy in 1999, antidiscrimination provisions in 2012, and civil unions in 2015), they focused mostly on shaping the perception of civil society (Contardo 2012). Once Chilean public opinion became more sympathetic to the movement in the mid 2000s, these organizations started a more intense political work with legislators.

## **Data and Methods**

The data come from semi-structured interviews conducted on social movement activists and legislators. The sample criteria for the organizations included depended on their degree of bureaucratization, understood as having an office, staff members, and policy or legislative goals (Staggenborg 1988). Due to previous research on social movements in Chile and the author's knowledge of Chilean society, the final sample comprises 11 environmental, 10 LGBT and 8 labor organizations. From those organizations, I interviewed 66 respondents: 35 from the labor movement (the oldest and largest one in Chile), 16 from the LGBT movement and 15 from the environmental movement. This organization granted anonymity to all respondents.

After concluding the first round of interviews with activists, I conducted 12 interviews with legislators identified by activists as their allies. Three of the respondents are legislators and the other nine are deputies, which combined represent an 8% of all the members of the Chilean Congress. It is important to mention that three of these members of congress were identified as allies by more than one social movement. In those cases, I asked these legislators about their interactions with each social movement in separate sets of questions.

The coding of the interviews considered three areas. The first one was to define what sorts of activities allies perform together and their frequency (e.g. discussing and drafting amendments). The second identified the motivations that made both actors become close to one another, and the third dealt with perceived reciprocity expectations about their interaction.

### **Mapping the Interactions and Alliances in Congress**

As a starting point, it is important to mention that after several years of experience advocating for different bills, activists can classify legislators into different categories according to the contents and limits of their interaction. These categories are not fixed and depend on the levels of trust and commitment activists perceive from legislators. Thus, the alliances between legislators and activists are one of the possible kinds of interactions within a broader context of possible possibilities.

Trust is the predictability of the legislator's behavior, understood as the congruence between their public statements, the conversations they have with activists, and their voting on the floor. Activists argue they can relate to legislators that publicly endorse the movement's agenda, and that have a strong record to prove it. Commitment are the actions legislators carry out for the movement, but there is no fixed standard to evaluate it. Activists are aware of the institutional and contextual limitations legislators face, such legal attributions or partisan pressures. However, activists value a legislator that helps them to the maximum extent their capabilities given the circumstances. Table 1 summarizes the

possible range of relations between these actors, based on how activists perceived the legislators' support for their cause across the LGBT, labor and environmental movements.

Table 1.1. Categories of legislators by Trust and Commitment Levels.

		Commitment Intensity		
		Low	Medium	High
Trust Level	High	Sympathizer	Sympathizer / Circumstantial Ally	Ally
	Medium	Neutral	Sympathizer	Sympathizer / Circumstantial Ally
	Low	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral / Circumstantial Ally
Kind of Legislator		Defining Feature	Practical Expression	
Long-term Ally		Strong and constant support on several policy issues	Votes in favor of a bill; canvasses votes among peers; facilitates participation of activists in committee meetings; presents amendments; joint press conferences, etc.	
Circumstantial Ally		Strong support on one issue		
Sympathizer		Support's the movement's claims	Primarily votes in favor of a bill.	
Neutral		Ambivalent in their support to a social movement's demand	Could vote in favor or against a bill of interest for the movement	
Opponent		Ideologically opposed to the movement's demands	Votes against bills that align with the movement's interests.	

The most salient point of this categorization is the presence of two kinds of allies. Long-term allies display a continuous support for a social movement over several policy discussions. Circumstantial allies are legislators who become supporters of the movement by transiting from the sympathizer, neutral, or even opponent categories on one policy debate. There are three factors explaining this increased level of interaction: social changes, contextual crises, and the salience the issue has for a constituency or district.

Social changes refer to variations in how society perceives a topic, usually measured by public opinion polls. The case of the LGBT movement is particularly illustrative, as most of its members declared how their political networks expanded after national surveys

reported an increasing social support for recognizing rights to sexual minorities. Similarly, when a district goes through crises or conflictive situations, legislators tend to modify the standing they may have on an issue under regular circumstances (oppositional, neutral or sympathetic) and back a social movement claim if it aligns with the crisis' resolution. This tends to be the case for the environmental and labor movements, whose claims can be more easily linked to a territory or a defined productive sector. These external conditions can play a decisive role at defining the availability of legislators and their capacity to support the movement, reaffirming the notion that the categories of legislators are not discrete but fluid within range of possibilities.

Both kinds of allied legislators can provide the level of assistance identified as constitutive of a close interaction, such as discussing or presenting amendments, granting access to congressional spaces, or canvassing votes (Hall and Deardorff 2006). However, an important distinction emerges from the frequency of their contacts. Long-term allies have interacted with activists over several policy discussions, which facilitates the coordination of their efforts in the long term by developing a mutual understanding and trust over their action in congress. The interest of circumstantial allies to work with activists only over specific policies hinders sustained interactions over time, limiting the frequency of their interactions and the creation of a lasting bond.

### **The Bases and Dynamics of the Alliances: Motivations, Exchange, and Roles**



Analyzing the interplay of activists and their allies in Congress must consider their different positions within the polity's power structure, and their dissimilar attributions, mandates, and incentives. Legislators have been electorally chosen to represent a specific constituency and have the power to discuss and define policies addressing social problems. Located at the center of the state, they have the pressure to secure their reelection or at least to perpetuate the power of their party within the electorate. Activists, on the contrary, are organized forces of civil society located outside decision-making spaces, and seek to modify the status quo using institutional and extra-institutional strategies.

This section brings these factors into the analysis and delves into understudied dimensions of the alliances between activists and legislators, such as their motivations and reciprocity patterns. By comparing these dimensions to discussions about advocacy groups and social movement organizations in Congress, this section shows that the interplay of allied legislators and activists differs from most lobbying dynamics. Specifically, alliances appear as relations lacking precise terms of exchange, where activists are cautious of not compromising their autonomy before other legislators and society at large, while legislators seem morally motivated to cooperate with a social movement.

### ***Motivations for legislators***

The literature suggests legislators have instrumental motivations to support social movements. Members of congress decide to embrace the cause of a social movement to secure votes in future elections, either because the movement's demands align with the

needs of constituents (Goldstein 1999, Burstein and Linton 2002), or because these organizations engage in electioneering (Amenta 2006, Vasi et al 2014) or provide grassroots networks for politicians (Schlozman 2015). Theoretically these considerations should guide the actions of long-time and circumstantial allies. However, the accounts of social movement leaders and legislators report important differences in the motivations driving both kinds of legislative allies.

On the one hand, circumstantial allies become closer to social movement usually during the discussion of a bill, which limits the span of their interactions. The reasons driving their closeness are the contingent overlap of policy preferences (usually in the case of sympathizers), or the need to count with the legitimacy and networks of a social movement to deal with a district-level crisis or conflict. For instance, an environmental activist explains how they obtain circumstantial allies

“There are senators that are not acquainted with environmental issues or to us, but there are issues affecting their districts that increase their awareness, so they approach us. Some of them are legislators that may not commit to push a “green” policy because of capacity or time limitations. Then it’s like playing chess. It is a game where the actors involved change all the time.”  
Luciana, Environmental Activist

Other environmental activists also recall examples of how usually neutral or adversarial legislators turned into circumstantial allies during ecological crisis linked to the farming of salmons in the south of the country. During this juncture, activists had a broader network of supporters to denounce the malpractices of the salmon industries, and legislators could show their districts a reinforced disposition to find a solution to the crisis (Snow et al. 1998).

On the other hand, long-term allies seem more morally motivated to support a movement's cause. Allied members of congress frame their willingness to cooperate with a social movement as a personal commitment which is informed by biographical experiences. Professional and educational backgrounds incline some legislators to be more sensitive about a policy field, such as the allies of the environmental movement who usually hold bachelor or master's degrees in geography, agrarian sciences, or engineering. Other allied MCs pointed at their previous experience as an activist in one of the social movements (usually labor or environmental) or having a close family tie in making them more empathetic to the cause of the movement (e.g. having a gay sibling). The legislators' deep commitment or sensitivity with an issue facilitates the interaction with activists and the creation of a trust bond between them.

While activists declared they could not know the internal motivations informing their long-term allies' actions, their perception confirms this moral drive. Activists are aware that many of their demands are not popular or do not garner media attention over several years, and yet some legislators are willing to listen to them and present bills reflecting the movement's demands. As an alternative explanation, we could think of these legislators as being strategic in their support as it helps them build a profile as advocates of sexual minorities, labor rights, or environmental protection. However, that personal platform does not necessarily correspond with the traditional issues promoted by some of their parties. Also, as the case description states, no organization across all the three movements have the capacity to electioneer in favor of a member of congress. Thus, embracing these causes may not contribute to further the careers of these legislators.

One approximation to evaluate the assumed moral approach of these legislators is assessing the potential partisan and electoral costs they may face because of their support to a social movement. For example, a right-wing representative mentions this anecdote when asked about the consequences of her support to the LGBT movement:

Rodolfo: Have you ever paid any costs because of your support to sexual minorities?

Representative: I mean [laughs], they (constituents) have always threatened me that they will make me pay in the elections. At the beginning, I must recognize, I received more threats, such as people saying they are not voting for me, and I would get emails (about that), or that would appear on social media, and so on. Once someone cursed me! [laughs] he as a very evangelical person saying God was going to punish me and I don't know what else. I experience that, but each time is less. Recently I went to a popular market and a lady starts criticizing me for my moral values, and that many people who voted for me would not do that again. I told her I had no problem with that, that my decisions are not based on who is voting for me or not, but on convictions. I thanked her for voting for me in the last election but I also said she was free to vote for whoever she wants in the next election and that she could not be mad at me because I voted according to my conscience."

This quote is relevant considering that right-wing parties are the least likely supporters of the LGBT movement. Although the center-right government at the time openly supported some bills addressing historical claims of the LGBT movement (on antidiscriminatory provisions and civil unions), conservative politicians conform the largest part of the right-wing parties, which have a distant if not an adversarial standing about these issues. In fact, activists also recall a clear instance of partisan retaliation. A right-wing LGBT ally in the Senate could not remain as the chair of the committee that reviewed some of movements' demands because her fellow right-wing senators did not support her independence on those issues.

The public and active endorsement of LGBT demands by right-wing legislators could also damage their electoral prospects. Data show that conservative, less educated and poorer individuals in Chile are less likely to tolerate and support the recognition of rights for the LGBT community compared to the rest of the population (Toro et al 2016). Electorally, some of the allies of the LGBT movement (including the legislator in the quote) represent working and lower middle-class districts<sup>2</sup>, where constituents are ideologically less inclined to back this level of commitment. Moreover, none of the social movement organizations included in this analysis declared having the capacity or even attempting to electioneer in favor of a specific candidate or legislator. Therefore, some long-term allies are willing to risk partisan and electoral retaliations that could endanger their careers to support a social movement.

### ***Motivations for activists***

Opposed to legislators, activists seem driven by more instrumental reasons. The main rationale for activists to forge alliances with people in Congress comes from realizing the obstacles posed by their own organizational limitations and the institutional boundaries they face. On the one hand, social movement respondents are aware that sustaining traditional repertoires of action such as protesting is burdensome and unsustainable in the long-term. Even the most resourceful unions of the labor movement,

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<sup>2</sup> For instance, some of these legislators represents the communes of Renca and Cerro Navia, that have a comparatively lower level of development compared to the rest of the territories in Santiago according to the UN HDI of 2000.

which theoretically have the numbers and experience to organize protests, avoid calling them fearing low turnouts. On the other hand, activists are aware that traditional repertoires of protest are effective mostly at the agenda setting stage (Burstein and Hirsch 2002), and that their lobbying effectiveness wanes in advanced stages of congressional discussion given the astringency of the lawmaking process (Soule and King 2006). Thus, forging an alliance with a legislator becomes a less costly mechanism conducive to gain access to congressional spaces and influence the lawmaking process over time. As one respondent of the LGBT movement declares:

“One of the advantages of this organization is that we can go to Congress and have access to it. [Our allies] open doors and that is what we need, access to spaces where we can be listened to...to be invited in, to talk (to other lawmakers), find out about different points of view... (the relevance of having allies) is knowledge we have acquired over time”  
Alan, LGBT Activist.

Activists can perceive their allies as allowing them to be considered as stakeholders or agents of the policy domain. Therefore, challengers will actively seek to obtain legislative allies because of the resource they represent in terms of securing access to Congress for long periods of time. The way activists value their allies in Congress represents a nuance to previous assumptions in the literature. Since most research uses proxy variables accounting for the presence of partisan allies, the implicit assumption is that activists and legislators spontaneously cooperate once social movements bring their claims to Congress (Skrentny 2006). Instead, the interviews show that organizations are conscious about the advantages of building connections in Congress and actively seek to attract legislators and forge familiarity, closeness, and potential alliances with them.

### ***Exchange and Reciprocity***

Regardless of the motivations inspiring their actions, the exchange patterns between activists and legislators is based on the structural imbalance in favor of the latter.

Legislators are already central actors in the polity, and social movement organizations depend on the former for accessing the lawmaking process. This section observes the asymmetrical transactions between activists and legislators as direct reciprocal exchanges, where the frequency of contacts between the participants broadens the tokens of reciprocity and the relation between the actors.

Exchange actions take place when one of the actors in the dyad possess a resource desired by the other one, and activists and legislators have different assets that mutually benefit their agendas and spur their cooperation. Besides their social legitimacy, which can contribute to the favorable image of a legislator, social movement organizations have different strategies to collect expert information: environmental and LGBT organizations rely on a network of experts (e.g. universities, experts) that assist them in producing high quality reports that congresspeople can use in committees; the labor movement has enough resources to hire economists and lawyers that help them draft bills and assess the impacts of their proposal on the job market and the economy at large. In return, legislators provide detailed information about the lawmaking process, access to committees, present amendments, canvass votes, or openly speak in favor of the movement's demand.

Activists and legislators have different expectations about each other according to the resources they have. Labor movement leaders provided this description to exemplify the kinds of actions they expected from their allied legislators:

“Senators Goic and Muñoz have always been very close to the labor movement. They told us how the negotiation was going in the backstage, which senators were still doubtful about voting or not for the labor reform, they came here (to the union headquarters) to talk to us and discuss amendments to the bill, we could work those amendments together, they [the senators] could also help us reach the different partisan caucuses in the Senate. They were very helpful”.

Rodrigo, national union leader

These activities resemble to a large extent the interactions between interest groups and legislators (Hall and Deardorf 2006) including, canvassing efforts in Congress, drafting amendments or bills together, receiving information and outputs from social movement organizations, arranging press conferences, and voting. Since the lawmaking process follows the same procedures regardless of the issue at stake, there are no distinctions across the labor, LGBT and environmental movements in what they expect from an allied legislator.

