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## CORPORATE LOBBYING IN PARLIAMENT: OPERATIONALIZATION AND ASSESSMENT POSSIBILITIES EXEMPLIFIED BY USA AND RUSSIA

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**Abstract.** Lobbying studies are common in political science and economics, but only a few works are devoted to assessing a bill's lobbying potential. Empirical verification of theoretical judgments seems to be a logical continuation of discussions on lobbying. This article proposes a tool for assessing the lobbying potential of legislative initiatives, tested on real cases: a methodology combining quantitative and qualitative indicators, official and expert data. We tested it using comparative legal and statistical analysis, and expert estimations for two national cases: the United States, where there is a lobbying law, and the Russian Federation, where there is no such a law. We considered the resonant Build Back Better Act and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, both introduced as part of Joe Biden's Plan for a Clean Energy Revolution and Environmental Justice, and Social Gasification Act, voted as part of Vladimir Putin's address to the Federal Assembly. The influence of corporate lobbyists on the consideration of these initiatives was proven. While maintaining traditional ties with the Republican Party, U.S. fuel and energy corporations are establishing parallel contacts with representatives of the Democratic Party. The success of this tactics is confirmed by the profits of fuel and energy corporations, which were growing even against the backdrop of the "green" agenda of the ruling Democrats in Congress and the White House before the 2024 elections. In Russia, corporate interest in the high-monopolized fuel and energy sector is merging with state interest, de facto involving the president, the government and the both houses of parliament leaders in lobbying for the gas monopoly. The efforts of Russian lobbyists are concentrated not in parliament, but to a greater extent in the executive authorities, and thus bills introduced on behalf of the government may have lobbying potential, which is also evident in the example of the Social Gasification Act.

**Keywords:** lobbying, parliament, U.S. Congress, State Duma, fuel and energy complex, corporations, Exxon Mobil, Gazprom, green energy, social gasification.

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## КОРПОРАТИВНЫЙ ЛОББИЗМ В ПАРЛАМЕНТЕ: ВОЗМОЖНОСТИ ОПЕРАЦИОНАЛИЗАЦИИ И ОЦЕНКИ НА ПРИМЕРЕ США И РОССИИ

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**Аннотация.** В статье предложена методика оценки лоббистского потенциала законодательных инициатив. Она содержит количественные и качественные индикаторы, официальные и экспертные данные. Ее апробация на основе сравнительно-правового и статистического методов проведена для США, имеющих закон о лоббизме, и РФ, где его нет. Рассмотрены резонансные законопроекты 2021 г. Во-первых, об инвестициях в инфраструктуру и более качественном восстановлении, внесенные в рамках Плана революции в области чистой энергии и экологической справедливости Дж. Байдена (*Plan for a Clean Energy Revolution and Environmental Justice*). Во-вторых, о социальной догазификации, упомянутой в послании В. Путина Федеральному Собранию. Доказывается влияние корпоративных лоббистов на рассмотрение указанных инициатив.

**Ключевые слова:** лоббизм, парламент, Конгресс США, Государственная Дума, топливно-энергетический комплекс, корпорации, ExxonMobil, "Газпром", "зеленая" энергетика, догазификация.

## INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of lobbying has been actively researched for a long time across various branches of science. The RSCI database on the *e-library* platform alone contains more than 1,100 works on this subject, the first of which was published in 1995. About 75% of these studies are related to political science and law. Approximately 10% of the articles are published in authoritative scientific journals (the core of the RSCI), demonstrating a steady scholarly interest in the issue of lobbying.

However, Russian scholarship noticeably lacks publications, first, devoted to corporate lobbying in parliament, and second, proposing methods for assessing the lobbying potential of legislative initiatives. The relevance of these areas of study is associated with the fact that corporations have become the driving force of the global economy, and lobbying efforts are concentrated in legislative bodies, which adopt universally binding norms.

This gap is partly filled by foreign publications. For example, Hall et al. [1] reviewed the experience of lobbyist groups in U.S. legislative bodies based on lobbying reports, hearing transcripts, and interviews with congressmen and experts. Lits analyzed the lobbying technique known as Astroturfing – creating an artificial grassroots movement against legislative initiatives [2]. The work by Lorenz et al. [3] includes data on companies' attitudes toward bills considered in the U.S. Congress.

An analysis of anti-corruption declarations and other biographical sources shows that among the deputies of the Russian State Duma, there are owners of significant capital, indicating their lobbying activity [4]. Noble and Chaisty examined changes in the Russian parliament under United Russia's dominance in areas such as lawmaking, oversight, interest representation, elite recruitment, and legitimization [5].

