Assignment 4

**Social Policy – Pending**

Memo: Due - Session 10 [3/30/2021] – 20 points

Advocacy Product and Journal: Due - Session 12 [4/13/2021 – 15 points

Briefing: Due – Sessions 13 & 14 [4/20 & 27/2021 – 5 points

Total: 40 points

**Introduction**: The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate the relationship between social policies and social work practice – specifically, how policies affect the lives of clients, the programs agencies develop, the communities in which social workers work, and the roles which social workers play in social service/social change organizations – by providing an opportunity track a bill in the state legislature and participate in its development as a social policy.

**Task**: Related to the issue you identified in Assignment 3. Social Policy – Past, identify a bill that is being considered by the Maryland General Assembly in 2021 which is important to the constituency with which you, your agency or your affinity group works, or which you want to work with after graduation; track and keep a journal on the bill’s progress throughout the legislative process; and complete the following components.

**Components:**

* **Memo:** In preparation for a meeting with the leadership of one of the concerned organizations/coalitions, write a 3-4 page memorandum to the Executive Director/Steering Committee, due prior to the start of Session 10 on 3/30/21 for 20 points, outlining the impact of the proposed legislation that includes these elements:
* Summary – of the social issue addressed by the pending bill
* Overview – a brief description of the pending bill
* Significance & Impact – an explanation of why the proposed policy is significant to the agency and the clients/community it serves … and an analysis of how the proposed policy will affect/impact the agency and the clients/community it serves
* Framework – what policy framework can be used to better understand this pending bill and why?
* Supporters & Opponents -- an assessment of what entities might support this bill and why … and what entities might be against this bill and why
* Recommendation -- what position should the leadership and organization take on the proposed bill … and why?
* A brief discussion of the strategies and actions the agency should take to respond to the proposed policy
* **Advocacy:** At a key point in the legislative process …
* Create an advocacy product [1-2 pages] – a Fact Sheet, Talking Points for Senator/Delegate visit, Letter to your Senator/Delegates, Letter-to-the-Editor, etc.
* Participate in an advocacy activity to help advance/kill the bill
* Write an entry in your journal discussing your advocacy activity – what was it, why you chose that activity, and what was its strategic timing?
* Submit your advocacy product and journal entry via an email to the instructor, due prior to the start of Session 12 on 4/13/2021 for 15 points.
* **Briefing:** Present a brief [5-10 minute] update to the full class on the bill you have been tracking … provide an overview of its intent, outcome, lessons learned from your advocacy activity, and recommended next steps (suggested strategy for next year if the bill failed, strategy for implementation/follow-up, evaluation if the bill passed). Briefings will be held during Session 13 on 4/20/2021 and Session 14 on 4/27/2021 for 5 points.

**Format**: All written communications shall be single-spaced, double-spaced between block paragraphs, using Calibri 14 pt. font, and 1” margins.

**Note:** For this particular exercise, a “policy” is defined as an action of government that has the effect of law and that affects either the nature/amount of resources provided to the agency or its clients and/or the types of activities in which the agency can/cannot be involved.

To the extent possible, use actual data pertinent to the constituents and organizations impacted by this proposal. As such, you may need to review documents related to this proposed law as well as conduct a key informant interviews with individuals involved with this pending policy. Make sure to cite the sources of your data.

You may also make some assumptions that are necessary to draft the memorandum, as long as they do not contradict the data you have collected, the policy itself, or current conditions in/activities of the agency.