Task: Interest Group Memo

File name: lastname_groups.doc or .docx or .rtf. Please follow this convention. Please also indicate PA 507 in the email subject line.

Format: 750 to 1500 words. A concise paper is better than a lengthy one, but the goal is to cover enough information that the reader understands the environment in which policy will be made.

Task description

This memo is very straightforward, and you should already have some of the information you need to complete this assignment. The assignment is very simple:

List and explain the groups—and types of groups—that support your sense of the problem, and the need for its solutions. Also list the groups that will oppose your interpretation, and that you will need to either persuade to join you, or that will work against you no matter what. Explain which of these groups would make your best allies, and explain who will be your stiffest opponents. Explain why—not merely assert that a group is “big,” has a lot of “money,” or has “millions of members.” The goal is to dig down below the obvious.

In writing this, here are places to look for information:

1. News coverage of the issue, from credible sources like the New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, or similar such sources
2. More specialized publications like CQ Weekly Report or Roll Call
3. Congressional hearings provide a rich summary of who has testified, and what they have said. You can usually just skim their prepared statement to get a sense of what they are doing.
4. Avoid starting with a Google search. This will yield very broad and hard to use information. In particular, it is unlikely to find the range of interest groups that you want to find. However, if you do a Google search, search on the problem statement, not on the type of interest group. For example, “there are too many runway incursions,” not “aviation interest groups.” The goal is to narrow the search to reasonable limits.
5. Finally, this is not the sort of information you are likely to find in the scholarly literature. This assignment is really about collecting information from databases and similar sources.