It appears that operationalization – i.e., the empirical verification of theoretical judgments – can enhance discussions on lobbying. The present paper proposes a methodology for evaluating the lobbying potential of legislative initiatives, tested on real cases. To confirm its universality, the methodology is applied to two highly specific jurisdictions: the United States and Russia.

The subject of the study is bills in the fuel and energy sector. This choice is due to the significant influence of fuel and energy corporations on the economies of both countries, which are major exporters and consumers of fossil fuels. Their energy markets are highly monopolized, facilitating lobbying [6]. In the United States, the largest extractive companies are *ExxonMobil* and *Chevron*; in Russia – *Gazprom* and *Rosneft*. According to some publications, *NOVATEK* has strengthened its position in the Russian gas market in recent years [7].

Previously, both foreign and Russian researchers focused on the competition between conventional and renewable energy sources. It was found that the largest corporations in both the U.S. and Russia paid lip service to the “green” transition while actually slowing it down [1, 8]. In the U.S., this is partly due to the Republican Party's established ties with the oil and gas industry, whereas the Democratic Party supports the development of green energy [9]. These party divisions are reflected in legislative discussions on the development of the fuel and energy complex. The influence of meso-institutions – regulatory agencies that occupy an intermediate position between macro-institutions (e.g., parliament) and micro-institutions (companies) – is growing [10].

## THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

Signs of lobbyist interference in the legislative process can be identified when Astroturfing is detected [2], or when a particular bill is mentioned in corporate documents or in the speeches of company representatives, including at parliamentary hearings [1]. Additional indicators include the biographical data of deputies – particularly their previous employment in corporations (the “revolving door” practice) [11], among others. Sources from which conclusions about lobbying can be drawn also include corporate reports, transcripts of meetings and hearings, bill databases [3], anti-corruption declarations, party contribution reports [4], as well as interviews, journalistic investigations, and media coverage [10].

The degree of production regulation and the size of the tax burden on an industry can be used to assess the effectiveness of lobbying [12].

The transparency of the lobbying environment is determined by four categories of requirements: 1) for lobbyists, 2) for politicians and officials, 3) for regulation, and 4) for oversight [13]. Based on these categories, the present paper develops a methodology for evaluating the lobbying potential of legislative initiatives.

First, the company's (corporate lobbyist's) interest in the adoption or rejection of a bill (the subject of lobbying) should be identified by analyzing corporate reports and statements by management. Then, evidence of the presence of the object of lobbying – one or more deputies affiliated with the lobbyist – should be sought.

The affiliation of the object of lobbying with the leading faction and the relevant committee of the legislative chamber indicates, first, the deputy's political weight and degree of participation in implementing party strategy (including interactions with the lobbyist), and second, their involvement in the consideration of the bill (since the committee's position influences the wording of the bill during the vote).

Obstructing a bill is a tactic employed by the parliamentary minority to prolong discussions in order to introduce amendments that either dilute the original content or radically change the text of the bill in favor of the lobbyist.

Experts play a crucial role in lobbying by shaping discussions around the subject and providing conclusions to parliamentarians. Therefore, it is important to identify relationships between scientific institutions, consulting agencies, industry associations, and the corporate lobbyist. These relationships can be revealed through the identification of founders or partners, donations and contributions to authorized capital, company representatives delegated to nonprofit working bodies, etc. The participation of affiliated experts in discussions surrounding the lobbying subject should also be determined.

A lobbyist may involve the public in supporting or opposing a bill by organizing media campaigns and engaging activists, such as environmentalists. The scale of such efforts can be extensive. This activity is essential for shaping public opinion during the bill's discussion in parliament and after its adoption. Hearings involving lobbying targets, af-

filiated experts, journalists, public figures, and corporate representatives indicate interest in the bill.

The existence of an association between a corporate lobbyist and a lobbying object can be confirmed by targeted financial expenditures. In the United States, disclosure of such expenditures is required by law, though corporations may attempt to circumvent this requirement. In such cases, an increase in a company's lobbying expenditures can serve as an indicator. This data can be obtained from the authoritative online resource *OpenSecrets*, which compiles information from the Federal Election Commission and the Senate archive.

Additionally, special funds are created in the U.S. to support parties and factional groups during elections – so-called political action committees (PACs). Donation amounts to PACs are strictly regulated. Since 2010, super PACs have been established to receive unlimited contributions from corporations and labor unions; however, they are prohibited from direct contact with candidates. Contributions from lobbyists to such entities confirm their intent to promote corporate interests through a party or specific deputy. In Russia, such aspects are less strictly regulated, but candidates and parties are still required to disclose corporate and individual participation in financing their election campaigns. The final indicator of lobbying – though not always supported by reliable evidence – is an increase in corporate profits following the adoption or rejection of the lobbying subject.

