

The affirmative team would argue that if it wins that either of these permutations are desirable, then the competitiveness of the counterplan is defeated.

TYPES OF COUNTERPLANS

The *agent* counterplan is perhaps the most common counterplan type. The resolution forces the affirmative team to utilize the agent of action named in the resolution as the agency implementing its plan—in the policy debate resolutions of the past quarter century, this has always been “the United States federal government.” An agent counterplan typically proposes an action very similar (or even identical) to the affirmative plan with the exception that the action is taken by someone other than the U.S. federal government. The alternative agent might be the 50 state governments or various international agencies (the United Nations, the World Bank, the Global Fund, and so on).

The *plan inclusive* counterplan (also called an *exception* counterplan) does the affirmative plan for all but some small subset of the population named in the resolution. Consider the 2007-2008 policy debate resolution calling on the U.S. federal government to “substantially increase its public health assistance to sub-Saharan Africa.” An affirmative plan might propose a big increase in funding for HIV/AIDS prevention programs in sub-Saharan Africa. A negative counterplan might suggest doing the affirmative action everywhere *except* in Sudan, arguing that increased funding (of any type) for Sudan would be diverted to support genocide in Darfur. If a resolution calls for increasing federal funding of renewable energy alternatives, a negative counterplan could endorse all of the affirmative plan yet propose a ban on funding for wind power (perhaps arguing that too many birds are killed in windmills).

The *process* counterplan proposes to do the affirmative plan through a different procedure from the one specified in the plan. A *study* counterplan suggests that time should be allotted for certain studies to be completed before the affirmative action is taken. On the other hand, a *consultation* counterplan suggests that certain important allies (or domestic interest groups) should be given an opportunity to participate in the development of a proposal. Sometimes a debate resolution locks the affirmative plan into defending a certain procedure. Consider a resolution calling on the federal government to fund research into alternative energy resources; a negative team might counterplan with tax credits (encouraging private investment) as a superior way to achieve the same result.

The *uniqueness* counterplan is used by some negative teams in an effort to establish the uniqueness of a disadvantage. Suppose the negative team has introduced a federalism disadvantage, claiming that federal control of secondary education undermines a