



# **Interfaith Advocacy: The Role of Religious Coalitions in the Political Process (Routledge Research in American Politics and Governance)**

*Katherine E. Knutson*

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Using the historic Minnesota state government shutdown of 2011 as a backdrop, *Interfaith Advocacy* describes the work of the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition, an interfaith advocacy group that brings together leaders from Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and Muslim traditions to advocate on behalf of a range of policies. As the nation's first statewide interfaith lobbying group, the story of the JRLC facilitates an examination of the role of political advocacy groups in state level American politics: what they are, how and why they form, how they mobilize citizens to participate in the political process, how they work to influence government, and what their impact is on American democracy.

With research based on two years of in-depth interviews, participant observation, and analysis of archival records, this volume offers proof that it is possible to build successful long term political coalitions among improbable allies. The book investigates both the strengths and weaknesses of this model of advocacy and concludes that the presence of religious advocacy groups in the political process offers substantial benefits of representation, concern for underrepresented issues and groups, and the development of networks of social capital.

Interfaith Advocacy is grounded in the theoretical literature of political science but also accessible to all readers who have an interest in political advocacy, state politics, or religion and politics.

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