#### CASE OF THE U.S.

U.S. lobbying legislation has evolved over a long period. The current law, which replaced the original 1946 legislation, was adopted in 1995 [source 1]. It defines lobbying as the professional activity of corporate representatives in public authorities, conducted on a regular and contractual basis. Lobbyists must register in the lobbying registry, and companies are required to disclose financial flows and contacts with lobbyists. In practice, however, no more than 20% of active lobbyists are registered, and their reports cover only about 5% of actual contacts. There is also another law that restricts former officials from working as corporate lobbyists [source 2]. However, this law is not fully

enforced: up to half of former congressmen are involved in the “revolving door” practice.

Fuel and energy corporations actively participate in political life. They employ full-time lobbyists in Congress and spend large sums on lobbying. In 2023, oil and gas companies spent \$133 million on lobbying, making them the top industry in terms of lobbying expenditures [source 3]. Among the 500 most profitable oil and gas companies, over 200 have proven links with politicians [6]. The close ties between the fuel and energy sector and the Republican Party are also evidenced by the volume of donations made in its favor (Fig. 1).

Empirical data collected over many years show that more energy-related laws are adopted under a Republican majority in Congress than under a Democratic one. Democrats controlled 44% of congressional sessions since 1970s (93rd-96th, 100th-103rd, 107th, 110th-111th), while Republicans controlled 40% (97th-99th, 104th-106th, 108th-109th, 114th-115th) (Fig. 2). In the remaining 16% of cases, each party controlled one chamber. The 104th “Republican” session saw a historical peak in the number of energy laws passed.

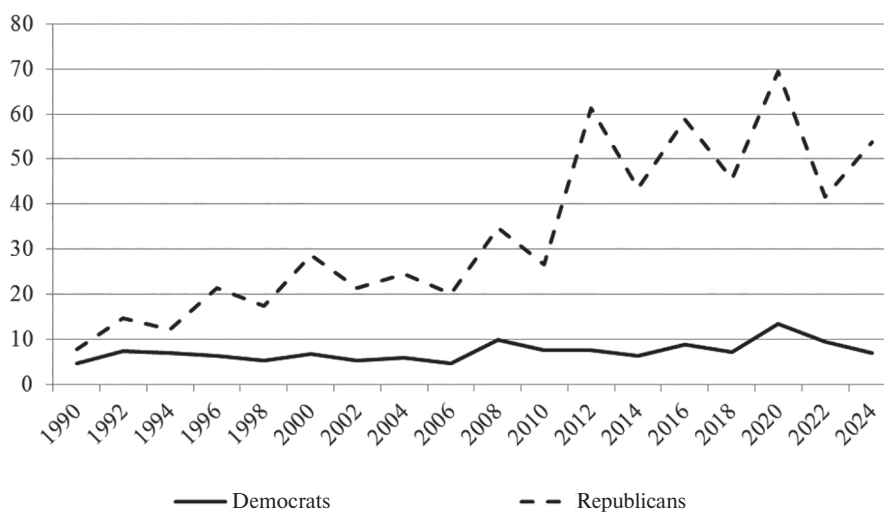
The dominance of the Republican Party negatively correlates with the total number of laws passed during a session (correlation coefficient:  $-0.57$ , at  $p < 0.01$ ). This means that, on average, Congress passes fewer laws under Republican control than

under Democratic control. Over the entire period studied, the number of energy bills correlates with both the total number of bills introduced (0.8) and the total number of laws passed (0.63). The proportion of approved energy laws relative to all adopted laws correlates strongly with the proportion of energy-related bills among those introduced (0.89) and adopted (0.88). Finally, the number of introduced energy bills correlates with their share among all introduced bills (0.75).

The administration of President Joe Biden (2021–2024) pursued a “green” legislative policy, in line with the pre-election Clean Power and Environmental Justice Plan. This plan aimed, in particular, to reduce emissions from fuel and energy companies. Two bills considered by the 117th Congress (2021–2022) are of particular interest:

- The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (code *HR3684*), introduced in June 2021, provided for the allocation of \$47 billion to fund alternative energy projects and reduce carbon emissions. It became law in November 2021 [source 5];