Nevertheless, activists do not have a clear parameter of how and to what extent their allied legislators should reciprocate. Activists do not expect a legislator to do all the previously mentioned actions simultaneously or throughout the discussion of a bill. Activists are aware of the constraints people in Congress may have, such as not being in an important congressional committee, lacking support from other legislators, or that other issues may be more pressing in a particular moment. Considering the knowledge social activists have of congressional norms, practices, and context, they appreciate when they



perceive a legislator doing everything in their power to assist the movement given the circumstances. During the discussion of the civil unions bill, one LGBT activist praised the commitment of an allied legislator that was not even in the *ad-hoc* congressional committee that discussed the civil unions bill, but helped the movement by taking an active stance to present key amendments:

“We ask them (allied legislators) for certain things. Unlike social movement organizations, legislators can participate by their own right in all congressional committees, even if they are not official members. Then there are certain times we ask representative Fernandez to go to the Constitutional Committee, of which she does not belong to, but has the right to speak there, and can even transmit certain things we want and even present amendments.”  
Oscar, LGBT activist

Therefore, in some instances activists expect a legislator to discuss amendments to a bill with them and convince other legislators to approve them, while in others they only expect a legislator to carry out a joint press conference. The prospects on what to expect from the legislator depends on how activists read or perceive the political scenario, such as the committee their allies participate in or the stage of the lawmaking process. What matters to activists is that their allied legislators do the maximum possible effort based on the context.

Activists have different ways to support or reciprocate the work of their allied legislators. The most institutional actions relate to providing information (briefings, reports, comparative analyses with other countries, etc.) about a policy subject. Another action is publicly recognizing the movement allies who have been crucial at the presentation, discussion, or passage of a bill. This recognition takes place through the

organizations' websites, press conferences or social network accounts. Social movement organizations, especially in the LGBT and environmental movements, know they have thousands of followers on social media, so any kind of public recognition is a valuable reward for a politician.

Activists also receive requests from long-term and circumstantial legislators about what they expect the movement to do for them. Allied legislators consistently mentioned that policy information (e.g. comparative data) is the most valuable resource social movements can provide. For example, as one environmental activist mentions:

“(Allies) can be quite tedious sometimes. They call you anytime for any nonsense. I am tired of them calling me home on a Sunday at 10 pm. Because they call to ask if you can write them the amendment of a bill for the next day, that the deadline is at noon, or if I can read a bill draft. Their staff call me as well...I am done, I am really tired.”  
Carmen, environmental leader

Regardless of the discomfort some activists feel about being constantly available to their allies' needs, there is an important benefit for both actors. Legislators can use the organizations' input to show the work they are doing and tell their constituents about bills and amendments they are working on. Activists can benefit by providing information or drafting a bill that promotes their movement's agenda. Therefore, this is a case of cooperation where both actors can obtain important advantages.

However, long-term allied legislators also ask activists for other actions that do not necessarily match with legislative duties, going beyond the usual exchange analyzed in the social movement or lobbying literature. Allies usually frame these actions as *favors*, which relate to non-congressional activities that are required sporadically. Some social movement

organizations, particularly in the labor movement, are asked more often to conduct these *favors*, which sometimes are not even linked to policy or discussions of interest for the organizations. SMO leaders may not agree completely with the request but feel obligated to concede. For example, a national union leader mentioned the following anecdote in our conversation:

Laura: Once deputies Montes and Aguiló started a hunger strike for some Mapuche political prisoners from the south, and they had no better idea than coming here (to the union headquarters) to do it. We do not believe in hunger strikes since there is no need to suffer for something that is fair. (We thought) They had to do something different.

Rodolfo: but you let them do their hunger strike here anyway...

Laura: yes, yes, we did. It was their right and they were our friends. Now one of them is a senator."

In this quote we can see that although activists do not fully agree with their allies, they acquiesce to reciprocate the proximity of a legislator, while the latter benefits from the social legitimacy of a social movement organization by conducting activities under their tacit support. Therefore, the pressures for reciprocity are not bounded to the discussion of a bill but can be extended over time considering the ongoing interaction activists establish with their allied legislators.

This quote also shows the relevance of cultivating a tie with a politician over time. Responding to these favors are a way for activists to build complicity and trust with a legislator. Thanks to these actions, activists can forge a connection that provides unforeseen benefits as legislators move forward in their political careers. In this example, one of the representatives involved in the hunger strike became a senator a few years later.

The repeated interaction of activists and their long-term allies also seems to create a more personal level of connection between them, which explains the expectations of exchange outside legislative discussions. Activists often mentioned their gratitude with their closest allies, and felt they had to recognize their efforts in non-legislative instances. For example, the most important LGBT organizations and some national unions mentioned they provided a special award of public acknowledgment to those legislators more committed to their cause. Legislators express an even more personal connection when they refer to those organizations they work more closely with. Some allies of the LGBT and labor movement explicitly mentioned they were friends with some of these activists, and that their bonding grew because of the closer ties they developed over time.

Although activists generate a stronger bond with long-term allies, they are also cautious about preserving their autonomy, even if that implies creating a temporary distance with their allies in Congress. Three main reasons inform the decision of activists to stress their non-institutional role: to avoid being considered a partisan organization before other legislators and society; to protect their right to decide the best strategies to achieve their goals; and to dissent from their allies when the perceived circumstances require that.

Addressing the first reason, activists are cautious of the risks of being perceived as partisan agents given the affinities they have built with their allies. This reluctance to be seen as part of a party contrasts with other social movements that attempt to gain power inside partisan structures (Schlozman 2015, Heany and Rojas 2015, Skockpol and Williamson 2016), or that attempt to bridge partisan and mobilization efforts (Mische 2006). Perceptions of political cooptation can undermine the social legitimacy that social

movement organizations have built over the course of several years. Also, the ability of social movement organizations to build networks and to talk to other legislators in Congress is curtailed if they are perceived as a partisan group. The willingness of a legislator to hear the demands of a movement severely decreases if they perceive it is controlled by an ideologically opposed party.

The ability to create a distance between the organization and the party is not evenly distributed. The LGBT and environmental movements have been relatively effective at maintaining a perception of autonomy because of their strategy to build ties with legislators across the political spectrum. The presence of ideologically liberal legislators in the right-wing parties has enabled them to find sympathizers and allies beyond the left and the center, and that has increased their perceived autonomy. The labor movement, on the contrary, has a historical linkage with the partisan left, and to this day most of the leadership in the main national unions is part of a leftist political party. In any case, this temporal distance does not harm the closeness activists have generated with their long-term allies.

## **Discussion and Conclusions**

The analysis of the alliances between activists and legislators shows the presence of a much more nuanced interaction than previous research suggests. The interaction both actors establish goes beyond the encounter of seemingly overlapping agendas (Cress and Snow 2000; King, Cornwall and Dahlin 2005) or sympathies (Soule et al. 1999, Minkoff

1997, Giugni and Yamasaki 2009). Three findings of this article provide conceptual to the overlooked interactions members of congress establish with challengers (Skrentny 2006, Vasi et al 2014) by examining the motivations and exchange patterns orienting their contacts.

The first finding is that a legislative ally is not a cohesive category and instead is composed by two main kinds of allies, which vary based on the degree and length of commitment they display for a social movement. Circumstantial allies are legislators who are not usually close to the social movement or that may only be sympathetic to it. The interference of external factors, such as district-level crisis, create incentives for these legislators to assist social movement on a specific policy demand (drafting a bill or canvassing votes with fellow legislators). Long-time allies, on the other side, are legislators displaying a more consistent degree of sympathy and commitment for the movement, who usually support activists' demands over several policy issues.

The next two findings reflect how the frequency and continuity of interactions affects the motivations and exchange expectations activists establish with circumstantial and long-term allies. Activists and circumstantial allies tend to maintain an instrumental tie during their interaction, as expected based on the literature. That is, activists cooperate while their interests align and help to advance the agenda both actors support. Therefore, although the exchange patterns they establish remain close to direct exchange (Molm 2003, Molm et al 2007), since there is not a clear balance in their reciprocity, the actions and their contributions pertain to their legislative goals.

In contrast, the relation between activists and their long-term allies differs as their regular contacts nuances this utilitarian approach with affective or moral rationales. Activists and legislators still cooperate and coordinate their actions in congress during the discussion of a law. However, the responses of long-term allies suggest they perceive activists as more than social actors but also as friends. As such, they expect the leaders from these organizations to perform or carry out certain “favors” that do not relate to the approval or support their legislative work. As the weaker actor in the dyad, activists concede to these tacit but expected requests to protect the proximity they have cultivated with a legislator.

While it could be argued that these non-legislative favors respond to a strategic exchange extended beyond specific policy discussions, two factors support the idea that, at least for legislators, the emergence of moral or affective rationales define their interactions with their allied social movement organizations. First, members of congress face potential retaliation from their constituents and parties. Second, none of the organizations they support provide clear electoral resources that could improve the voting performance of their long-term allies.

These findings have implications for the political consequences of social movements in congress and the alliances they establish with legislators. The presence of two kinds of allies shows that social movement organizations can count with variable levels of support in congress. Long-term allies provide activists with a limited but consistent access and assistance in congress, which is useful when social movements plan their strategies to shape the lawmaking process. This level of support is relatively constant and goes beyond

specific policy discussions. Once changes in the preferences of legislators due to contextual conditions, such as external crises (Snow et al 1998), the network of potential supporters expand, and social movement organizations can gain more influence in congress.

Second, and more importantly, the interaction between activists and their allies in congress has multiple layers that research should take into consideration. Social movements need to meet the expectations legislators have about their exchange patterns, distinguishing those established with circumstantial and long-term allies. Long-term activists can develop affective or moral dispositions to support activists, and those expectations set the standards for the exchange patterns they intend to establish with activists. While the latter may sustain an instrumental rationality to interact with members of congress, they still need to be aware and fulfill those expectations to secure a lasting access to congress.

When analyzing the interaction of social movements and congress, future research should focus on the long-term efforts activists deploy to influence multiple policy outcomes. As this research shows, social movement organizations are active through multiple policy campaigns (Clemens 1997, Whittier 1997). Therefore, many of them are not new to congressional politics and already count with a level of experience and acquaintanceship that ease their contacts with legislators. Therefore, scholars accounting for the effect of elite allies need to consider the effects of circumstantial and long-term allies on social movement outcomes.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **GAINING INFLUENCE IN CONGRESS: THE PATHWAYS LEADING TO LEGISLATIVE ALLIANCES**

#### **Introduction**

Despite the relevance of counting with legislative allies to secure social movement goals (McAdam 2010, Meyer 2004), the mechanisms explaining how activists establish alliances with legislators remain a black box in the literature (Skrentny 2006, Vasi et al 2014). Research usually explains this phenomenon indirectly by assuming that legislators and activists ally on the basis of shared ideological and programmatic affinities, often assuming it as a structural condition (Cress and Snow 2000, Schlozman 2015). While this approach provides a base level to explain the cooperation between activists and legislators, it has some shortcomings. For instance, challengers struggle to attract the attention of congress and even when it is controlled by theoretically sympathetic parties (see Amenta et al 2010).

I focus on the microfoundations of the alliance between activists and legislators and argue that an alliance between both actors is possible once activists obtain acceptance in Congress. To achieve this recognition, two conditions need to concur. First, a social movement organization needs to gain a reputation as a serious and resourceful group able to contribute to the lawmaking process. Second, these organizations need to have socially skilled leaders capable of interacting with legislators and build a bond with them. Once both conditions are present, activists are on the radar of legislators and engage in the sort of coordination theorists argue the latter can provide, such as discussing and drafting bills or canvassing votes in congress (Hall and Deardorff 2006). This argument considers the

role of legislators' perceptions in the process, since the way they see social groups may make them expect different actions and capacities across social movements.

This argument nuances the study of the alliance between activists and MCs in two ways. First, it considers the perspective of activists to define who an ally is, asking challengers to identify legislators that have been diligent supporters of their agenda in congress. Second, it brings the views of the legislators into the analysis, accounting for their perspective about what conditions or characteristics make them prone to work with social movement organizations. Also, this argument is based on the premise that legislators must have an interest or sensitivity on the topic (raised by activists or external conditions) and be willing to address it with an organization. Thus, alliances are part of a process of mutual encounter of interests and capacities.

To explain the mechanisms behind the alliance between activists and legislators I consider the cases of the Chilean LGBT, labor, and environmental movements focusing on the long-term interactions instead of particular episodes of contention. These three social movements present important variations in resources, traditional repertoires of action, and historical linkages to the political system, which could lead to different pathways to alliance formation. Therefore, all the social movements operate under similar structural conditions (e.g. number of parties, democratization levels), facilitating their comparison.

The structure of this article is as follows. The next section discusses the potential of different repertoires of action for obtaining acceptance in congress. Later I address the role of legislators' perceptions on social movement activity, and then provide an overview of the organizational capacities of the environmental, LGBT, and labor organizations in Chile.

Next, I analyze the repertoires of action deployed by these social movement using qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) to evaluate what pathways are conducive to obtain allies and contrast it with the conditions legislators consider relevant. The last section summarizes and concludes.

### **Social Movements and their Influence in Congress**

Social movements actively seek congressional attention, and some try to forge a tie with particular legislators. However, as political mediation theory posits, the effectiveness of a tactic depends on its fit with its political environment (Amenta 2006), such as political structures and the interests of the decision-makers.

Legislators are often described as strategic actors with two main sets of interests motivating their action. One is seeking to secure their seats in consecutive elections (O'Brien and Shomer 2012), while the other is ideologically shaping the content of legislation (Fenno 1973, Mayhew 1974). Thus, any aid from activists to fulfill those goals could turn MCs responsive to social movement demands.

Some of the most plausible accounts explaining the alliance between social movements and legislators reflect a fit between activists' tactics and the interests guiding legislators' behavior. According to Amenta et al (1992, 2005) and Vasi et al (2014), activists can obtain legislative allies through electioneering. That is, movement actors publicly endorse candidates and work for their campaigns and once elected, they monitor how their endorsed candidates vote and decide whether to keep supporting them. While not addressing directly the emergence of alliances, Soule and Olzak (2004) and Granados and

Knoke (2005) also assert that the information activists provide about the contents and consequences of a policy, and the way they frame it, is one of the most valuable assets to legislators.

Instead of focusing on the effectiveness of isolated tactics, a condition usually associated with an increased social movement influence in congress is acceptance. Acceptance can be defined as the ongoing recognition social movement organizations receive by elected officials thanks to their use of different repertoires of actions that turn them into legitimate actors in the decision-making process (Gamson 1990). The salience and recognition organizations obtain in congress places them in the radar of legislators and is conducive to their access to decision-making spaces (Kitschelt 1986). However, although salience and access facilitate gaining influence, they do not necessarily imply it (Binderkrantz 2014).

