

# Time, Place and Scope: A Journey through the U.S. Supreme Court & Its Friends\*

Sahar Abi-Hassan<sup>†</sup>    Janet M. Box-Steffensmeier<sup>‡</sup>    Garrett Carder<sup>§</sup>  
Dino P. Christenson<sup>¶</sup>    Enan Srivastava<sup>||</sup>

## Abstract

Law and geography are tightly intertwined, yet there is a dearth of work on this strategic interaction. In this paper we provide an exploratory analysis of the density of cases and interest groups as amici by geographical origin, across issue areas, and through time. Through a spatial analysis of the cert petitions filed in the US Supreme Court, we illustrate the heterogeneity level of each state based on the number of cases it outputs, under which issue areas and the number of interest groups lobbying said cases. We find that while the origin of cases on the Supreme Court follow an expected state size/number of cases proportion, some states are overrepresented while others remain underrepresented. Moreover, we find that these same states are equally overrepresented/underrepresented with respect to the number of amicus-filing organizations. This study provides the most comprehensive picture to date of the distribution of cases and amici groups through space and time, with important implications for understanding the ability of external actors to shape public policy through the U.S. Supreme Court.

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<sup>†</sup>Assistant Professor & Head of Legal Studies, Department of Public Policy and Political Science, Mills College, 5000 MacArthur Blvd. Oakland CA 94613. E: [sabihassan@mills.edu](mailto:sabihassan@mills.edu).

<sup>‡</sup>Vernal Riffe Professor of Political Science & Sociology, The Ohio State University, 2140 Derby Hall, 154 N. Oval Mall, Columbus, Ohio 43210. E: [box-steffensmeier.1@osu.edu](mailto:box-steffensmeier.1@osu.edu), P: (614) 292-2880, F: (614) 292-1146.

<sup>§</sup>Department of Computer Science and Engineering, The Ohio State University, 395 Dreese Laboratories, 2015 Neil Ave. Columbus, OH 43210. E: [carder.320@buckeyemail.osu.edu](mailto:carder.320@buckeyemail.osu.edu).

<sup>¶</sup>Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, Boston University, 232 Bay State Road, Boston, MA 02215. E: [dinopc@bu.edu](mailto:dinopc@bu.edu), P: (617) 358-6279, F: (617) 353-5508.

<sup>||</sup>Department of Computer Science and Engineering, The Ohio State University, 395 Dreese Laboratories, 2015 Neil Ave. Columbus, OH 43210. E: [srivastava.183@buckeyemail.osu.edu](mailto:srivastava.183@buckeyemail.osu.edu).