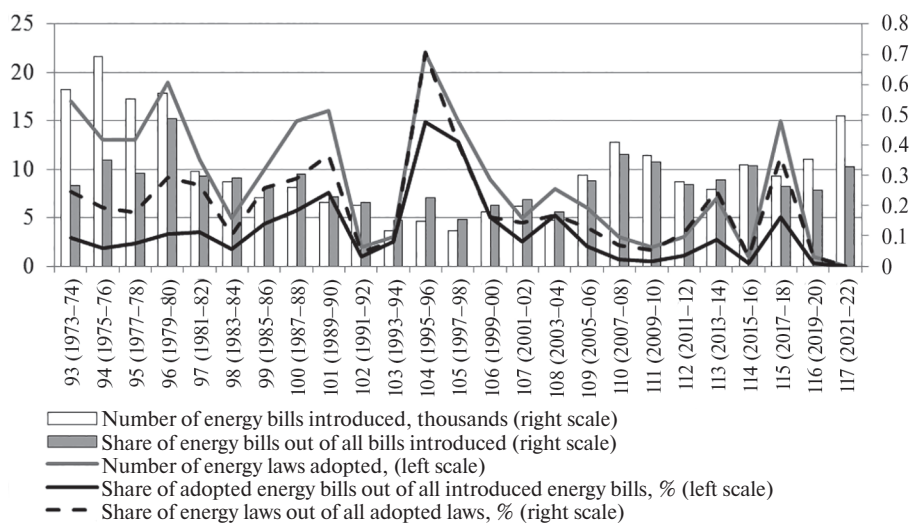
- The Build Back Better Act (Inflation Reduction Act) (code *HR5376*), introduced in September 2021, provided for funding in the amount of \$550 billion for “green” energy projects and reducing the carbon footprint of fuel and energy companies. It was ultimately rejected by Congress [source 6].



**Fig. 1.** Participation of fuel and energy companies in financing U.S. parties, 1990–2024, million dollars

Note. Data for 2024 are given for nine months.

Compiled by the author based on data from the OpenSecrets resource.



**Fig. 2.** Number and share of bills introduced and energy-related laws adopted by convocations of the U.S. Congress, 1973–2022

Note. The 93rd–117th Convocations are included since data for earlier years are incomplete.

Compiled by the author based on data from the U.S. Library of Congress [source 4].

Let us consider the lobbying potential of these projects.

Lobbyists' interest is confirmed by the fact that both bills were mentioned in *ExxonMobil's* lobbying activity reports for the fourth quarter of 2021 [source 7] and the first quarter of 2022 [source 8], i.e., during their consideration in Congress. The reports also show that the corporation's lobbying expenses increased by 13.2% during this period, despite a downward trend over the previous eight years.

The presence of the subject of lobbying is supported by the Federal Election Commission, which recorded contributions from *ExxonMobil* to senators J. Barrasso, S. Daines, S.M. Capito, M. Kelly, J. Cornyn, C. Coons, J. Manchin, M. Rubio, K. Sinema, J. Tester, and M. Hassan aimed at preventing the adoption of bill *HR3684* [source 9].

The use of the “revolving door” practice is indicated by the employment of the former Department of Energy official S. Banaszak and former member of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources M. Braniff by *ExxonMobil* [source 8].

The affiliation of the object of lobbying with the relevant committee is confirmed by the fact that among the 11 senators affiliated with *ExxonMobil* is Senator J. Manchin, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Additionally, the object of lobbying is associated with the ruling party: Senator C. Coons, a member of the Democratic Party and a close associate of President Biden, succeeded him as Senator from Delaware [source 10].

Amendments introduced to bill *HR3684* can be considered a form of obstruction. Notably, at the initiative of Senator S.M. Capito, the volume of investments in environmental protection measures was cut by nearly half. Bill *HR5376* was ultimately rejected due to the negative position of the relevant committee, chaired by Senator J. Manchin.

Although no formal hearings were held on these bills, several expert organizations participated in public discussions, including the *Brookings Institution*, the *Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)*, and the *American Petroleum Institute (API)*. These institutions received charitable donations from *ExxonMobil* amounting to \$3.9 million in 2020, \$3.3 million in 2021, and \$10 million in 2022 [source 11]. In 2021, the *API* allocated \$423,000 to promote a pro-fuel agenda on social media, and a CSIS study published the same year highlighted the negative economic impact of bill *HR3684* [source 12].

*ExxonMobil* has its own PAC, whose funds were used for Senator J. Manchin's election campaign (\$962 thousand) and a House of Representatives caucus in support of national business [source 13].

Despite the “green” agenda of the Biden administration and the 117th Congress, the net profit of fuel and energy companies in 2021–2022 increased. For example, *ExxonMobil*’s net profit rose 2.4-fold – from 23 billion to 55.8 billion dollars. This was due to increased oil production and the opening of the largest oil refinery, *Beaumont*. The profit of *ExxonMobil*’s competitor *Chevron* also increased. It appears that legislative changes positively impacted the major players in the U.S. oil and gas market (Fig. 3).

The presented figures demonstrate the influence of the industry lobby, which is able to block (in the case of bill *HR5376*) or significantly mitigate (in the case of bill *HR3684*) undesirable initiatives, despite their high political status. The considered bills were aimed at implementing the election program of the U.S. president.