This article argues that acceptance is a necessary condition for social movements to establish alliances with legislators, emphasizing it as the status challengers achieve by demonstrating their organizational capacities and an empowered leadership. Legislators may be open to interact with an organization because of a long-term or circumstantial sensitivity or interest overlapping the goals of an organization. However, since the alliance between activists and MCs entails building a relational tie that facilitates their coordination in congress, legislators will tend to create a closer tie with organizations showing their fit for congressional affairs.

Therefore, I stress that social movement organizations have to show legislators their strength as social actors, their capacity participate in legislative spaces, and count with

socially skilled leaders that guide the organization in their interaction with people in congress. Thus, this approach goes beyond traditional notions that associate acceptance with using different tactics that make an organization known to legislators (Kitschelt 1986, Tilly 1978), stressing instead that gaining a reputation as a group that is fit to work in congress is more effective when interacting and potentially allying with legislators.

### *Organizational Strength*

This dimension refers to the tactic resourcefulness of social movement organizations. Groups with more resources are capable of using a wider range of tactics to target institutions and influence elected officials (McCarthy and Zald 1977, Andrews 2001). This diversity renders more salience across different contexts that may be more receptive to some strategies instead of others. For instance, in some cases activists may need to carry out assertive strategies that threaten the political position or career of elected officials, such as electioneering (Amenta, Caren and Olasky 2005; Steil, Vasi and Van de Rijt 2014) or protesting or rallying. In other contexts where lawmakers are more open to listen, challengers may only need to approach them and do lobbying (Granados and Knoke 2005).

Although the literature emphasizes the use of institutional tactics like lobbying to gain access and ascendance in legislative spaces (Andrews and Edwards 2004, Eising 2007), organizations deploying diverse tactics signal lawmakers their potential to exert pressure from multiple angles. This diversity can signal legislators the social support these organizations have, and also their adaptability to participate in congressional spaces to

support their legislative work. Therefore, these organizations legitimate their position as relevant social groups that should be considered by elected officials.

### *Empowered Leadership.*

Although organizational strength signals legislators about the capacities and adaptability of a group, the interaction between activists and members of congress takes place at the personal level. Fligstein and McAdam (2012:46) introduce the concept of “social skill” to refer to the ability of activists “to create shared and collective identities” with other actors, facilitating the emergence of collective action. This research posits that after legislators recognize an organization as a key player in its respective field, it is the social skill of its leader what contributes to build an interpersonal bond between them, which is conducive to achieve the level of trust or mutual understanding necessary to coordinate actions in congress. As Anderson (2018) argues, the social skill of policy entrepreneurs is pivotal at building alliances with institutional actors and trigger policy changes.

According to Fligstein and McAdam (2012) and Anderson (2018), social movement leaders can use different approaches to persuade legislators to build a relational tie. One of the most common is framing (see Snow et al 1986), since activists can persuade legislators to create a common front by presenting arguments that resonate with the interests and concerns of lawmakers. The authors also mention that socially skilled individuals maximize their chances of success by accurately reading their context (e.g. timing, personality traits), which make them flexible about the content of their frames and the extent of their

demands. This adaptability is relevant since the lawmaking process is not linear and activists may face setbacks during the discussion of a bill.

### **Perceptions and Alliance Formation**

Along with the capacity of an organization to gain salience and the social skills of its leaders, this research considers the perceptions and dispositions of legislators as a mediating factor at explaining acceptance (see Ingram et al. 2007). The way legislators construct a target population not only defines their decision to support it, but also the behaviors they expect from it or consider acceptable (Guetzkow 2010). Therefore, legislators may expect organizations from a social group to behave or look according to the image that fits their perception before granting acceptance.

Research has paid increasing attention to the notions among legislators about activists' deservingness and their effects on mobilization efficacy (Skocpol 1992, Burstein 1999, Quadagno 1994). For example, according to Skrentny (2006) the perception American elites had about racial groups mediated the worth they attributed to their demands of affirmative action policies. African Americans had to protest intensely to become a deserving group, while other racial groups achieved recognition (and obtained allies) much faster since people in congress saw them as analogous to blacks. However, other groups could not reach the same status, deeming their efforts fruitless in spite of extensive mobilization and lobbying efforts.

Perceptions can mediate the effectiveness of social mobilization even when the status of challengers is not defined. Vasi and King (2012) argue that targets of social

mobilization can diverge in their assessment about similar repertoires of action depending on how threatening they perceive them. Wouters and Walgrave (2017) also assert that legislators are generally responsive to those social movements they perceive as displaying high levels of internal unity. Therefore, legislators' judgment about a group's reputation and the tactics they use plays a role at explaining why not all social movements gain acceptance despite their similar strategies and resources.

If legislators' perceptions mediate their response to social movements (e.g. inclusion, indifference, or repression), this should also be the case for the alliance formation process. Historical trajectories or organizational resources can configure different expectations among legislators about what activists should do to gain recognition, conditioning the effectiveness of tactics across movements, which leads to different pathways to build an alliance. For example, the connections of the Chilean labor movement with leftist parties could make legislators expect union leaders to be part of a political party before granting them recognition. On the contrary, the recent and nonpartisan history of the environmental and LGBT movements may turn that factor irrelevant at explaining the recognition of legislative authorities.

### **The Characteristics of the Chilean LGBT, environmental, and labor movements**

This section reviews the Chilean, LGBT, environmental and labor movements, focusing on their linkages to the political system, resources, and traditional repertoires of action. The labor movement is hypothetically in an advantageous position to gain acceptance and establish alliances with legislators. It has long-lasting ties with political



parties, and its main national unions have the organizational resources (money, numbers, staff, etc.) required to sustain the institutional activism of their leaders. On the contrary, the LGBT and environmental organizations are comprised by smaller groups under constant financial stress, and do not usually have a large membership of supporters. However, they have experienced leaders that give continuity to the policy efforts of these organizations before decision makers.

*Labor movement.* Chilean unions have historically gravitated to centralized organizational infrastructures to coordinate their actions. The Workers' United Center (CUT) has been the main labor confederation since the early twentieth century, encompassing unions from diverse economic sectors, such as mining, industry, and the state bureaucracy. However, the unity of the movement fractured in the last twenty years, as internal tensions made two groups leave CUT and found their own confederations: CAT and UNT. Although CUT is widely recognized as the most important national confederation, all respondents see the movement's lack of organizational unity as a weakening factor.

In terms of resources, CUT has presence in every region of the country and counts with a paid staff that includes a policy research center created in 2005. The other two unions limit their presence to a few regions and have a smaller staff (mainly secretaries). Financially, all the unions claim to receive a steady income from their affiliated members to cover basic expenses (e.g. staff salaries), which they complement with sporadic public funding directed to skill training and educational programs. Although this movement has the largest membership in the country, its numbers have decreased since the democratic

restoration of 1990 (Palacios-Valladares 2010). The three national confederations have almost 250,000 affiliated members nationwide (Obregon, 2017), with CUT comprising a 94%, while CAT and UNT share a 5% and 1%, respectively. These figures still enable CUT and other affiliated groups such as ANEF (public employees), to rally and commemorate historical dates such as the International Workers' Day, and to protest and strike.

Politically, the Chilean labor movement is tightly connected to the country's party system and was pivotal in the foundation of the Communist and Socialist parties. Although the proximity between leftist parties and the movement has decreased since the democratic restoration of 1990 (Palacios-Valladares 2010), partisanship is still a noticeable feature of the movement. For example, the leadership of the main national unions such as CUT, CAT, UNT, ANEF and CDP, is affiliated to a party. Communist, Socialist and Christian Democrats parties are the most common choices, and in several of these unions partisan banners structure their internal elections.

*Environmental movement.* The Chilean environmental movement traces its origins to the 1960s, with the appearance of the first conservation organizations. However, the organizational density of the field took off at the end of the 1980s, when several activists who took part in the movement against the dictatorship founded different organizations. Simultaneously, international donors and arrival of large INGOs such as Greenpeace contributed to train the leadership of the nascent movement.

Contrary to the labor movement, environmental organizations (EMOs) lack a central coordination, extensive grassroots membership, and secure funding. The latter is

particularly threatening according to respondents. Most EMOs emerged thanks to international funding directed to support the emergence of civil society in Chile during the democratic transition. The consolidation of Chilean democracy and the sustained economic growth (e.g. joining the OECD), made the country ineligible for international cooperation, cutting several funding options. Now, most EMOs survive thanks to small grants coming from European embassies, or political groups such as the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation or the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung from Germany. Thus, most EMOs dedicate significant amount of energy to secure funds for their survival.

Nonetheless, Chilean EMOs have shown other areas of strength. Although small, these organizations have a highly professionalized staff. Chilean EMOs' staff range from three to six full-time staff members, most of them holding undergraduate and graduate degrees in an environmentally relevant field (e.g. biology, geography, engineering). This training equips activists with the technical and conceptual skills to elaborate policy proposals. Also, most of these groups have a network of volunteers in universities (e.g. researchers) that bolster the organizations' research capacities.

Politically, the participation of environmental leaders in the protests for democratic restoration in the 1980s created ties with other activists that later on became legislators, party officials, and ministers. However, unlike the labor movement, members of EMOs do not usually participate in political parties. Instead of partisan affiliations, the stability, social recognition and reputation of EMO leaders facilitates the linkages these organizations create with political authorities.

*LGBT movement.* The trajectory of LGBT movement shares some similarities with the environmental organizations. The first LGBT organizations emerged in the latter days of the dictatorship, focusing on AIDS prevention and the liberation of sexual minorities (Diez 2010, Contardo 2012). During the democratic restoration, other organizations like Movilh started advocating for the rights of the LGBT community, although internal movement divisions diffculted the creation of a unitarian coordination such as in the labor movement.

Although the scarcity of local and international sources of funding leaves LGBT groups are under constant financial stress, they overcome it through coalition work. Some LGBT organizations created the Sexual Diversity Front, where they share experiences and mutually support each other to prepare congressional meetings. Like the EMOs, LGBT organizations also associate with universities and research centers, acquiring the expertise necessary to elaborate proposals they can use with legislators. Fundación Iguales drafted a proposal on equal marriage with the University of Chile' Law School, and Movilh did something similar in the past to advocate for civil unions. Also, all organizations rely on volunteers to sustain some of their activities. While volunteers constitute the core of less formalized organizations (e.g. Visibles, Mums), professionalized groups (e.g. Fundación Iguales and Movilh) rely on volunteers to open chapters throughout the country.

While LGBT organizations carry out demonstrations such as annual pride parades, they often resort to other repertoires of action. Media conferences and online activism are the preferred tactics these groups pursue. For instance, the two most professionalized LGBT organizations, Movilh and Iguales, are the two more popular organizations on Twitter, with more than 150,000 followers each.

Like the environmental movement, some LGBT leaders created connections with future elected officials while protesting against the dictatorship in the 1980s. However, the pervasive homophobia of Chilean society minimized the potential for cooperation with those politicians. According to a historical LGBT leader, only after 2005 they perceived more tolerance from the political system, which coincided with a higher level of social legitimacy measured by public opinion polls (See Andia et al. 2012). Although some activists are affiliated to political parties, those are not long-standing memberships and partisanship is not a salient trend in the movement.

## **Data and Methods**

The data come from semi-structured interviews conducted on social movement activists and legislators. The sample criteria for the organizations included depended on their degree of bureaucratization, understood as having an office, staff members, and policy or legislative goals (Staggenborg 1988). Due to previous research on social movements in Chile and the author's knowledge of Chilean society, the final sample comprises 11 environmental, 10 LGBT and 8 labor organizations. From those organizations, I interviewed 66 respondents: 35 from the labor movement (the oldest and largest one in Chile), 16 from the LGBT movement and 15 from the environmental movement. I also interviewed 12 legislators identified by activists as their allies.

The analysis section comprises two parts. The first addresses the combination of repertoires of action that signal the strength of an organization to a legislator using QCA. Here, the outcome is the recognition of organizational strength, which I coded considering

the congruence in the accounts of activists and legislators. If a SMO declared having an ally in congress, and that legislator also identifies this organization as a salient actor in its respective field, then that organization is considered organizationally relevant. In this case, I coded the outcome as 1 and 0 otherwise.

Then I considered a set of factors that attempt to reflect the strength of an organization based on the accounts of respondents and the relevant repertoires analyzed in the literature, such as protesting (McAdam and Su 2002), district-level activism (Gillion 2012), lobbying (Baumgartner and Leech 1998), media activism (Gamson and Wolfsfeld 1993), partisan affiliations (Mische 2008), and electioneering (Goldstone 2003). The coding of these factors is as follows: if an organization declared conducting any of those repertoires in their attempts to access congressional discussions or to gain influence before legislators, then the condition is present and coded as 1. If not, the coding is 0. For the case of legislators, I asked them to mention the characteristics that make them consider a social movement organization a relevant group in their respective field (environmental, LGBT or labor), and then followed the same approach to assess the presence or absence of a condition.

I use Qualitative Comparative Analysis (FsQCA) (Ragin 2009) to analyze the strength of social movement organizations, considering that different group may be inclined to use different tactics, and that legislators may have different expectations about that a social movement from a specific movement should do. Therefore, this method allows to account for different combinatorial recipes that lead to the same outcome by identifying consistencies across cases leading to a certain outcome using Boolean algebra. That is, a

single outcome could be obtained through different combinations of causal recipes that establish the presence or absence of independent variables. I use crisp sets since all the factors in the analysis are dichotomized (1 meaning the presence of the variable and 0 its absence). Appendix Table 2.3 reports the truth table with the variable values, numbers of cases, and consistency levels for each recipe for activists, while Appendix Table 2.4 provides the same information for legislators.

In QCA it is possible to specify the effect of the explanatory conditions. For instance, that only the presence and not absence of a factor is conducive to the observed outcome. In this analysis, I expect that either the absence or the presence of a condition contributes to the organizational strength of a group. Research on social movements shows has challenges adjudicating on the effects of specific repertoires of action, as they are not conclusive at securing political influence. For instance, protesting can increase congressional attention on an issue but have adverse effects on voting (McAdam and Su 2002). Therefore, some repertoires may undermine or increase the strength of some organizations across social movements.

The second part of the analysis assesses the empowerment of social movement leaders. Here I examine the content of the interviews between activists and legislators, contrasting their accounts of the individual-level dynamics that help them to create an interpersonal tie conducive to legislative cooperation.

