Positives of Interest Groups

- Stimulate interest in public affairs
- Membership is based on shared attitudes NOT geographic locations
- Provide useful, detailed info to govt.
- Vehicles for political participation
- Part of the checks and balance system of govt
  *Groups watching over what govt. does

Negatives of Interest Groups

- Own special interest may not be what is in the best interest of all Americans
- Influence not always determined by size, but by the better financed groups
- Hard to determine who or how many people the group actually represents
- Many groups don't represent the views of all the people that are a part of it
- Some tactics are unethical and could undermine the political system
  *Bribery
  *Contributions
  *Revenge

Why so many interest groups in the U.S?

U.S. is a diverse society = A lot of different interests

- Rules of the Game
  *1st Amendment = speak freely, petition, assemble
  *Decisions made at all levels of govt.
- Growth in Govt = Govt. affects all aspects of life
- Disturbances = Usually form when interests are threatened in some way
- Incentives = Join for a good cause
  Companionship