It should be noted that corporate lobbyists interact not only with traditional patrons (in this case, the Republican Party), but also with their opponents who hold significant political power (Democratic Senators J. Manchin, C. Coons, etc.). This supports the idea that the American corporate lobby uses situational tactics, focusing more on achieving results than on party loyalty.

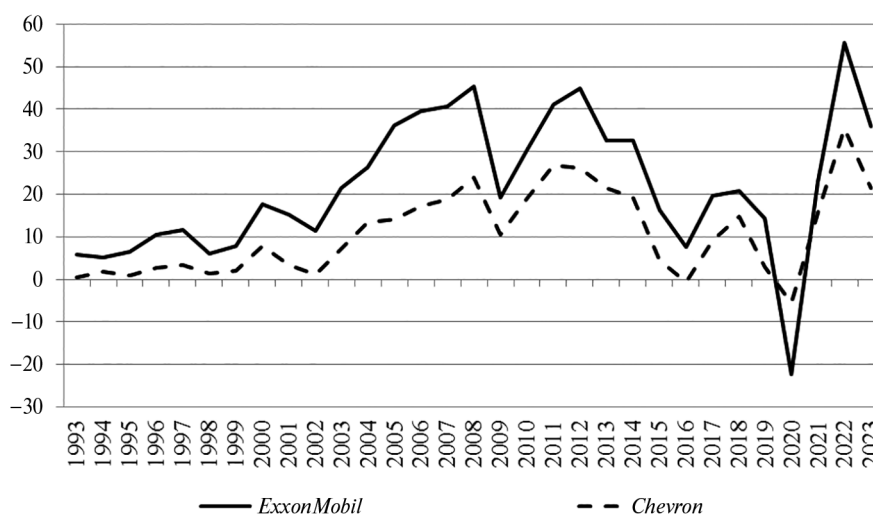
### CASE OF RUSSIA

In Russia, there have been numerous attempts to regulate lobbying activities through legislation.

The first draft law was developed in 1992 by the Supreme Soviet. A group of deputies first introduced it in the State Duma of the first convocation in 1995 and again in 1996, but it was withdrawn in 2002.

During the second convocation of the Duma, deputies introduced a new bill in 1997. However, it was withdrawn in 2004 following a negative response from the Government of the Russian Federation. In the fourth convocation, in 2003, a group of opposition deputies prepared another bill, which was withdrawn from consideration in 2005. In the sixth convocation, deputies introduced a draft law in 2013 on the procedure for promoting the interests of commercial organizations in government, but it was returned to the initiators due to procedural violations. The authors reintroduced it in 2015, but the chamber rejected it in the first reading in 2017. Media reports mentioned another initiative developed by deputies of the sixth convocation in 2019, but it was never formally introduced.

The Russian legislator chose to regulate lobbying primarily through anti-corruption legislation. Public officials are required to report their expenses, income, and sources of property. They are prohibited from holding foreign bank accounts, and transitions from public service to subordinate or supervised organizations are restricted by law [14]. The question of whether a separate law on lobbying is necessary remains debatable. The American experience shows that legislative measures are not



**Fig. 3.** Dynamics of the net profit of the largest U.S. fuel and energy corporations, 1993–2023, billion dollars

Compiled by the author based on data from the companies’ annual reports.

fully effective; however, the absence of legalization turns lobbying into a shadow practice.

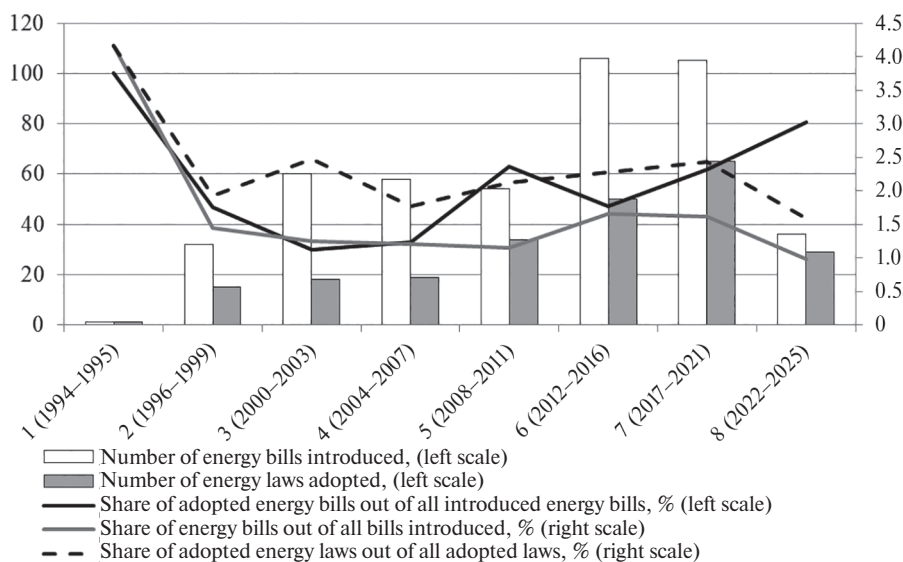
This is evident in the Russian oil and gas industry, where, according to various estimates, PJSC Gazprom occupies more than half of the gas market, and PJSC Rosneft holds another 15%, while also controlling about 40% of the gasoline and diesel fuel market. The Russian fuel and energy sector is largely monopolized, and the lobbying capabilities of companies are well-researched [7, 8, 10]. The introduction of bills and the adoption of laws regulating this sector are undoubtedly influenced by industry lobbyists.

