Template for Lobbyist Interviews, May 2014

Introduction:

Hello, may I please speak with _____?

My name is Jesse Crosson, and I am a PhD student in political science at the University of Michigan.

I am conducting research on the extent to which advocacy organizations work in coalitions with other organizations.

As part of a University of Michigan research project, Professor Michael Heaney and I are building a database of interest-group coalitions in the United States. In order to assemble this database, we are currently interviewing hundreds of advocates to ask a few short questions about involvement in interest group coalitions.

Would you be willing to participate in a brief, five-to-ten-minute interview on how you do or do not work with coalitions? It is anonymous and is strictly for academic research. If you participate, you would be free to skip any question that you wish not to answer or end the interview at any time without penalty to you. Participating in the interview would not expose you to any significant risks or provide you any benefits.

[Receive respondent's response.]

Questions:

1. As you are aware, a coalition exists any time two or more advocacy organizations choose to work together on a common advocacy project.

    A. Thinking only of the past 12 months, which coalitions have *you personally* worked with?

    B. For each coalition, please tell us the issue area that it works on?

    C. We are interested in *all types* of interest group coalitions—small and large, formal and informal, ad hoc and permanent, etc.—so please take as much time as you need to list all of the coalitions in which you've taken part.

2. A. [For each coalition listed in response to question 1]: For coalition _____, who is the leader of this coalition?

    B. [If the respondent gives the name of a person, then ask:] Which organization does _____ work for?

C. [If the respondent gives the name of an organization, then ask:] Is there an individual person in organization _____ that acts as a leader for the coalition?

D. [If the respondent says that there is no leader of the coalition, or many leaders, then ask:] Is there someone whom you believe would know the most about the history and inner-workings of the coalition?

E. So, you have told me that you have worked with the following coalitions over the past year [Read list]. Are there any other coalitions that you would like to add to this list? [If so, then repeat questions 2A through 2F above.]

F. Are there any other coalitions? [If so, then repeat questions 2A through 2F above.]

3. I would like to ask a few brief demographic questions in order to assess the representativeness of the sample. As I mentioned earlier, you are free to skip any questions you don't wish to answer.

A. [Interviewer records sex/gender without asking.]

B. Could you tell me how many years you have worked for [your organization]?

C. Could you tell me how many years you have been a registered lobbyist?

D. Have you ever worked for Congress or a member of Congress?

E. Have you ever worked for a federal government agency?

F. Could you tell me the year in which you were born?

G. Could you tell me how you identify your race/ethnicity?

H. Could you tell me, do you personally identify as a Democratic, a Republican, or a member of another party? Or, do you prefer not to identify with any party?

I. Could you tell me, where would you place yourself on the right to left ideological spectrum? Are you: (i) to the right of very conservative; (ii) very conservative; (iii) somewhat conservative; (iv) moderate; (v) somewhat liberal or progressive; (vi) very liberal or progressive; (vii) to the left of very liberal or progressive. Or do you not think of yourself as being on this spectrum?

Conclusion:

Thank you for your time. Would you like for me to send you a copy of the results when the study is completed? [If yes, then ask:] How would you like me to send it to you? Please let me know the e-mail or postal address that you prefer.