**Independent Student Assignment: Interest Groups DUE DATE: February 25**

***Worth One Test Grade***

**Choose an interest group to research. You must have your interest group approved before you start your research. *Need Help: Ask!***

**For each group, find out and outline the basics:**

*1) Mission*

1. What is the group's mission?
2. What causes do its members support?
3. What is the group's brief history, including: why was the group formed and how old is the group?
4. What are the main ways they promote their agenda?

*2) Membership*

1. What is the size of their membership?
2. Are there dues, or do they ask for donations?
3. What sorts of people belong?
4. Are there tangible or material incentives to belong?

*3) Budget*

1. What is their total annual budget?
2. How is the money allocated and where does it come from?

*4) Staff*

1. What is the size of their staff? What does the staff do?

*5) Lobbying*

1. How much of their time is spent directly lobbying Congress or the agencies?
2. Do they use a public relations or law firm?
3. Do they work with particular members of Congress or particular people in a government agency?
4. Do they lobby on the state and local level?
5. Do they use the courts?
6. Do they use grassroots lobbying techniques?
7. Which form of lobbying do they use most often?

*6) Partisanship*

1. Is it a partisan group? If so, with which party would each group associate?

*7) Analysis and Assessment (OPINION)*

Now that you've got the basics on your groups, you need to assess their effectiveness.

1. Will a group be effective in promoting its agenda over the next few years? Why or why not?
2. What will help promote or hinder the group's success? You should probably articulate this opinion in a more forthright and judgmental manner. You may also provide suggestions as to how either group might improve its effectiveness in promoting the policies that it favors.

Make sure you use the Internet intelligently. Assess the validity and bias of sources as you examine them. A group's Web site will likely present that group in a favorable light. Not all commentators are neutral or equally savvy in their analysis.

You MUST also include ***citations***, including footnotes or parenthetical citations as well as a ***bibliography***. Be careful to use ***multiple sources*** and to correctly cite any Web sources.