### **Pathways to obtaining an alliance**

According to activists, ideological affinities do not explain why they gain acceptance in congress and build an alliance with a legislator. Organizations across the three movements hold agendas that are more closely related to the left, but their activists declare they establish (or at least attempt) alliances across the ideological spectrum. The underlying reason is that not all bills have a univocal interpretation to legislators. For example, LGBT activists have found allies in the liberal sectors of the right and sometimes indifference from the center-left, showing that parties are not homogenous entities and that ideological affinities can create general initial sympathies, but not close connections. This notion contrasts with traditional understandings of the alliances between activists and legislators, which rely mostly on ideological proxies (see Giugni and Yamaski 2009).

Respondents instead emphasize the reputation of their organizations, built over several years of activism, as what legitimates them in congress as social actors and allows them to engage in policy discussions. As one LGBT activist mentions when explaining their access to congressional spaces, “it’s a matter of reputation. We, and also other organizations, have gained a strong reputation because of all the issues we have dealt with over time [in congress].” Thus, since activists attribute their access to congress to the capacities of their organizations, this section examines the tactics respondents identify as conducive to display organizational strength in congress.

The results of the QCA analysis in Table 1 show four different combinatorial paths leading to organizational capacity. The first four solutions show the results for those organizations that received political acceptance in congress, while the last two account for those organizations that did not. In QCA notation, the conditions written in capital letters



indicate its presence, and its absence if written in lower case. The asterisk (\*) operates as a logical connector *and*, while the plus sign (+) indicates the logical operator *or*.

Table 2.1. QCA Results for Organizational Capacity in Congress, According to Activists

Configurations Explaining Organizational Strength (numbers of activists)	Unique Contribution
<i>Intermediate Solution</i>	
protest*district*party*LOBBY*electioneering (4 Environmental, 6 LGBT) +	0.138
protest*MEDIA *referral*LOBBY*electioneering (9 Environmental, 5 LGBT) +	0.277
protest*district*media*REFERRAL*LOBBY*electioneering (2 LGBT) +	0.055
PROTEST*PARTY*media*referral*LOBBY*electioneering (15 Labor)	0.416
<i>Parsimonious Solution</i>	
LOBBY (9 environmental, 11 LGBT)	1
Configurations Explaining the Lack of Acceptance (numbers of activists)	
<i>Intermediate Solution</i>	
protest*party*MEDIA*lobby*electioneering (2 Environmental)+	0.285
protest*district*PARTY*media*lobby*electioneering (5 Labor)	0.714
<i>Parsimonious Solution</i>	
lobby (2 environmental, 5 labor)	1

The sets of solutions for the presence and absence of organizational strength have a consistency and coverage of 1. Coverage is a measure of the proportion of cases that experience the configurations in the output that also experience the outcome. Consistency is a measure of how uniformly the causal conditions can express the outcome. Therefore, all the cases in the sample experiencing one of the configurations of factors leading to the respective outcome (presence or absence of organizational strength), and those configurations account for all the possible pathways conducive to the outcome.

The first configuration covers environmental and LGBT organizations that lobby legislators, but do not engage in protesting, district level activism, electioneering and lack partisan ties. Despite their relatively small size, these organizations are capable of

elaborating strong proposals thanks to their experienced leaders or because of their ties with experts willing to support the organization.

The second configuration also considers lobbying and adds media and online activism as additional factors leading to organizational strength. This solution covers the strongest environmental and LGBT organizations (e.g. Movilh), which have a relatively large and stable staff, use social media to diffuse their demands, and have presence in other cities besides of Santiago.

The third solution states that organizations that lobby legislators, are referred to congress by senior activists and do not protest, electioneer, carry out district-level activism or use social media, also obtain acceptance. Referral was a variable created to reflect the situation of two relatively new LGBT organizations (founded less than five years ago). They are part of the Sexual Diversity Front and have increased their visibility before legislators thanks to the sponsorship of senior LGBT leaders.

The fourth pathway matches exclusively the trajectory of the major labor movement organizations (e.g. CUT, ANEF, CDP). These unions show their organizational strength by protesting, lobbying, having partisan connections, and do not actively engage in online activism and electioneering. This causal recipe reflects more clearly the expected advantage of deploying institutional and extra-institutional repertoires to attract legislators' attention (Andrews 2001, Amenta 2006). While other conditions like the historical reputation of some organizations play a role at increasing the salience of an organization, respondents declared they are insufficient to maintain a reputation. Thus,

partisan networks, protesting, and a comprehensive lobbying strategy are pivotal at securing a place in ongoing policy discussions.

These results, along with the parsimonious solution, support the use of lobbying as an appropriate repertoire in institutional settings (Hall and Reynolds 2012, Soule and King 2006). To activists from salient organizations, lobbying shows legislators they are capable of engaging in congressional politics and participate in the discussion of a bill, regardless of other tactics they may use to attract the attention of elected officials. Activists claim that their ability to present policy drafts, or understand the pace of the lawmaking process, signals MCs they are experienced groups that can support their legislative work. For instance, the organizations perceived as organizationally irrelevant by legislators (3 labor and 2 environmental) in Table 1 do not mention lobbying as one of their regular repertoires of action.

The four combinatorial recipes also show an interesting movement-level division. Environmental and LGBT groups have three similar pathways to display their organizational strength, while successful labor organizations only have one. The presence or absence of the conditions in these recipes in obeys to the strategic choice and the capacities of social movement organizations.

Besides lobbying, labor movement organizations considered as organizationally relevant by legislators declare protesting, cultivating partisan ties and not electioneering as part of their strategy to gain salience in Congress. While the main national unions (e.g. CUT and ANEF) do not protest often during the discussion of a bill or as a tool to attract legislators, they mention it is a tactic they can use when political institutions seem

particularly unresponsive. However, the decision to protest is carefully assessed even by the largest unions, which are cautious a small turnout could be perceived as an organizational. The leadership of the smaller labor confederations (CAT and UNT) are also aware that not protesting constitutes one of their main obstacles to be recognized as relevant labor organizations in congress.

Labor movement respondents also mention the importance of being part of a political party to build their reputation as union leaders and to access political networks and information. Even respondents from the smaller unions comment on their need to enroll in a political party to be on the radar of legislators. As the head of one of the main national unions explains, participating in a political party becomes a necessary condition for the leaders of labor unions:

“[Besides ideological affinities], inasmuch people without a partisan affiliation assume social responsibilities, they realize they need support, contacts, etc...for instance, when I go to congress and we are discussing a law, we organize inside the union and I go to talk to the legislators from my party, the other goes to talk to the legislators from his party, and he who is an independent, who does he talk to? In Chile the political power in the National Congress and in the Executive power has a partisan expression. Therefore, you realize you may need to affiliate to a party.”  
Jaime, national union leader.

Partisanship increases the access of social movement organizations to networks, information, and congressional caucuses, which are crucial to gain recognition among MCs. Surprisingly, although electioneering is recognized as a key assertive tactic (Amenta et al 2005), and the main labor unions have hundredths of thousands of affiliated members, none of the them used it. Moreover, activists from the national unions deem it implausible tactic considering the obstacles that preclude the electoral mobilization of their bases:

'[We don't electioneer] because there isn't much civic consciousness [among unionized workers]. If we take into account the binomial system [Chile's electoral system], where you get one left-wing and one right-wing candidate elected no matter what, the legislators' strategy is to give away stuff. People also have a short-term memory...[our] people do not understand that union leaders are political agents. If we want to improve their wages, if we want to improve laws, we need to change politics...but people still don't get it.'

Claudia, Labor movement leader.

Individual-level apathy and structural constraints such as the electoral system deter national unions from electorally mobilizing their members. Therefore, their inability to guide their sizable membership electorally makes electioneering an oddity rather than a feasible repertoire.

The LGBT and environmental groups use different tactics to display their organizational strength compared to the labor movement. These groups base their organizational strength primarily in their ability to lobby legislators. This is particularly clear for the first solution covering the smallest organizations in these movements. The absence of other repertoires, nonetheless, obeys to organizational limitations and strategic decisions. As small organizations, they do not have the numbers or financial resources to call for protests at the local or national level. Moreover, they avoid cultivating an activist profile cautious that legislators would perceive them as a less professionalized group.

The lack of partisanship, on the other side, is a strategic decision. Although their claims generate greater affinity with leftist parties, respondents worry that an official membership in a political party would damage their reputation by being labeled as partisan organizations. Partisanship would sever their ability to cross partisan and ideological boundaries, which is an important characteristic of LGBT and environmental groups

compared to the labor movement. Similarly, their lack of grassroots membership and their apprehension on stating political preferences stop these organizations from endorsing candidates.

The larger LGBT and environmental organizations, covered by the second recipe, also have a limited protest potential given their lack of an ample base of rank-and-file members. However, they gain public salience by building a communications platform ran by a staff member specialized on social media, and also with contacts with different media venues. These organizations enhance their status as social actors by reaching large segments of society, showing legislators their potential as social organizations. Activists are also aware that legislators can benefit from their social legitimacy and media capacity, either by recognizing the role of MCs as supporters or at diffusing their policies or opinions.

Regarding electioneering and political endorsements, these organizations have a different standing compared to the smaller groups. LGBT organizations like Movilh or Fundacion Iguales prefer to publicly recognize any candidate that commits their support to equal rights legislation, but not as an official or exclusive endorsement. That is, these organizations acknowledge candidates from different parties competing in the same district, going against traditional notions of electioneering as an electoral resource focused on a targeted candidate.

### **Combinatorial Recipes for Legislators**

The reputation of an organization is crucial at facilitating the interaction between activists and legislators. As one legislator allied to the environmental movement

commented in an interview, “we don’t know all the organizations fighting for the environment. We are aware there are many, but the ones that we actually engage with are just a few.” Therefore, the ability of social movement organizations to deploy repertoires or action that resonate with the interests and expectations of legislators is crucial to gain visibility and sustain interactions with them. This section brings legislators into the analysis by assessing the factors they consider key to recognize a LGBT, environmental, or labor organization as a relevant actor.

This section includes an additional variable labeled leadership. Some legislators emphasized the experience of social movement leaders as a favorable condition at explaining why they relate to some organizations and not others. Being referred by a senior organization is not included in this analysis. Table 2 reports the QCA recipes for the conditions leading to organizational strength based on the assessment of legislators, where the presence of a condition (in upper case letters) indicates its necessity, while its absence (in lower case letters) indicates its irrelevance for the outcome.

Table 2. QCA Results for Legislators Explaining SMO Acceptance

Recipe (and numbers of allied legislators per movement)
protest*party*electioneering*LOBBY (6 LGBT, 5 Environmental) + protest*electioneering*MEDIA*LEADERSHIP*LOBBY (2 LGBT) + PROTEST*PARTY*DISTRICT*electioneering*media*LEADERSHIP*LOBBY (2 Labor)

The pathways signaling organizational capacity are embedded in the vision legislators have about each social movement and share an important degree of congruence between the outputs of Table 1. Results in Table 2 also emphasize the need to engage in lobbying to be considered as a relevant group. The first recipe includes legislators allied

with the environmental and LGBT movements, who emphasize that their organizations must develop lobbying capacities to gain presence in congress and participate in discussions with legislators.

“I would make a distinction among them [environmental organizations]. Greenpeace has legislative technical capacity, but after knowing them for a while, they are more focused on fundraising. That is their goal. But you have other organizations...such as Terram or Chile Sustentable, with technical capacity to participate in congressional tasks. There is much more support and work [with these organizations] over time...And there are other organizations such as OLCA, which are more at the margins and I think they are not that interested in legislation, but in stirring enduring social conflicts.”  
Javier, Representative.

This quote from an ally of the environmental movement evidences how important it is for an organization to build a reputation in congress. Legislators distinguish the groups that seem more committed to adapt their actions to congressional spaces and that have the resources and capacities to do so. Also, legislators seem to disregard contentious repertoires, privileging instead the technical abilities of LGBT and environmental groups to produce inputs for discussions, making cooperation and mutual support sustainable over time.

The second solution focuses on the largest LGBT groups. According to these legislators, what drove them close to some LGBT groups was their strong leadership, lobbying capacities and their ability to have presence in media outlets and social networks. Protesting and electioneering are not necessarily required to signal organizational strength. The emphasis on leadership highlights how relevant it is for an organization to have prepared leaders in charge of the interactions with legislators. This is even more



relevant than partisanship based on the comments of a senator about Rolando Jimenez, a historical LGBT activist and leader of Movilh:

“Rolando was affiliated to the PPD... but I don’t know if it helps or not. An activist gains recognition because of the strength of their discourse, and how transparent and dedicated they are to the cause. That is what makes them credible and inspire trust and joint work...I think nobody knew Rolando was part of that party, but that does not matter in his trajectory as a citizen and activist, but how he has contributed to social and cultural changes.”  
Ester, Senator.

Recognizing an activist’s role as the head of an organization is not a repertoire that groups can deploy, but a personal characteristic a social movement leader develops over time. Therefore, organizations need to maintain their leadership over time, so activists can learn to navigate the political arena, cultivating contacts and gaining influence in congress.

Finally, the third combination of causal factors is based on the perspectives of the two allies of the labor movement. According to the respondents, their model of a strong and capable organization is based on the national unions (e.g. CUT or ANEF), which have the potential to engage in protesting, have extensive partisan networks, presence in multiple districts, and lobbying capacities. Smaller national unions, such as CAT and UNT but do not have the capacity to call for their own rallies, their leaders are comparatively less prepared than those of the main unions and have limited presence throughout the country. Therefore, elected officials recognize their legitimacy but do not consider them particularly relevant or influential.

These results show two main patterns. First, legislators deem lobbying as a necessary condition to gain organizational acceptance. Lobbying is not just approaching

legislators and providing them information, but also about how the organizations do it. For instance, these groups should avoid unfounded opinions, and rely on empirical data and comparative experiences. These factors are beneficial for building a reputation among policymakers as a serious and capable organization.

Second, the perception legislators have about a social movement mediates the extent to which the latter should perform different repertoires to become organizationally relevant. MCs expect labor organizations to protest and have partisan ties, while LGBT and environmental organizations are exempt from those requirements. Legislators base these expectations on the historical role of the labor movement at mobilizing the population for social and political changes in the twentieth century. The history of the largest unions (CUT or ANEF) became the standard to judge other groups, affecting the smaller confederations (CAT and UNT) that are not perceived as consolidated groups. Also, legislators value protesting as a routinized repertoire to pressure the executive power, which is crucial to push any reforms to the labor code in Chile. The lack of a historical paradigm to compare the LGBT and environmental movements with makes congresspeople assess them in terms of their ability to support legislative work and resonate with the social changes of Chilean society.

Similarly, legislators expect union leaders to have a partisan affiliation given the historical connections of the labor movement with leftist parties. Since partisanship is not a feature in the history of the LGBT and environmental movements, their activists are not expected to be members of a party to be considered as organizationally relevant or reputable. Having partisan connections can be beneficial to establish communication

channels with legislators, but as the previous quote on leadership shows, legislators assess LGBT (and environmental) activists according to other standards.

