Clear, realistic, and appropriate recommendation

Policy recommendation:
- What is the policy you’re suggesting?
  - What piece of legislation? what rule change? what issue area?
  - Make sure it’s not a trivial or universal recommendation.
- What is the recommendation you’re making?
  - Make sure you’re specific about the course of action you’re suggesting here (vote yes on X legislation, change Y policy, submit Z bill to your subcommittee etc.)
- IMPORTANT: You should have two specific sentences in your paper. The first, which is VERY close to start, explicitly lays out your recommendation (i.e. “Congressman, you should vote yes on H.R. 137.”). The second sentence is essentially the same, but is placed at the end of the paper in your conclusion.

Client/Boss:
- Who are you addressing in this memo?
- Does this person have the power to take the course of action you’re suggesting?
  - Are they on a committee or subcommittee that deals with this legislation?
  - Are they in a position to simply take this action or change public policy?
- Would this person be inclined to support this course of action?
  - Writing to a very liberal senator about a conservative policy or vice versa would be a bad idea. Left leaning ideas go to the democrats or possibly moderate republicans and right leaning ideas to republicans or possibly moderate democrats.

Policy Args, political args, counter-args

Policy arguments:
- Why is your recommendation a good course of action? Why is it good public policy? Who does it help? How?
  - You should have multiple arguments here
  - e.g. X piece of legislation will create 2 million jobs
- What evidence do you have to support your claims?
  - e.g. Non-partisan think tank Y did a study that showed X legislation will create 2 million jobs

Political Arguments:
- As a person who seeks re-election or - at the very least - cares about how the public will respond, it’s important you present them with arguments that are political in nature. Why does this policy make sense politically?
  - For Elected Officials:
    - How will this help them in their upcoming primary election? Were they vulnerable in their last primary? Do they worry about more liberal/conservative primary challengers running them off their ticket?
    - How will this help them in their upcoming general election? Were they vulnerable in their last race?
  - For Unelected Officials:
    - Often they may have to work with or for people who are up re-election and as such, need to know how politically viable this policy is. Also,
public opinion on policies may have an influence on how well this policy is enacted. Make arguments that include these considerations.

- What evidence do you have to support your political arguments?
  - “According to Gallup, 74% of the voters in [the United States / your state / your congressional district] supported X legislation.” Think about what constituency they would care about when looking at polls. Would a congressman care what the whole country thinks or would they care about what the people in their congressional district think?
  - “This bill supports small farmers, which make up 30% of the voters in your state.” Feel free to hunt around Census or other data sources for this kind of info.
  - “In your last primary, you were challenged by a candidate that ran as the ‘true conservative’ in this race and nearly won. This legislation, which has been supported by [insert conservative group], will help establish your conservative credentials in this race.”

**Counter-arguments**

- What arguments would your political opponents make? Why are their arguments wrong or otherwise misguided? You need to present them and refute them.
  - It’s important to foresee the strongest cases your political opponents would make and present them fairly (i.e. do not argue with a straw man).
  - Refuting a strong case will make your arguments that much better.

**Writing and structure**

**Format**

- This is a role playing exercise, so we expect this to look professional and be formatted in a memo style. I’ve created an example below.

**Clarity**

- Make sure you present ideas in an intelligent order and that you have coherent paragraphs (i.e. they’re about the same topic) with strong topic sentences.

**Grammar/spelling**

- This one is obvious. I would suggest having someone else read your paper to look for mistakes.

**Quality of research**

- Just like the first assignment, there is a healthy amount of research that needs to be done for this paper. The very best sources of information on public policy are often think tanks or public policy organizations of some type. Additionally, work that appears within academic journals or are from scholarly sources are also good. Newspapers and periodicals are acceptable as sources, but aren’t nearly as good.
- I would highly suggest taking advantage of the librarians in Gelman as well as coming and talking to me if you feel lost in terms of research.
Format Example:

TO: [Your boss; e.g. Governor Mark Dayton (D-MN)]
FROM: [The role you’re playing; e.g. Ryan Krog, Senior Legislative Assistant]
RE: [Give an appropriate title]
DATE: [Date]

Dear Governor Dayton,

[Insert five pages of a well-argued policy recommendation supported by great evidence. Make sure to number your pages.]

Sincerely,
[Insert your signature here in Pen]

Ryan Krog [type your name here again below signed name]

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[Your sources]