

Legislative Brief Outline
Social Policy – Spring, 2026

1. PROBLEM DEFINITION (20 points)

The introduction to the legislative brief describes the social issue or problem that is addressed by the state legislature. You must give background information with some descriptive indicators (social, economic, political or other relevant indicators) about the type and severity of the problem and the effects of the problem on the state, communities, or specific population groups.

- a. What is the specific problem/issue addressed in the state bill
- b. What are the objective indicators that the problem exists in the state or a community (Use U.S. census data sources, state data sources, community survey results to support your problem description.)
- c. Describe which groups are most affected by the problem, and evidence to support your description.
- d. How does the problem impact people/communities, either positively or negatively?
- e. Is the problem present in every community in Georgia, or certain localities? Does the problem “look the same” across different localities? What evidence supports your position?
- f. Which types of people are most affected by the problem? Are all people impacted similarly or are there differences? Again, provide state or local data to support your problem description.
- g. Is there a similar problem in other states? For example, compare counties or states with national data on the issue, if appropriate.

2. STATE POLICY ANALYSIS (20 points)

Address each of the questions below:

- a. What are the goals of the legislative bill? What does it hope to achieve?
- b. What specific services or benefits will come from the proposed solution? (e.g., new/amended programs, extended access to services for marginalized groups, new monetary benefits, including tax credits) are proposed to address the defined problem?
- c. Who is eligible to receive benefits/services? What groups will be excluded from receiving services/benefits, and why?
- d. Is there consensus or conflict among various interested parties on what the bill proposes as a solution? What is the intended outcome to result from the proposed solution to the problem?
- e. Are there any possible unintended consequences, and what provisions are made to address them?

3. LEGISLATIVE PROCESS (20 points)

Describe the process the legislation went through during the legislative session:

- a. Is the bill an amendment to an existing law? If yes, cite the law. What are the changes/differences between the existing law and the bill?
- b. What committee was the bill assigned? Who is the chair of that committee?
- c. Was the bill assigned to a sub-committee? Who chaired the sub-committee?
- d. Were there any public hearings on the bill? If there were any public hearings on the bill, what individuals/groups gave testimony in the hearings? What issues were raised during the hearings by those giving testimony and/or by the legislators?
- e. Were there any lobbyists working for/against the bill? What were their positions on the bill?
- f. Did the content of the bill change while in committee? Who advocated for these changes, and why? Did the changes alter the original intent of the bill, positively or negatively? Was there consensus/conflict on the bill's changes?
- g. Was there a committee vote on the bill? What was the vote count?
- h. Were other bills introduced in the legislature to address the same problem? If so, what was the purpose of this tactic? Cite the other bills introduced.
- i. If two bills addressing the same problem progressed through both chambers of the legislature, did the sponsors of the bills compromise or negotiate to join or eliminate one bill? What were the strategies of the bills' sponsors? What did they hope to accomplish?
- j. Was there any floor discussion about the bill in the House and/or Senate? What impact did this have on the bill's outcome?
- k. Were there any votes on the bill? What was the final count? How did your personal legislators vote on the bill?
- l. What role did the Governor have on the bill's progress through the legislature?

4. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION (20 points)

- a. What agency will have responsibility for administering the bill if it becomes law (e.g., what governmental agency will execute the bill (e.g., Department of Human Services, Division on Aging, Public Health Services)?
- b. What type of programs or services will the bill provide? Does the bill propose to support existing services or establish new services?

- c. How will recipients receive any services or benefits under the legislation? Is a new/modified service delivery system required, or is the current service delivery system sufficient under the legislation?
- d. How will any new services/programs be financed under the legislation or is the legislation fiscal neutral (no new public monies are required)
- e. Is there a fiscal note accompanying this bill, if so how much money is requested by the sponsor?
- f. Are requested/current monetary resources being adequate to meet the legislation's objectives.

5. COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS (20 points)

The following community representatives must be interviewed for your paper:

- 1. One or more sponsors of the bill. (Generally, the first name on the bill is the originator of the bill. He/she will have the most knowledge about the problem and the solution proposed in the bill);
- 2. Your personal state legislators (Senator and Representative) to gain their perspective on the problem/issue being addressed by the bill and the proposed solution expressed in the bill;
- 3. At minimum, two community representatives who would be affected by the bill to gain their perspective about the problem and solutions to the problem (e.g., front line social workers, agency administrators, a member of an advocacy/lobbying group, recipients of services, or other community residents who will be directly impacted by the bill).

Sample questions include

- 1) What are your views of the bill, why do you support or not support the bill?
- 2) What does the other side say?
- 3) Why was the bill initiated?
- 4) What impact do you see the bill making?
- 5) Who is for and against the bill.
- 6) Do you have any suggestions about who I should talk to or can you tell me groups/legislators who support or oppose the bill.

Please Note: Other questions may be asked based on the focus of the social problem and legislative response.

The above sections are the heart of the paper and careful attention should be given to it. Be analytical, not just descriptive.

6. PERSONAL REFLECTIONS (20 points)

As a social worker, present your perspective about the social problem, the proposed solution, and the legislative process. **Discuss each point below in the brief**

- a. Review of the NASW Code of Ethics. What are the ethical strengths/weaknesses of the proposed solution to the social problem?
- b. What ethical dilemmas might be evident because of implementing the legislative bill? Give comments on how the policy may affect individuals, families, communities, or practicing social work professionals.
- c. What did you learn about the ethics of policymaking based on your observations, interviews, discussions with legislators and community stakeholders. [Be critical in your analysis, not just descriptive].
- d. Present your position on the bill.
- e. Discuss how this bill will/will not resolve the problem as defined by legislators and/or people affected by the problem?
- f. Do you anticipate any unintended consequences (e.g., new problems emerge because of the implementation of the state law)?
- g. What areas or sections of the bill would you recommend needs modification to address any concerns, and what action steps would you implement to address those concerns. Similarly, what aspects of the bill are good for addressing the problem and should therefore be protected?
- h. How will this bill enhance social justice for targeted individuals/groups?
- i. Discuss how this bill aligns/does not align with your personal values?
- j. Finally, what insights did you gain about policy making from participating in the legislative process?

7. References

List of 10+ peer – reviewed references in APA format.