### **The role of personal interaction**

As the previous section shows, legislators consider the leadership as a relevant condition to explain their proximity to a group. An organizationally strong group can be on the radar of members of congress, but the actors paving the road to build an alliance are the heads of these groups. The interaction dynamic activists establish with legislators vital considering that an alliance goes beyond conversations and entails activists and legislators coordinating their efforts to influence policy, such as drafting and presenting bills or amendments.

Once the interests of activists and legislators converge, social movement leaders attempt to cultivate a relation with them. Over time, those contacts generate mutual trust and allow them to coordinate their action in congress. As an environmental leader mentions, there are regular and contingent elements explaining how activists can create proximity with a legislator:

“It’s intuitive, super intuitive...[first] you have identify the legislators of your interest and that means scanning committees, topics, regions, and if you don’t know them, you must have a file to know who they are (career, bills presented, areas of interest) because you need to talk to them about something! You present a brief memo [on the issue] and handle it in person.

After that, everything is intuitive...such as finding out if they work closely with their staff...you may also need to build connections with civic organizations in their district because they care about that. But there isn’t a universal recipe because it depends on the project, the conversations you can foresee, the personalities of the legislators. For example, Senator Allende is like “you are with me or you are against me”, and she stops

talking to you, which is a stupid way to do politics. On the contrary, you have other senators like Allamand, who can be extremely mean or extremely nice. It depends on each legislator.”

Luciana, Environmental leader

As the respondent explains, her capacity to read context is crucial at facilitating their interaction with members of congress. Challengers need to master the content of their proposals not only to present their claims to legislators, but also to support the latter’s congressional duties in case they decide to work together. Moreover, activists also consider the legislator’s trajectory and biography to increase the resonance of their demands’ framing. For instance, environmental activists mention they use a nationalistic approach, such as the preservation of the country’s environmental heritage, when addressing right-wing legislators.

Complementarily, activists must take into account other subjective traits. As the quote mentions, members of congress rely at different degrees on their staff for their legislative activities. Therefore, activists must identify where to allocate most of their efforts and decide if they will cultivate a relation directly with the legislator or through his staff. Even more contingent is the role of the legislator’s personality and interests. Activists are aware that some members of congress resent when activists take stances different from theirs, and while those differences do not represent a permanent impasse, they slacken their interactions for some time. Others have volatile personalities, but activists who know the legislator consider this as a normal part of their interaction, which does not compromise their cooperation. Recognizing these personality traits help activists fit their

discourse to the legislator's interests and perceptions, which contribute to build rapport and trust.

Although legislators are the most powerful actor in the alliance, and activists attempt to reach as many legislators as possible to increase their network of potential supporters, the latter take some provisions and strategically decide the congressperson they will work with. Activists assess the legislator's reliability, understood as the congruence between voting records and public statements on policy (or just the statements for newly elected officers). The latter is crucial for activists, since working too closely with a legislator with a tainted reputation (e.g. corruption scandals) can damage the organization's image, but also because a congruent legislator is more predictable about their support for the movement.

This level of understanding and awareness of personal and contextual conditions make socially skilled activists capable of securing close and constant interactions with legislators (Fligstein and McAdam 2012). Although both actors have a shared interest on an issue, the alliance between them ultimately depends on the proximity they generate during their personal interactions, thanks to the challengers' resonant frames, awareness of personality traits and workstyles, and their support the legislative work of the MC. These elements are crucial at building the acquaintanceship bond that facilitate their coordination. An ally of the LGBT movement mentions that she became close to certain groups after she noticed the activists' understanding and adaptability to act in congress.

"We have a debate [with activists]. We don't negotiate. It's not that suddenly you receive an amendment draft. There are conversations about a project, and I appreciate that. It's

not that they [activists] come to you and say, “you have to do this”, because they never do that. Instead, there is a conversation about their problems or a particular bill. Within that frame we work on possible amendments but starting from a joint conversation.”

Clara, Representative

Other allied legislators concur and express that the activists’ ability to voice their demands, understand congressional constraints (e.g. legislative rules) and read context (when to push or expect results from legislators) is crucial for creating a common view about the extent of their interaction and cooperation over time. Contrary to the movement differences in the pathways to organizational strength, legislators expect any organization leader, regardless of the movement, to meet these expected personal attributes. Otherwise, legislators may consider a social movement group as a player in the field, but they would not develop the level of interactions conducive to a coordination of their legislative work. In consequence, the more skilled activists are at framing their demands, presenting supportive information, understand their position in the lawmaking process and the way to address a legislator, the easier it is for them to sustain their interaction with members of congress and build the familiarity and trust necessary to work together.

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

This research argues that social movements obtain legislative allies by gaining acceptance. This involves building a reputation as a relevant group in congress through the use of varied repertoires of action showing the strength of a group and its capacity to contribute to the lawmaking process. Nevertheless, these organizations also need socially skilled leaders interacting with legislators that facilitate the coordination of their actions in

Congress. One contribution of this article is that while these two dimensions are conducive to acceptance, legislators' perceptions about tactics and social movements mediate the achieving salience and, as a result, the emergence of alliances.

Addressing the organizational dimension of acceptance, legislators deem lobbying as a necessary condition for all groups attempting to display their strength and adaptability. The relevance of lobbying is twofold. First, it signals a disposition and the capacity to participate in legislative politics as an informed actor. Second, it provides inputs that legislators can use to sustain their legislative activities, such as information supporting a policy stance. Therefore, social movement organizations willing to forge a close interaction with a legislator need to develop lobbying capacities to participate in congressional discussions.

The results also show the presence of different pathways leading to organizational strength, and legislators' perceptions about social movements are at the root of these differences. Chilean legislators, regardless of their degree of commitment for the movements' cause, expect labor organizations to lobby, protest, have partisan connections and a strong leadership. The history of the labor movement and the organizational capacities of the largest national unions, such as CUT or ANEF, are the standard to evaluate other labor groups. This is a burdensome bar for small labor organizations that cannot mobilize ample resources, reducing their odds of gaining organizational salience and, ultimately, building alliances in congress. On the contrary, the absence of a clear canon for the LGBT and environmental groups make them rely primarily on lobbying to gain salience in congressional spaces.

There is also evidence of the significance of micro interactions to understand how activists and legislators become allies. After gaining recognition, social movement organizations need socially skilled activists (Fligstein and McAdam 2010, Anderson 2018) capable to engage in personal contacts with MCs. The ability of these activists to frame their demands anticipating the interests and personal traits of legislators (e.g. personalities), and the read the overall context of congressional politics, increases the reputation of the social movement and enhances the resonance of the conversations between activists and legislators. Thanks to these conversations, both actors develop the mutual understanding and trust required to coordinate their actions in congress, such as drafting bills together or canvassing votes. The relevance of leadership echo the argument of Morris and Staggenborg (2004), who claim that movement leaders are strategic decision-makers that matter at all levels of social movement activity.

These findings highlight some key points for the study of the interplay of social movements and congress. First, the presence of legislative allies is not a contextual factor but a resource social movements can obtain by developing organizational capacities to deploy repertoires of action and having empowered leaders in charge of contacting legislators. This research does not claim that ideological (Giugni and Yamasaki 2009) or biographical (Steil and Vasi 2014) features are ineffectual at explaining how legislators become sympathetic to a social movement. Instead, it complements this approach by showing that alliances emerge through a more complex process where social movements can turn legislators into allies.



Bringing political elite's perceptions about social movements and their repertoires of action is also necessary to understand the potential effects of mobilization in congress. Elite perceptions shape the effectiveness of mobilization repertoires required to gain political acceptance in congress, as the cases of the LGBT, environmental and labor movements illustrate. These results complement other studies pointing at the perceptions of group deservingness among political elites to explain the effects (or lack thereof) of social mobilization on policy outcomes (Skrentny 2006, Skocpol 1992, Quadagno 1994).

Considering elite perceptions also nuances the role of context and explaining the effectiveness of social mobilization. As political mediation argues movements (Amenta 2006, Amenta et al 1992), the impacts of social movement repertoires depends on contextual factors of the polity, such as its democratization or the practices of its political parties. In this case, although the Chilean environmental, LGBT, and labor movements act under the same structural conditions, they need to deploy different tactics to gain salience and build alliances based on the perceptions of legislators. Then, the sensitivities and biases of members of congress can explain variations in the effects of mobilization in the same polity across social movements.

One limitation of this research is its focus on established social movements that have had several years to build connections with members of the polity and be considered as field actors. As extra-institutional actors, social movements are at a constant disadvantage to influence the policymaking process. This limitation is greater for nascent organizations from movements that lack the seniority to have wide social recognition may struggle to be on the radar of legislators, even if they use lobbying to approach legislators. Further

research could account for different movement-level conditions that constrain the potential salience and access of social movement organizations to political spaces.

Appendix Table 2.3 Truth Table for activists

Protest	District	Partisan	Media	Referral	Lobby	Electio- neering	Out- come	Consis- tency	Number of cases
1	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	11 labor
0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	5 env. and 2 LGBT
1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	4 labor
0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	4 env.
0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	4 LGBT
0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	2 LGBT
0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1 LGBT
0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1 LGBT
0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	1 LGBT
0	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	1 LGBT
0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	5 Labor
0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1 env.
0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1 env.

Appendix Table 2.4 Truth table for legislators

Protest	District	Partisan	Media	Leadership	Lobby	Outcome	Consistency	Number of Cases
0	0	0	1	0	1	1	1	4
0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	3
0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	2
1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	1
1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1
0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **HELPING CHALLENGERS ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS: ASSESSING THE EFFECT OF ELITE ALLIES IN CONGRESS THROUGH BILL AMENDMENTS**

#### **Introduction**

Scholars have long theorized about the positive effect of counting with elite allies to increase the influence of social movements in the political system (Tarrow 1989, Meyer 2004). However, research results show mixed evidence on the role and effectiveness of legislative allies in congressional discussions. While some studies find that allied members of congress facilitate the passage of bills and programs that meet the demands of social movements (Amenta 2006; Cress and Snow 2000; Johnson, Agnone and McCarthy 2010), others find little or no effect (Olzak and Urihg 2001, Soule and Olzak 2004).

The focus on the passage of a law could partially explain the perceived lack of effectiveness of social movements and their legislative allies. Bills compete against a myriad of other policy issues for the attention of congress, having a short opportunity window to be discussed and approved by committees and the floor before becoming stagnant and die (Kingdon 1984). Also, the passage of a law requires the convergence of varied institutional actors and stakeholders that are more powerful than the authors of a bill (e.g. party leaders, the Executive power), which have the power to move bills forward by controlling the agenda, pace and focus of the discussion over subsequent stages. Thus, only a slim fraction of all bills becomes a law (Burstein, Bauldry, and Froese 2007), making this a restrictive measure to assess the influence of activists and their allies in congress.

Considering the barriers bills need to overcome to become laws, in this chapter I argue that movement allies in congress can assist activists' demands by presenting or

cosponsoring amendments that modify the content of bills under legislative discussion.

Therefore, I direct the analysis to studying the ability of movement allies and challengers to influence the lawmaking process at the committee level, which is the most relevant space of legislative discussion in congress. I test this argument analyzing the amendment process of four laws of interest of the Chilean environmental, labor and environmental movements. I follow a mixed methods approach to test this argument, using logistical regressions with random effects and interviews with activists.

This focus contributes to the study of the effects of social movement allies in congress in two ways. First, following Amenta et al (2005), unless social movements have a clear and precise goal, measures of success or failure are inaccurate. Activists may fail to achieve their main demand, but they can still partially achieve some of their goals. Applying this insight to the role of legislative allies, introducing and approving a bill may be beyond their capacities in congress, but they can still deliver long-lasting benefits by amending the content of legislation reflecting challengers' interests.

Second, instead of assuming that members of congress are de facto allies because of ideological, partisan, or biographical reasons (Steil and Vasi 2014; Soule and Olzak 2004; Olzak, Soule, Coddou and Munoz 2016, among others), I consider the perspective of activists at defining who is a legislative ally. While ideological affinities ease the interactions between activists and members of congress (hereafter MCs), an alliance implies developing a mutual understanding on specific policy preferences and coordinating efforts at crafting and presenting amendments. Therefore, movement allies in congress are a subset of those MCs who are sympathetic due to ideological or other motivations.

This is the order of presentation of this chapter: the first section addresses the interaction of legislators and activists, discussing how activists define who is their ally in congress. In the second section I situate the potential effects of movement allies during the lawmaking process. The third section examines the case selection, the data and the variables used. The fourth section presents the results of the statistical analysis, providing evidence on the effectiveness of legislative allies at amending legislation compared to other relevant stakeholders. The fifth section discusses these results and concludes.

### **Legislative Allies and Social Movements**

The literature generally considers partisanship as a sufficient condition to define who is a legislative ally. For example, progressive or leftist parties are identified in Western democracies as allies of the labor (Schlozman 2015), environmental (Johnson et al. 2010; Olzak et al. 2016), women's rights (Soule and Olzak 2004), or homeless movements (Cress and Snow 1996, 2000). This perspective assumes the ideological affinities between progressive legislators and activists are enough to bring them together to push for policy changes and does not look at their interplay in detail (Skrentny 2006).

While this approach has found evidence about the positive effect legislative allies have for social movement outcomes in congress, it suffers from an important shortcoming. Research in political science consistently shows that political parties are not monolithic blocks but organized groups with internal ideological differences. Since not all the legislators from the same party will agree on how to solve a social problem or how to vote

on the floor (McCarty 2001, Carey 2002), most analyses conflate the effects of party members and allies (see Amenta 2006 and Steil et al 2014 for exceptions). Moreover, if all members of a party would inevitably sympathize or ally with a movement, the best way for activists to secure their demands would be to push for legislative discussions once their allies control Congress. However, research shows social movements struggle to achieve all their demands even in the presence of sympathetic political agents (Olzak and Uhrig 2001; Kriesi, Koopmans, Duyvedak and Giugni 1995).

According to the activists interviewed in this research, an ally is not necessarily a MC with shared ideological affinities, but a legislator with whom they have generated and acquaintanceship and trust bond that facilitates their coordination in congress. Respondents from the Chilean LGBT movement illustrate this point when they mention the unresponsive and even hostile stance of the head of the hypothetically supportive Socialist Party during the discussion of civil unions in congress. Respondents mention that what distinguishes their allies from other legislators is that they work closely with activists to enhance the odds that a bill of their interest becomes a law. They do so by sharing information, drafting bills or amendments, canvassing votes, or holding joint press conferences. Considering the intensity of this bond, activists only develop this level of coordination and closeness with a subset of all the sympathizers they find in congress. In consequence, this research considers the perspective of activists to define a set of legislative allies.