In particular, there has been an increase in the number of bills introduced and laws adopted in the energy sector (these parameters correlate with a coefficient of 0.9 at  $p < 0.01$ ) (Fig. 4). The share of introduced bills and the share of adopted laws on energy issues show an almost linear relationship (0.95).

Since the 5th convocation, the United Russia party has held a majority of seats in the State Duma. The Unity – Fatherland – All Russia (OVR) bloc dominated during the 4th convocation. In the 1st-3rd convocations, there was no predominant political force. The pro-government parties Choice of Russia, Our Home – Russia, and

OVR held 16.9%, 14.4%, and 27.5% of the seats, respectively. Across all convocations, there was a moderate correlation between the representation of the “ruling” party and the number of adopted energy laws (0.52), the share of energy bills (–0.57), and adopted energy laws (–0.6). This suggests that as the party majority strengthens, fewer energy-related bills are introduced and fewer laws are passed on average, but the probability of adoption increases compared to periods when the “ruling” party is absent.

Companies in the Russian fuel and energy sector are primarily export-oriented, ensuring high profitability. However, the domestic market is also substantial, and realizing its potential requires investment in infrastructure. The law on social additional gasification (code 815987-7) provides for the free delivery of gas to citizens’ homes [source 16]. This draft law was considered by the State Duma between 2019 and 2021, around the same time as the American bills mentioned above. It was introduced by the government and originally had different content. The State Duma Energy Committee criticized the draft, and its consideration was postponed. In May 2020, President V. Putin approved instructions to accelerate additional gasification. Only after this did the draft pass its first reading. In April 2021, during his address to



**Fig. 4.** Number and share of introduced energy bills and adopted energy-related laws by convocations of the State Duma of the Russian Federation

Note. Data on the 8th convocation are provided until October 2024.

Compiled by the author based on data from the Legislative Support System [source 15].

the Federal Assembly, the President instructed that additional gasification of settlements be carried out without charging citizens, which prompted renewed work on draft law 815987–7.

The fact of interest in the lobbied bill is confirmed by the inclusion of social additional gasification as a priority in Gazprom's reports; the law is directly mentioned in the company's 2021 annual report [source 17, p. 66].

The object of the lobbying efforts was P. Zavalny, Chairman of the State Duma Committee on Energy, who had worked in Gazprom structures for 28 years (a case of the “revolving door” practice). In one interview, he stated: “Will I lobby for Gazprom's interests? Ask me directly, and I will answer directly – of course I will. And Rosneft's interests, too” [source 18]. Zavalny is one of the wealthiest deputies, with an income of 38.7 million rubles in 2021, and in other years exceeding 100 million rubles.

In addition to his role on a specialized committee, party affiliation is also significant. Zavalny represents United Russia, which initiated social additional gasification in 2020, while the party's General Council Secretary, A. Turchak, suggested that the associated costs be borne by Gazprom. At a meeting with the President of the Russian Federation, Gazprom Management Committee Chairman A. Miller proposed designating Gazprom as the unified operator of additional gasification. The alignment between the ruling party's and the company's initiatives is understandable, given that Gazprom's Board of Directors has historically been chaired by Russian Prime Ministers V. Chernomyrdin, D. Medvedev, and V. Zubkov. Notably, Chernomyrdin was also the leader of the pro-presidential party Our Home – Russia, and Medvedev has served as chairman of United Russia since 2012.

The obstruction the bill under consideration is evident: 15 amendments introduced at the second reading significantly altered its content. Proposals included the creation of a unified operator for additional gasification, a surcharge to the gas tariff for legal entities, and the adoption of a “take-or-pay” principle in long-term supply contracts. These amendments were authored by high-ranking officials: Chairwoman of the Federation Council V. Matvienko, her deputy A. Turchak, Chairman of the Federation Council Committee on

Economic Policy A. Kutepov, State Duma Chairman V. Volodin, his deputy S. Neverov, and Energy Committee Chairman P. Zavalny.

Given the high status of the amendment authors, the bill was passed immediately in the second and third readings, and the following day it was approved by the Federation Council. The Russian Government designated Gazprom's subsidiary, LLC “Gazprom Gazifikatsiya”, as the unified operator.

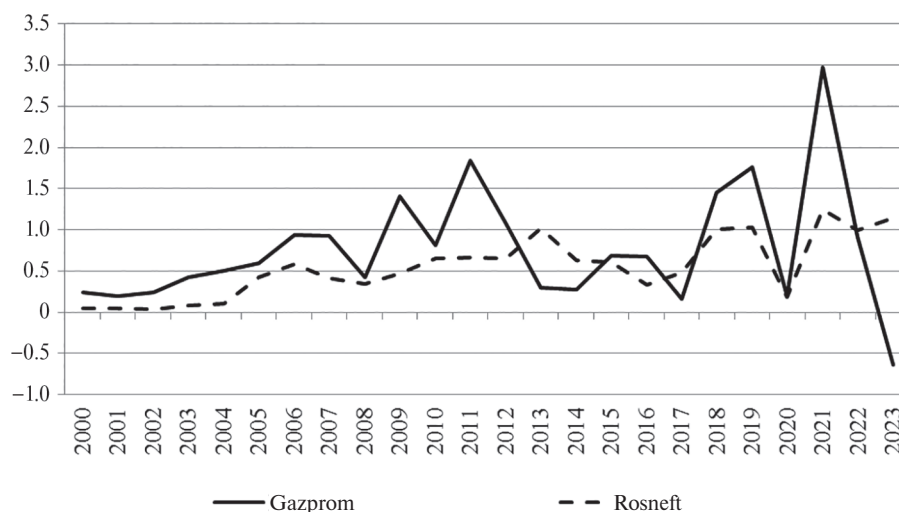
The expert background surrounding the law was shaped by the Union of Oil and Gas Industry Organizations “Russian Gas Society”, whose founder and sponsor includes Gazprom, and whose chairman is Deputy P. Zavalny [source 19]. Public opinion was also influenced by various media outlets, including those owned by the Gazprom-Media holding (e.g., NTV, TV-3).

Representatives of the corporate lobbyists and the objects of lobbying participated in parliamentary hearings on March 2, 2020, in the Federation Council. Notably, S. Gustov, Director of LLC Gazprom Mezhrefiongaz, proposed the introduction of an inter-tariff subsidy and a “gas mortgage” – a state-subsidized bank loan to pay for additional gasification services.

While Russian companies' lobbying expenditures cannot be reliably estimated, data exist on Gazprom's financial contributions to projects associated with United Russia and its members. For example, in 2018–2019, Gazprom donated 150 million rubles for the construction of residential houses in the village of Elshanka in the Saratov Region [source 20, p. 231], which was presented in the media as a charitable initiative of V. Volodin.

In the first year following the adoption of the discussed law, Gazprom's revenue increased by 62%, profit quadrupled, assets grew by 15.4%, and domestic supplies rose by 11.2%. Additional gasification was completed in 22.7% more households, and the number of connected households increased 6.2-fold. Over time, Gazprom's peak profit values have significantly exceeded those of its competitor Rosneft, while its lows have been less volatile (except in 2023), illustrating the stabilizing effect of state support for the gas monopoly (Fig. 5).

Officially, social additional gasification is free of charge for citizens, and Gazprom's investments



**Fig. 5.** Dynamics of the net profit of the largest corporations in the Russian fuel and energy sector, 2000–2023, trillion rubles

Compiled by the author based on data from the companies' annual reports.

in the program in 2021–2025 will amount to 526.1 billion rubles. In reality, there are several sources for the replenishment of these costs.

1. For consumers, gas is delivered to the boundaries of their households free of charge, while the actual connection is carried out at the users' expense (beneficiaries receive a subsidy from the budget). With more than 1.1 million connections performed and the cost of work averaging about 100 thousand rubles per household, the income of the unified operator has already exceeded 110 billion rubles.

2. The increase in domestic demand following additional gasification is estimated at 20 billion m<sup>3</sup> per year, with an additional 10 billion m<sup>3</sup> expected from the supply of natural gas vehicle fuel to new consumers [source 21]. Consumers pay for gas supplies at tariffs indexed by 10% for the period 2024–2027 – above the projected inflation rate.

3. Free-of-charge gas delivery to the plot boundary for citizens is subsidized by private businesses through an investment surcharge of up to 35% on the gas tariff.

4. Taking advantage of its position as the unified operator, Gazprom provides loans to regional gas supply organizations for building gas networks, independently setting the terms and interest rates of those loans [source 22].