### **The Action of Legislative Allies in the Lawmaking Process**

Most congresses around the world show an important degree of isomorphism in the norms and procedures guiding the lawmaking process, facilitating the analysis about the role of legislative allies across polities (Shaw 1998). There are three factors that are particularly relevant to understand the fate of a bill. The first is the gatekeeping role of legislative committees, as they can advance, modify, or kill a bill under their jurisdiction before it reaches the floor (Heath et al. 2005). Since the specialized discussion of a bill takes place in the committee, the decision and opinions of its members informs the votes of the rest of MCs once the bill reaches the floor (Francis and Riddlesperger 1982; Burstein et al. 2007). Also, it is at this stage that legislators present amendments that incorporate activists' demands or canvass the votes of other committee members and their partisan caucuses. Therefore, the action of legislative allies in a reduced but key decision-making space such as the committee is crucial to secure all or some of the aspirations of a social movement during the discussion of a bill.

In the larger context of legislative politics, there are three conditions that mediate the likelihood of bill or amendment approval in congress. One relevant is the policy specialization of the legislator who cosponsors it, particularly at the committee level (Krehbiel 2010, Thomas and Moore 1991, Anderson et al 2003), since legislators developing a reputation for focusing their work on a policy field are more likely to see their bills and amendments approved by their peers. Based on the interviews I conducted with legislators and activists, those MCs who are seen as allies of a social movement are usually considered highly specialized on their respective fields within Congress. For instance, these

legislators usually hold degrees relevant to their areas of policy expertise and have also organized or lead informal ad hoc cross-partisan groups in support of a social movement, such as the Green Caucus in favor of the environmental movement (Somma and Medel 2017).

Hypothesis 1: Amendments cosponsored by allied legislators will be more likely to be approved compared to those presented by other committee members.

A second condition is what King et al. (2005) and other scholars coin as the theory of legislative logic (Cornwall et al 2007, Soule and King 2006). According to this theory, a fragmented legislative process mediates the influence of challengers, where every subsequent stage of the lawmaking process is more stringent than the previous one. This means that the demands of social movements should be less likely to be considered after a bill has been voted by a chamber and passes to the next one for its final approval, and also that the content of a bill is less likely to change. However, as institutional actors, allied legislators are still central to the discussion of bills even at advanced stages of the lawmaking process in congress, having the potential to convey the movement's demands to more advanced legislative stages (Soule and Olzak 2004).

Political scientists complement this notion by providing evidence suggesting the differences in legislative behavior and bill approval rates between congressional chambers (Cox and McCubbins 2005, Gailmard and Jenkins 2007). For instance, Calvo (2007) argues



that senators are more disciplined in their voting compared to deputies, leaving less space for autonomous behavior once political parties (or the presidency) attempt to achieve a certain political outcome. The accounts of all the interviewed activists confirm these differences, pointing at the Senate as the less responsive chamber in Congress. This was specially the case in the Labor and Water Code reforms, where several left and right-wing senators showing a more conservative stance in favor of the status quo.

Hypothesis 2a: The amendments proposed by allied legislators will be equally likely to be approved at any stage of the lawmaking process.

Hypothesis 2b: The amendments proposed by allied legislators in the Senate will be more likely to be approved than those presented by other senators.

The third and crucial factor is the ascendance of the Executive power in the lawmaking process, which has been surprisingly neglected in most research on the legislative consequences of social movements. The reason for that is the scholarly focus on the American case (Andrews 2001, Amenta 2006, Skocpol 1992, Soule and King 2006), where Congress has the sole authority to present bills and the Presidency relies on their party to set the legislative agenda (Cox and McCubbins 1994). This is an exception compared to the rest of the world, since in presidential and parliamentary systems the Executive has direct attributions over agenda-setting, the timing of discussions, exclusive initiative prerogatives on several policy issues (e.g. budget or creating new bureaucracies)

and can present amendments to any bill under discussion (Cox and Morgenstern 2001, Aleman 2006). These advantages turn the sponsoring or explicit support of the Executive power a key condition for the approval of laws in places like France and Chile (Londregan 2007). Thus, an analysis of the legislative influence of social movements and their allies must consider the effect of the Executive power on the lawmaking process.

### **Social Movements and Legislative Activism**

Social movements deploy different tactics attempting to attract legislators' attention and influence the lawmaking process (Amenta et al 2010). Among those, protesting is usually considered useful (Piven and Cloward 1977, Biggs and Andrews 2015, McAdam and Su 2002), as it draws public opinion and media coverage while it delivers information about a pressing societal issue (Burstein 1999). However, protesting was not a repertoire activists used during the congressional discussion of the four major reforms studied in this research. While the labor movement only marched once during the first stage of the Labor Code reform, the LGBT and environmental movements did not hold ad hoc mobilization efforts during the discussions of the bills of their interest.

Instead, all the organizations in the sample declared their reliance on institutional activism, particularly lobbying and participating in committee hearings. Several scholars have pointed at participating at committee meetings and lobbying legislators as particularly effective tactics challengers use to persuade legislators (Granados and Knoke 2005, Andrews 2001, Schlozman and Tierney 1986). Considering this evidence, the

presence of social movement organizations during the discussion of amendments in legislative committees should be positively correlated with their approval.

Hypothesis 3: The presence of social movement organizations at committee meetings should be positively correlated with the approval of amendments.

### **The discussion of historical demands**

The cases of the environmental, LGBT and labor movements in Chile are useful instances to assess the influence of activists and their legislative allies in a context where the Executive power has a strong role in the lawmaking process. Over the last ten years, the Chilean Congress has approved or at least discussed to an advanced stage some of the historical demands of these movements. The four legal transformations briefly outlined below share two relevant commonalities for the study of the action of movement allies and activists in congress. First, although some of them started as bills proposed by legislators, they all received the explicit support of the Executive power in its general idea, making the Presidency a pivotal actor in their discussion. Second, all the respondents in the sample mention that these reforms garnered the active support of most organizations in their respective movement, which allied with specific legislators to advocate for specific amendments during the committee discussions.

#### *Labor Code Reform*

Since the democratic restoration of 1990, the Chilean labor movement pushed for structural reforms to the Chilean Labor Code. Although a coalition of center-left parties ruled the country uninterrupted for 20 years, the cross-partisan elite consensus on neoliberal policies, an unyielding right, the political caution of the left, and the low levels of unionization in the country contributed to explain the lack of major reforms during this period (Drake 2003, Frank 2004). The situation changed in 2013, when the then candidate Michelle Bachelet ran for the presidency included in her platform a reform of the Chilean Labor Code. One of the key aspects of this campaign promise was to legislate on some of the historical demands of the movement, such as regulating collective bargaining (Barria, Araya and Drouillas 2012). This promise was particularly significant since the 65<sup>th</sup> article of the Chilean Constitution stipulates that only the President can present policy reforms on that policy issue.

Once elected and after incorporating the comments of national unions and private interest groups, in December of 2014 Bachelet introduced a bill that started its discussion in the Chilean Chamber of Deputies. The reform faced the fierce opposition of the right and even of some centrist legislators from the ruling coalition, who questioned its potential negative effects on economic growth. While the capacity to lawfully present amendments on some issues of this reform is an exclusive prerogative of the Executive, labor movement allies successfully introduced modifications that clarified or expanded other elements of the reform. For instance, deputies Pascal, Andrade (two allies of the movement), and Melo presented and passed an amendment that protected the legal rights of union leaders in a meeting of the Labor Committee in June of 2015.

Once in the Senate, the discussion of this reform was less auspicious compared to that of the Chamber of Deputies. As activists pointed out, this is a more conservative chamber that pushed back even on some of the issues where the Presidency and the national unions agreed on. While some elements of the reform were watered down in the Senate, such as the binding character of collective bargaining, this bill was finally approved by Congress (Law 20940) in 2016.

### *Antidiscrimination and Civil Unions Laws*

The antidiscrimination and civil unions laws (Laws 20609 and 20830, respectively) respond to historical demands of the LGBT movement. The antidiscrimination bill was originally introduced to the Chilean Senate by the government in 2005, penalizing discrimination based on multiple grounds, including sexual orientation. The inception of the civil unions law was a bill introduced by right-wing senators in 2010. During the discussion of both laws, the LGBT organizations were active participants in the legislative process and the Executive power publicly supported their approval.

While the original text of both projects considered the main demands of the LGBT movement, the introduction of amendments became a battleground between the supporters and antagonists of both projects. For instance, senators Allende, Perez and Rossi (allies of the movement according to activists) successfully cosponsored an amendment in 2011 that incorporated gender identity into the categories recognized by the new antidiscrimination law. In the case of the civil unions law, senator Alvear (another ally) sponsored an amendment regulating the inheritance rights for partners, which was

approved and became part of the final version of the bill. Activists declared their constant interaction with their allied legislators in both cases, analyzing with them the bill under discussion and discussing or drafting necessary modifications. Therefore, the amendments presented by the elite allies at the committee level improved the content of the resulting bill by incorporating multiple demands of the LGBT movement.

### *Water Code Reform*

Finally, the reform to the Chilean Water Code also represents a long-term demand of the Chilean environmental movement, which started its formal discussion after a group of allied legislators presented a bill in 2011 (Bill 7543-12). According to the Chilean Water Code, water is a privatized economic good traded as a commodity in a free water market. Given the negative side effects of this policy at limiting the water supply for human consumption and overexploiting reservoirs (Bauer 2004), this reform aimed at regulating the market, granting the state more rights to oversee the rational use of this resource, and ending the perpetual cession of water rights to private agents.

The Chamber of Deputies approved this bill in 2016 with a content that reflected the movement's demand, thanks to the support and amendments of sympathetic legislators and allies. However, the center-left government introduced new amendments in the Senate that lessened the changes in the water rights (Arellano 2017). By 2019, the new right-wing government introduced additional amendments that preserved the status quo by not modifying the ownership of valid water rights.

## Data Coding and Variables

The data collection and selection of relevant bills included in this research followed three steps. First, I sampled the most important social movement organizations for each of the three movements included in this research, encompassing seven labor, nine LGBT, and 11 environmental organizations. The criterion to select the organization comes from the author's knowledge about the country, literature references, and key informants. Then, I asked 66 activists (leaders or board members) of those groups to mention the most important bills presented to Congress in the last ten years (2006-2016). Respondents of the LGBT movement mentioned the antidiscrimination law enacted in 2012 (Law 20609), the law regulating civil unions approved in 2015 (Law 20830), and the then bill to recognize the right to gender identity (Law 21120); the labor movement activists mentioned the reform to the Chilean Labor Code passed in 2016 (Law 20940); and the environmental activists identified the project creating the national bureau of biodiversity (bill 9404-12), a bill protecting mountain glaciers (bill 9364-12), the reform of the water code (bill 7543-12), and an law providing incentives to renewable energy (law 20936).

The final stage of the data collection coded 2,053 amendments presented at the congressional committees reviewing the antidiscrimination, civil unions, and Labor Code reform laws, along with the Water Code reform bill. Three reasons informed the decision to select these four reforms. First, some of the other projects lack decisive Executive support and have not passed the first committee revision. Therefore, there are no amendments to analyze. Second, some of those salient projects have only passed the first round of

committee meetings(e.g. the bill on mountain glaciers), and their inclusion in the sample could bias the analysis by inflating the effect of the first stage of discussion. Third, most organizations in each social movement participated in the discussion of the four selected projects, which avoids counting niche demands. For example, while all environmental groups agreed that promoting renewable energy was desirable, only one organization participated in the discussion of that law (Chile Sustentable). Thus, considering all the bills that are important for a movement (Olzak and Soule 2009) could underestimate the effect of social movements in Congress since not all projects are equally relevant to activists and/or not all organizations are capable of participating in all legislative discussions.

### *Dependent variable*

The dependent variable is the approval of an amendment, and the unit of analysis is all the amendments presented during the committee discussions of the four aforementioned projects. Since the pieces of legislation included were reviewed by the same number of committees in the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies (depending of where the bill started its discussion), the voting of the amendments is bounded to each reviewing committee. This makes it possible to link the voting of amendments in specific committee sessions to the presence of social movements and to incorporate changes in public opinion.



The advantage of using amendments instead of laws to evaluate the effectiveness of legislative allies in congress comes from the effects those modifications can have in the final bill. While the substantive effect of the amendments can vary (Kreppel 1999), this research assumes that those changes presented by allied MCs will favor the movement even if they aim at clarifying content. Therefore, amendments presented by legislative allies are more likely to achieve incremental gains in favor of a movement compared to laws that may never leave the first committee discussion.

The coding of this dichotomous dependent variable considered an amendment approved in case it passed the committee vote, and rejected if it did not pass the vote, was declared inadmissible, or was withdrawn by its author. This coding also takes into consideration the role of the Presidency in the discussion. Sometimes the Executive power decides to sponsor a modification presented by a legislator, introducing an amendment conveying the same original intent, which turns the piece presented by the legislator inadmissible. When that was the case, I coded the original amendment presented by the legislator as approved, in case the Executive amendment passed the committee vote, or rejected otherwise.

### *Independent Variables*

*Ally Cosponsor.* This is a dichotomous variable measuring the presence of at least one ally sponsoring (or cosponsoring) an amendment based on the account of the activists about who was their allied in Congress throughout the discussion of a project. During the

interviews I asked the respondents about those legislators they felt sympathetic to their demands, and then about those they considered more committed to their cause. Based on the accounts of the respondents, I distinguished an ally from a sympathizer given the actions of the former in support of a bill or an amendment. While a sympathizer could vote in favor of an amendment, an ally also discussed (or drafted) the content of a modification with activists, also invited them as audience to committee meetings, or held joint press conferences. Therefore, this approach avoids the conflating the effect of assuming the alliance between a MC and a social movement based on their shared ideological affinities and provides more precise results of the role of those allies at the committee level. See Appendix Table 3.4 for a list with all the legislative allies identified by the respondents.

*Origin of Cosponsorships.* This categorical variable captures the partisan origin of the amendment. Those modifications introduced by legislators belonging entirely to the center-right coalition (*Alianza por Chile* or *Chile Vamos*) were labeled as “right,” becoming the reference category; those amendments sponsored by legislators from the center-left coalition (*Concertacion* or *Nueva Mayoria*, depending on the year) were labeled as “left,” and those amendments that included at least one member from a different coalition were labeled as “cross-coalition.” Considering the Executive power acts as a legislator by its own right regardless of its parties, the final category considers if the amendment was presented by the government. It is important to mention that the variable accounting for the presence of allies can overlap with this measure, since some allies come and presented amendments with legislators from both coalitions.