5. For 2025–2027, Gazprom is exempt from the mineral extraction tax in the amount of up to

600 billion rubles per year (1.8 trillion rubles over three years).

Thus, the federal budget and gas consumers not only cover the costs of additional gasification – estimated at 2 trillion rubles by 2030 [source 23] – but also enable the unified operator to generate profit from a project presented as socially important. Despite such substantial investment, the increase in the gasification level in 2023 was only 0.8%, according to Deputy Prime Minister A. Novak.

Gazprom also enjoys other advantages. For instance, in 2024, the company received 400 billion rubles from the National Welfare Fund for the construction of a gas liquefaction plant in the Leningrad Region. Amendments to the Tax Code of the Russian Federation introduced a reverse excise tax on ethane, liquefied gas, and petroleum raw materials, which led to a loss of 252 billion rubles in federal budget revenues from 2021 to 2024.

The lobbying essence of the considered law lies in the fact that additional gasification – formally free of charge for citizens – generates additional profits for the company. Since 2022, the additional gasification program has been made perpetual by order of the President of the Russian Federation and extended to include social facilities. A total of 3,000 such facilities are expected to be connected, thereby expanding Gazprom's customer base – an expansion that is crucial for maintaining the com-

pany's revenue stream following its exit from numerous foreign markets.

### CONCLUSIONS

The advantage of U.S. lobbying law is the availability of official data on lobbying activities. However, its legitimization does not reduce pressure on lawmakers nor compel companies to abandon such practices. The legislation remains incomplete, and actual practices often take place in the shadows.

The case considered confirms the involvement of fuel and energy corporations in the American legislative process. The influence of *ExxonMobil*, aimed at preventing the adoption and implementation of initiatives proposed by the President, is evident: one of the projects was rejected by Congress, and the other was adopted in a significantly softened form.

While preserving traditional ties with the Republican Party, fuel and energy corporations also establish parallel contacts with representatives of the Democratic Party – especially during periods of Democratic control in Congress. Notably, of the 11 congressmen with whom *ExxonMobil* had documented relationships, 6 were Democrats and only 5 were Republicans. It was the former who played the decisive role as objects of lobbying. The success of this results-focused, nonpartisan tactic is confirmed by the growth in profits of

fuel and energy corporations, even amid the Democrats' "green" agenda in both Congress and the White House.

Unlike the U.S., Russian legislation places the responsibility for overseeing lobbying activities on government officials rather than on businesses. Another key difference lies in the nature of corporate-state relations: the Russian state owns about 40% of shares in both Gazprom and Rosneft. This indicates not a public–private partnership, but a fusion of corporate and state interests – clearly demonstrated in the case of the social additional gasification program.

In Russia, lobbying efforts are more often directed toward executive rather than legislative bodies. Therefore, bills introduced on behalf of the government may also carry lobbying potential, as evidenced by the law on additional gasification.

Due to the structure of the Russian party system, ties between corporate lobbyists and political parties are less pronounced than in the U.S. Despite the law's clear social significance, the additional gasification program includes mechanisms that allow the unified operator not only to recover its infrastructure costs but also to generate profit. In fact, the government (which drafted the bill), the leaders of both chambers of parliament (who proposed key amendments), and even the President (who issued instructions for its adoption) acted as lobbyists for the interests of the gas mo-

**Table.** Comparative assessment of the lobbying potential of the U.S. and Russian draft laws in the fuel and energy sector

No.	Criterion	U.S. (bills HR3684, HR5376)	Russia (bill 815987-7)
1	Presence of a corporate lobbyist and a lobbying subject	Yes	Yes
2	Presence of the object of lobbying	Yes	Yes
3	Involvement of the lobbying object in the "revolving door" practice	Yes	Yes
4	Affiliation of the object of lobbying with the ruling faction, profile committee	Yes	Yes
5	Presence of the practice of obstruction of the object of lobbying	Yes	Yes
6	Support of the lobbying subject by experts affiliated with the lobbyist	Yes	Yes
7	Shaping public opinion on the subject of lobbying	Yes	Yes
8	Participation of the lobbyist in discussing the subject of lobbying at hearings and other events in the parliament	Yes	Yes
9	Presence of the lobbyist's financial expenses in favor of the object of lobbying	Yes	Yes
10	Increase in the lobbyist's profit after the adoption (rejection) of the bill	Yes	Yes

Compiled by the author based on his own research.

nopoly – securing the expansion of its market and revenue base for years to come.

The article confirms the effectiveness of the proposed model for assessing the lobbying potential of legislative initiatives. The model combines quantitative and qualitative indicators, as well as official

and expert data, and is applicable across different national jurisdictions (see the table).

The advantage of the methodology lies in its consideration of a comprehensive set of both direct and indirect features, which enhances the objectivity of the results obtained.

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