*Proportion of Organizations.* This variable reports the presence of social movement organizations in a reviewing committee as a proportion of all the groups that intervened during the discussion of a bill. I chose this measure instead of the raw number of social movement organizations participating in these debates given the restrictions of some committees to external audiences. For instance, committee meetings in the Chamber of Deputies tend to be more open than those in the Senate. Therefore, fewer organizations may partake in committee discussions at the Senate compared to the Chamber of Deputies, but they may be proportionally similar across all the intervening groups.

#### *Control Variables*

*Committee Chair.* This variable builds on the research of bills in congress, which shows that committee chairs are more likely to sponsor bills than other legislators (Anderson et al 2003, Cox and Terry 2008), and their proposals are more likely to be approved (Moore and Thomas 1991). Additionally, chairs are usually highly invested in the content of the bills reviewed by their committee and have relevant prerogatives, such as controlling the order of the discussion and voting of amendments. Therefore, having a chair cosponsoring an amendment is an important condition to assess the salience of movement allies.

*Number of Cosponsors.* An intervening factor that can affect the rate of amendment approval is the number of legislators cosponsoring it. As an indicator of support, larger

numbers of cosponsors may signify to a committee the broad support an amendment has. In exchange, those cosponsors can personally persuade other legislators within or across coalitions to back the modification, increasing its chances of approval. This variable is based on previous findings in legislative studies indicating that bills with larger numbers of cosponsors are more likely to become a law (Aleman and Calvo 2010).

*Chamber.* Research points at differences between congressional chambers regarding their power to control the legislative discussion (Gailmard and Jenkins 2007), or their discipline when supporting bills presented by the Executive power (Aleman 2007). Considering that all the activists in the sample pointed at the Senate as a chamber where the discussion of bills becomes harder to shape, I included a dummy variable considering if the amendment was introduced for discussion at the Chamber of Deputies or the Senate.

*Public Opinion.* Public opinion has been long regarded as a crucial element to evaluate the viability of legislation that can also lessen the effectiveness of social movement action in congress (Amenta, Olasky and Caren 2005; Burstein 2009; Olzak and Soule 2009). This variable contains direct indicators for the approval of the Labor Code Reform and the Civil Union laws thanks to a monthly survey (conducted by Cadem from 2014 to 2016) that monitored the public support for these bills. The other two bills consider proxy surveys. For the Water Code reform, I used a survey (Adimark) evaluating the government's approval on environmental affairs, which is the closest measure available to assess people's

perception on this issue. For the antidiscrimination laws I used the Latin American Public Opinion, which has a question related to people's tolerance to homosexuality since 2006.

*Government Ideology:* Considering the environmental and LGBT bills were discussed across different presidencies, this control variable accounts for the potential effect of the president's ideological standing (Soule et al 2016, Agnone 2007). The reference category is having a center-right government in power.

### **Method of Analysis**

This research uses random effects logit models to analyze the 2,053 amendments presented in the four bills studied. This method allows to analyze variations in the dependent variable accounting for unobserved factors that may affect the amendment approval likelihood for each one of the bills discussed. This strategy is preferable over fixed effects logistic regression as it does not assume the same slopes and variances across the amendments discussed under each bill. Instead, it allows for variations in the error terms across groups (in this case, bills) starting from a common intercept, yielding more precise results. Moreover, the use of random effects helps to reduce the bias caused by some bills having larger numbers of amendments. Table 1 reports the number of amendments presented by legislators for each bill and the percentage they represented from the total number of changes proposed. The figures for those amendments sponsored by legislative allies overlap with those originated by other actors, except from the government.

Table 3.1. Number of Amendments Introduced by Law, Sponsor, and Stage.

Law/Bill	Left Party	Right Party	Cross-Coalition	Executive Power	Ally	Total
<i>Labor Code Reform</i>						
Stage 1	324 (54%)	186 (31%)	0 (0%)	93 (15%)	253 (42%)	603
Stage 2	221 (41%)	156 (29%)	43 (8%)	121 (22%)	130 (24%)	541
					Total	1144
<i>Civil Unions Law</i>						
Stage 1	112 (44%)	111 (44%)	4 (2%)	25 (10%)	113 (45%)	252
Stage 2	28 (47%)	18 (30%)	13 (22%)	1 (2%)	25 (42%)	60
					Total	312
<i>Antidiscrimination Law</i>						
Stage 1	25 (64%)	12 (31%)	2 (5%)	0 (0%)	9 (23%)	39
Stage 2	50 (28%)	89 (50%)	5 (3%)	36 (20%)	39 (22%)	180
					Total	219
<i>Water Code Reform</i>						
Stage 1	109 (47%)	46 (20%)	25 (11%)	50 (22%)	108 (47%)	230
Stage 2	58 (40%)	10 (7%)	0 (0%)	80 (51%)	31 (21%)	148
					Total	378

Although the election of random effects over fixed effects in this case violates one of the assumptions of the model (the lack of correlation between the regressor and the unit effects), this is only problematic in cases of high levels of correlation (Clark and Linzer 2015). Considering the endogeneity of several of the variables, I conducted logistic regression diagnostics (e.g. model specification and correlation tests), which reported no specification or correlation problems.

## Results

Table 2 delivers the results for the approval of amendments in the Chilean Congress testing the effects of cosponsorship and set of control variables. The first model is the most basic in the analysis, measuring the likelihood of an amendment being approved in a committee given the ideological standing of the cosponsor, with the amendments

presented by right-wing legislators as the reference category. Here, the modifications introduced by leftist legislators are significantly more likely to be approved compared to those presented by right-wing members of congress.

Table 3.2. Effects of Sponsorship on the Approval of Committee Amendments

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Left-Right Cosponsors	1.598*** (0.291)	1.332*** (0.307)	1.600*** (0.291)	1.308*** (0.309)	1.280*** (0.307)	1.324*** (0.308)	1.216*** (0.310)
Left Party Cosponsors	0.789*** (0.161)	0.367 (0.200)	0.772*** (0.163)	0.323 (0.203)	0.296 (0.204)	0.336 (0.202)	0.287 (0.204)
Government Cosponsor	4.150*** (0.206)	4.144*** (0.206)	4.122*** (0.209)	4.151*** (0.214)	4.076*** (0.209)	4.121*** (0.209)	4.120*** (0.213)
Ally Cosponsor		0.678*** (0.182)		0.779*** (0.197)	0.902*** (0.219)	0.499* (0.241)	0.675*** (0.260)
Proportion of Orgs.			-0.003 (0.004)	-0.005 (0.004)	-0.006 (0.004)	-0.005 (0.004)	-0.005 (0.004)
Ally # Chair				-0.376 (0.354)			-0.271 (0.357)
Ally # 2 <sup>nd</sup> Stage					-0.451 (0.270)		-0.968** (0.332)
Ally # Senate						0.345 (0.269)	0.894** (0.336)
<i>Controls</i>							
Chair Cosponsor	0.854*** (0.184)	0.816*** (0.185)	0.860*** (0.185)	1.048*** (0.279)	0.770*** (0.190)	0.860*** (0.188)	0.962*** (0.282)
Number of Cosponsors	-0.047 (0.041)	-0.074 (0.042)	-0.050 (0.041)	-0.067 (0.044)	-0.074 (0.042)	-0.07 (0.043)	-0.036 (0.045)
Second Stage	0.365* (0.166)	0.480* (0.169)	0.337* (0.171)	0.426* (0.174)	0.635** (0.210)	0.451** (0.174)	0.912*** (0.241)
Senate	-0.471** (0.173)	-0.531** (0.174)	-0.400* (0.197)	-0.433* (0.200)	-0.433* (0.199)	-0.571* (0.233)	-0.880*** (0.261)
Public Opinion	0.058*** (0.005)	0.057*** (0.005)	0.058*** (0.005)	0.058*** (0.005)	0.058*** (0.005)	0.058*** (0.005)	0.057*** (0.005)
Government Ideology	-0.068 (0.379)	0.061 (0.380)	-0.051 (0.380)	-0.056 (0.382)	0.098 (0.380)	0.166 (0.385)	0.243 (0.384)
Constant	-4.590*** (0.514)	-4.700*** (0.516)	-4.496*** (0.528)	-4.575*** (0.529)	-4.631*** (0.530)	-4.577*** (0.529)	-4.746*** (0.528)
Observations	2053	2053	2053	2053	2053	2053	2053

Standard errors in parentheses  
Results in Log odds

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

The second column includes the effect of having an ally legislator cosponsoring an amendment. The coefficient indicates that those amendments cosponsored by at least one movement ally are 1.96 times (converting it to odds ratio) more likely to be approved in the committee compared to those that do not. This effect remains significant and with a similar magnitude through models 2 to 7. Once the presence of allied legislators is taken into account the effect of left-wing cosponsorship loses significance, meaning that the approval chances for those amendments introduced by leftist members of congress are not different from those presented by right-wing politicians.

Column 3 includes the effect of the proportion of social movement organizations during the discussion of amendments in a committee. The results show a small and not significant effect for this variable on the likelihood of amendment approval. Therefore, there is no evidence to support third hypothesis about the positive effect of social movement organizations in the passage of amendments.

The congressional instances and spaces where MCs discuss amendments also influence their chances of being approved. Those modifications presented in the second stage of the legislative process are more likely to pass the committee vote compared to those introduced in the first stage. This result, significant across all models, challenges notions about the astringency of the legislative processes (King and Soule 2006), which limits the potential for modifying a bill in more advanced phases of the lawmaking process. Similarly, those amendments discussed in the Senate are significantly less likely to be



approved compared to those of the Chamber of Deputies across all models, as activists mentioned in the interviews.

The positive effect of having a social movement ally cosponsoring a bill becomes more nuanced once we consider the impact of those congressional factors on the approval of amendments using interaction terms. Column 4 shows that effect of having an amendment cosponsored by the chair of a committee and a legislative is not significant across all models. This means that the joint effect of having a modification cosponsored by both actors does not significantly affect its approval likelihood.

Columns 5 and 6 report the effect of having a bill cosponsored by an allied legislator in the second stage of the lawmaking process and in the Senate, respectively. Both interaction terms lack significance by themselves but become significant once considered together in column 7. The coefficient for the first interaction term is significant and negative, meaning that the positive effect of having an ally cosponsoring an amendment is reduced in the second stage of the legislative discussion. This result contradicts hypothesis 2a, which expected no differences in the approval of amendments presented by allied and non-allied MCs. The coefficient for the second interaction term shows that the effect of having an ally cosponsoring an amendment increases when they do that in the Senate. This result supports hypothesis 2b, which expected social movement allies in the Senate to be more effective at passing their amendments than their peers.

The other measures traditionally intervening in legislative processes show mixed results. Going against previous findings on the positive effect of having proposals cosponsored by larger numbers of legislators for its approval (Aleman and Calvo 2010),

this variable had no significant effects on the likelihood of an amendment passing the committee vote. Public opinion, on the other side, had a positive and significant effect on amendment approval across all models (Burstein 1999).

Analyzing the effect of having allied MCs cosponsoring amendments compared to other institutional actors situates their impact in perspective. Table 3 reports the estimated probabilities of amendment approval based on the last model.

Table 3.3. Estimated Probabilities of Amendment Approval

Conditions	Predicted Probabilities
Government	0.908
Committee Chair	0.435
Ally	0.361
Ally and Chair	0.506
Chamber of Deputies	0.337
Senate	0.223
Stage 1	0.210
Stage 2	0.321
Ally and 1 <sup>st</sup> Stage	0.367
Not Ally and 1 <sup>st</sup> Stage	0.158
Ally and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Stage	0.355
Not Ally and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Stage	0.320
Ally and Chamber	0.359
Not Ally and Chamber	0.316
Ally and Senate	0.363
Not Ally and Senate	0.160

Although the government is not the most active agent presenting amendments (around 20% of all amendments in Table 1), its proposals have over a .9 probability of being approved. Those amendments cosponsored by committee chairs have approximately a .43 probability to be approved, which are not significantly different from those presented

by allied legislators with a .36 probability. Therefore, while institutionally stronger actors have an advantage in the approval of their amendments, the changes proposed by social movement allies still have a high probability to pass a committee vote.

The next estimations also point at the positive effect of having an ally cosponsoring an amendment. Generally, having a social movement ally increased the likelihood of approval for an amendment at the Chilean Congress compared to those presented by other legislators. For instance, those modifications presented by a movement allies were more likely to pass in any stage of discussion in Congress or to be approved in its respective chamber. The difference in the estimation becomes larger in the Senate, where the amendments presented by social movement allies were more than twice more likely to be approved than those sponsored by non-allies.

## **Discussion**

The results report a consistent positive effect of having an ally cosponsor for the approval of an amendment in congressional committees, providing evidence in favor of the first hypothesis across all models. This finding is significant after considering the presence of other influential institutional actors, such as the committee chairs and the Executive Power, which have an advantageous position in the lawmaking process. Although the effect of having an ally cosponsoring an amendment is smaller compared to these actors, it still makes a significant difference in the approval of changes that can reflect the goal of social movement activists. This finding is also relevant considering the institutional barriers

activists face decreases their influence in the lawmaking process after the agenda-setting stage (King, Bentele and Soule 2007; Andrews and Edwards 2004).

The results also support the second group of hypotheses, which assessed the effectiveness of allied cosponsorships by discussion stage and chamber. There is support for hypothesis 2a, which established that those amendments introduced by allied legislators would be equally likely to be approved in the first and second stages of congressional discussion. Although committees are generally more likely to approve amendments presented during the second stage of the legislative discussion, there are no significant differences in the predicted probabilities for the approval of amendments cosponsored by allies comparing the first and second stage of discussion. This is a counterintuitive finding considering that the theory of legislative logic (Cornwall et al. 2007, King and Soule 2006) establishes that the stringency of the policymaking process decreases the likelihood of changes in a policy proposal as its discussion advances. Therefore, the chances to approve amendments should be lower in the second stage of legislative discussions.

Hypothesis 2b also considered the amendments introduced by allied senators as more likely to be approved than those cosponsored by other MCs. Results indicate that the Senate tends to approve fewer amendments than the Chamber of Deputies, but also that those amendments introduced by legislative allies in the Senate were more likely to be approved. Therefore, having allies in the Senate makes a positive difference for activists since that chamber is less likely to process amendments.

The consistent higher likelihood of approval for those amendments cosponsored by allied legislators not only provide evidence of their capacity to shape bills under discussion to support a social movement agenda. This also nuances previous understandings about the actions of allied legislators in congress. For instance, previous studies mention that MCs may present bills to appease their constituency, considering that introducing a piece of legislation is a costless effort with symbolic but inconsequential repercussions (Mayhew 1974, King and Soule 2006). While some amendments may fall into this category, the positive effect of having an allied MC cosponsoring an amendment suggests that these proposals are not necessarily testimonial tokens of support and that movement allies are invested in their approval by the committee.

Finally, the results do not provide support for the third hypothesis on the positive effect of having social movement organizations participating in committee meetings. The proportion of social movement organizations present during the discussion of a bill did not have a significant effect on the approval of amendments in Congress. This result requires a deeper interpretation and opinions based on the account of activists about their institutional activism. According to respondents, participating in a committee is relevant since their interventions become part of the history of the law, which judges use to interpret it. Also, in these spaces activists can publicly declare their support or opposition for an amendment and can publicly question legislators about their policy positions.

Respondents also declared that participating in a committee is not an inconsequential action but a requirement for engaging in legislative politics. Although legislators usually change their opinion through personal conversations, activists must still

be present in committee meetings since their absence could be interpreted as indifference on the issue under discussion, which affects their reputation in Congress. Thus, activists participate in a committee to build a reputation as a serious and committed organization on an issue. In consequence, the lack of statistical significance for the presence of social movement organizations in committee meetings does not necessarily mean they are ineffective in Congress, but that the effectiveness of their presence relates to other legislative necessities.

## **Conclusions**

This research advances the study of the political consequences of social movements, finding that the amendments cosponsored by allied legislators are likely to pass the committee voting and become part of a bill regardless of the stage of the discussion and the chamber. This finding is consistent with previous research on law approval (Amenta et al 1992) and provides empirical evidence to the hypothesized benefits activists can gain by obtaining elite allies in congress (Tarrow 1989, Amenta 2006, Meyer 2004), showing that activists can still be influential beyond the agenda-setting stage of the lawmaking process through the action of their allied MCs. Moreover, this study advances current theoretical understanding on the role of movement allies in congress in two ways.

First, including the activists' perspective to define what legislators are their allies in congress refines the analysis about the role of the latter at facilitating the achievement of social movements' goals. According to respondents, allied members of congress are

legislators who support the challengers' agenda working closely with the movement (e.g. discussing bills or amendment drafts with activists). This standard goes beyond the expectation that social movement allies primarily vote in favor of a piece of legislation and facilitates a more precise analysis on the role of allied legislators. It also avoids conflating the effects of allies with other MCs, as it could happen when defining allies based on proxies such as ideological affinities.

Second, bringing amendments into the analysis expands the theoretical discussion about the influence of social movements and their allies in the lawmaking process. In most congresses, only a very small fraction of all bills introduced passes the committee stage, and even fewer pass the floor votes. Moreover, bills usually become laws once crucial institutional actors, such as the Executive Power, decide to move the issue forward. Under this scenario, expecting social movements and its allies to pass a law when they compete against the vast prerogatives and resources of the Executive power or even committee chairs could underestimate their influence on the lawmaking process. Thus, focusing on bill amendments is a less constrictive bar which accounts for incremental gains that social movements and their allies can achieve on a process already influenced and moved by more powerful actors. Paraphrasing Amenta et al (2010), a social movement and its allies in congress may fail to pass a bill but can still shape the content of legislation using amendments and partially obtain some of their goals.

Although this research attempts to contribute to the comprehensive analysis about the role of social movement allies in congress, it has some important limitations. This research focused on bills that addressed historical and structural social movement

demands, bringing the attention and action of several organizations. This approach leaves niche demands out of the analysis, where only a small number of organizations and allies may be involved. Also, the effectiveness of allied legislators at presenting successful amendments does not mean their changes will necessarily prevail until the end of the lawmaking process. For instance, after the Labor Code Reform was approved in Congress, the Chilean Constitutional Court watered down some of its provisions favoring workers unionization. Therefore, other stages of the policymaking process, can also be a contested arena for social movements (Andrews and Edwards 2004, Amenta et al 2010).

Finally, considering the passage of policy as a fragmented process with multiple intervening actors (King et al 2005), future research should explore the influence of social movements and their allies in different venues and stages. For instance, as this research shows the involvement of the Executive power is a crucial condition to secure the approval of a law. Nonetheless, the mechanisms social movements can use to persuade the government and modify its legislative priorities are still at an incipient stage. Also, it is necessary to consider the action of social movements across different polities, which pose more restrictive or open political structures to challengers.



Appendix Table 3.4. Allied Legislators by Issue

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**Labor Code Reform**

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*Chamber of Deputies*

Andrade (PS), Boric (IA), Cariola (PC), Carmona (PC), Jackson (RD), Jimenez (PPD), Núñez (PC), Pascal (PS), Robles (PR), Saffirio (Ind.), Tellier (PC), Torres (DC), Vallejo (PC)

*Senate*

Goic (DC), Gomez (PR), Letelier (PS), Montes (PS), Muñoz (PPD), Navarro (MAS)

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**Civil Unions Law**

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*Chamber of Deputies*

Aguiló (IC), Boric (IA), Browne (Amplitud), Cariola (PC), Ciccardini (PS), Farias (PPD), Farkas (PPD), Fernandez (PS), Girardi C. (PPD), Godoy (Amplitud), Jackson (RD), Jimenez (PPD), Kast (Evopoli), Leon (DC), Mirosevic (PL), Pascal (PS), Rubilar (Amplitud), Sabat (RN), Saffirio (Ind.), Soto (PS), Tellier (PC), Torres (DC), Vallejo (PC), Walker (DC)

*Senate*

Alvear (DC), De Urresti (PS), Letelier (PS), Muñoz (PPD), Perez (Amplitud), Rossi (PS)

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**Antidiscrimination Law**

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*Chamber of Deputies*

Aguiló (IC), Fariás (PPD), Farkas (PPD), Girardi C. (PPD), Pascal (PS), Rubilar (Amplitud), Saa (PPD), Sabat (RN), Saffirio (Ind.)

*Senate*

Allende (PS), De Urresti (PS), Naranjo (PS), Letelier (PS), Núñez (PS), Perez (Amplitud)

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**Water Code Reform**

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*Chamber of Deputies*

Ciccardini (PS), Girardi C. (PPD), Jackson (RD), Lemus (PS), Melo (PS), Mirosevic (PL), Provoste (DC), Sepúlveda (PRI), Soto (PS), Vallejo (PC), Vallespín (DC)

*Senate*

De Urresti (PS), Horvath (Ind.), Navarro (MAS)

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## CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

“[During the approval of the Labor Code reform in the Senate] There was a trap there, absolutely. Christian Democrats and some PPD senators knew the right would dispute the law in the Constitutional Tribunal and we would lose it. No matter what they voted for, the thing [Labor Code reform] would be rejected there. We are not rookies, we know how things are. They [the senators] wanted us to believe they voted in conscience, but they voted because they had a strategy. They even gave arguments in the floor so the right could go to the Constitutional Tribunal... we have been too long into this to believe in Santa”

Rodrigo, Labor Movement Leader

It took over 20 years for the Chilean labor movement to have a bill that recognized some of their core demands, such as collective bargaining. The Labor Code reform was approved in Congress and counted with the support of the center-left that was in control of the Senate at the time. Yet, as the above quote shows, not all labor movement activists did not consider the center-left senators as allies. They distinguished between the senators that decidedly supported the reform from those who voted for it because of governmental and partisan pressures but were really against it.

I started this dissertation with a motivation: to analyze the dynamics of the interaction between activists and their allies in congress, investigating how actors defined and reached that level of interaction, and what consequences it had for the policy demands of social movements. Considering testimonies such as the one provided by Rodrigo, this research finds that the alliance and cooperation between activists and legislators is nuanced and complex, embedded in the perceptions of the actors involved and restricted to a limited amount of members congress. Contrary to most research approaches, researchers

need to be aware of how to observe this phenomenon and take into account the perceptions of activists, since they are the actors directly involved in moving their demands in congress.

This dissertation makes two main contributions to the study of the interactions between activists and elected officials, and particularly to the interplay of activists with their allies in congress. The first is theoretical and provides precision to political process theory, as it has consistently seen legislative allies as a structural condition favorable for social movement action. This research shows that these allies are not a structural condition per se, but a category of subject that needs to be studied directly. Legislators act in multiple spaces and ponder different sets of considerations, such as their personal convictions and ambitions, the needs of their constituents, and the mandates of their party. All those elements, combined, shape their behavior and their receptivity to social movements. These differences explain why there are allies willing to support a social movement across multiples issues over time, and why others display a more contingent support.

The second is methodological. Using interviews to define who is an ally in congress and the extent to that support (long-term or circumstantial) enables a better assessment of their influence and assistance to social movements. Most research uses proxy variables to account for the presence of legislative allies, and partisan affiliation is the most common of those measures (Olzak and Soule 2004, Cress and Snow 2000, King et al 2005, among others). Because of that conflation of multiple legislators into one category, research falls into wrongful assumptions such as expecting every member of a party to support a social movement, when in reality is usually a fraction of them. A more precise operationalization

of this variable can lead to more robust results about the effects of having legislative allies in congress, and also to a more exact interpretation about the role these allies play in the larger scheme of the lawmaking process.

## **Summary of Findings**

Chapter Two analyses the dynamics of the interaction between activists and legislators, considering their motivations and exchange patterns. Previous studies suggest an instrumental approach to explain the interplay of these actors (Vasi et al 2014, Clemens 1997), meaning that members of congress and challengers will cooperate to the extent their actions facilitate achieving a specific policy outcome. This research finds that repeated interactions enables the presence of two kinds of allies, long-term and circumstantial, and activists engage in different patterns of interaction with each one of these categories. When it comes to circumstantial allies, activists and legislators sustain an instrumental interaction, as expected in the literature. Activists strategically provide resources that assist the legislative needs of their allies (e.g. information about policy), and members of congress draft legislation or lobby their peers to secure the approval of a bill. Their coordination is bounded to a specific bill and lasts the time it takes for its approval in congress or until the legislator remains interested in it. On the contrary, moral and affective motives become present in the interaction between activists and long-term allies. While the instrumental rationality does not disappear, I show that members of congress are willing to endanger their career because of their personal commitment with the movement,

supporting it despite potential threats by their parties or constituencies. In return, activists nuance their instrumental motivation by cultivating a relation with these lasting allies engaging in non-legislative interactions and exchanges over time.

Although there are legislators that are sympathetic to a social movement because of instrumental or moral reasons, that initial disposition does not explain why some organizations obtain allies in congress. Chapter Three argues that acceptance is a necessary condition for the emergence of an alliance, which involves gaining a status as an organization capable of engaging in legislative affairs with an empowered leadership. This chapter uses QCA to contrast the combination of the tactics activists and legislators consider conducive to organizational strength (Amenta et al 2010). I find that there are two main sets of combinatorial recipes that make a group organizationally relevant. Environmental and LGBT organizations primarily need to use lobbying, while labor movement groups also need to show protest potential and partisan connections. The perceptions legislators have about each movement explain these different requirements. Legislators expect unions to conform to a canon based on the historical repertoires of the labor movement in Chile, while the absence of a clear standard make them expect environmental and LGBT groups to show mostly lobbying capacities. Therefore, the labor movement faces a higher bar to gain organizational reputation compared to the other two movements. Since the interaction between activists and legislators takes place at a personal level, organizations across all movements need to have socially skilled activists (Fligstein and McAdam 2012) in charge of the interaction with legislators. Therefore, legislators willing to cooperate with a social movement agenda will be more likely to

establish a connection with organizations that have proved their capacity to engage in legislative politics and that have experienced and reliable leaders.

Chapter Four studies the consequences for social movements to have allies in congress. While most research studies the action of legislative allies focusing on the proposal and approval of laws (Amenta et al 1992, Soule et al 2016, Cornwall et al 2007) I instead center the analysis in the approval of amendments cosponsored by a movement ally. The rationale behind is that the approval of a law is a restrictive measure to assess the influence of movement allies, considering that in most congresses only a small fraction of all bills ever become a law. I identified a set of movement based on the accounts of activists on four relevant pieces of legislation: the Labor Code reform for the labor movement; the Antidiscrimination and Civil Unions laws for the LGBT movement; and the Water Code bill for the environmental movement. Using logistic regression with random effects, I find that the amendments introduced by legislative allies are more likely to pass a committee voting and become part of a bill. The positive effect of this cosponsorship favors the goals of social movements even in conditions that have been long considered as detrimental to the influence of challengers, such as the senate or more advanced stages of the lawmaking process (King et al 2005, Soule and King 2006).

### **Limitations and Directions for Future Research**

This research has important limitations that should be considered in future research on this topic. The most relevant of those relate to the case selection, at the national and

movement levels. Addressing the national-level selection, the selection of Chile favors the comparability of results with other countries with similar political structures, ranging from Latin American presidential systems to some parliamentary regimes (Londregan 2007). That is, countries like Costa Rica, Uruguay or France have similar party systems and legislative structures that facilitate the comparison of the interactions activists establish with legislators.

However, results may change if consider other political system with other institutional arrangements. For instance, in politics with more pervasive clientelistic practices, such as Argentina (Auyero and Benzecry 2017) or Italy (Piattoni 2001), social movement organizations may assume a more subordinate relation with decisions-makers. This feature may lead to purely instrumental patterns of interaction between the actors, conditioning the alliance to the capacity of a social movement organization to deliver votes in elections.

Also, different party systems and electoral rules may facilitate or limit the capacity of activists to build lasting interactions with legislators. In the case of Chile, the stable party system and the electoral system favor the acquaintanceship and establishment of lasting networks between activists and legislators, since incumbents have high chances of keeping their seats in consecutive elections (Toro and Valenzuela 2018, Cabezas and Navia 2005, Bunker and Navia 2015). However, in other polities with less institutionalized party systems like Peru (Mainwaring and Scully 1995, Seawright 2012), legislators have shorter legislative careers. Therefore, the lack of clear ideological boundaries among parties, along

with the relatively high level of replacement of legislators, can limit the capacity of social movements to forge an interaction with lawmakers and, ultimately, build an alliance.

The other set of limitations relate to the selection of social movements. The data for this dissertation came from relatively stable and consolidated movements in Chile, with groups that have been active over decades. The organizational continuity of the movement provides relevant advantages, such as sustaining legislative activism for several years and build formal and informal contacts with elected officials and influential politicians. On the contrary, newer social movements may fail to build a network of institutional acquaintances or may have the organizational resources but lack the skilled leadership necessary to interact with legislators.

The ideological affinities of this movement also present a limitation and an opportunity for future research. The Chilean environmental, LGBT and labor movements' goals tend to be ideologically closer to the center-left, and most of their allies (with the exception of the LGBT movement) are located in ideologically related parties. Right-wing movements in Chile (e.g. anti-abortion, anti-LGBT) may establish other mechanisms to attract the attention of conservative legislators, such as the endorsement of the Catholic Church or the use of personal class-based connections.



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