Special Interest Group ~ Research Assignment

Introduction: Interest groups play a very important role in American politics. They represent the wishes and interests of everyday citizens like you and me as well as large multi-national corporations. Interest groups are effective because they can combine the motivation, energy, and financial resources of many.

Interest groups perform various functions but most importantly, they attempt to influence government. The purpose of this research assignment is to focus on several interest groups, so that we can learn what they are, what they represent, and how they operate.

Your Task:

(A) Working with a partner, you will select an interest group and research it. You will create a power point presentation, in which you will address the following questions.

1. What is your interest group?
2. Where is the group based? Does it have a national headquarters?
3. Who is the current president or leader of the group?
4. When, where, and why was it founded? Who founded it?
5. What is the purpose of your interest group? What is their main objective?
6. How many members does your interest group have?
7. What does the interest group do for its members (member services)?
8. What issues does it support? How does it justify (defend) that position?
9. What issues does it oppose? How does it justify (defend) that position?
10. What legislation (state or national) has it supported or opposed in recent years?
11. Did the interest group endorse candidates in the most recent election? Or provide ratings for the candidates?

Your power point presentation should last 10 to 15 minutes.

(B) Create a one page handout to go along with your presentation. This should be an outline or bullet points that help the audience to follow along.

(C) Here are your choices:

- NARAL Pro-Choice America
- National Right to Life Committee
- American Farm Bureau Federation
- United Farm Workers of America
- Sierra Club
- Independent Petroleum Association of America
- Associated General Contractors of America
- American Civil Liberties Union
- Christian Action Network
- National Rifle Association
• Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense
• United States Chamber of Commerce
• AFL-CIO
• National Organization for Women
• Bread for the World
• People for the American Way
• Christian Coalition
• American Conservative Union
• Log Cabin Republicans
• American Association of Retired Persons
• National Network for Youth
• 314 Action (pro-science group)

Reminders for good presentations:
✓ Introduce yourselves
✓ Introduce your topic
✓ Be sure to have a conclusion
✓ You and your partner should be involved in the presentation
✓ Be sure to use bullet points in your PPT. Do NOT have giant paragraphs of text on your slides!
✓ Remember to answer all of the questions
✓ Add pictures, graphs, charts, and visuals into your PPT where appropriate
✓ Do NOT read directly from your slides--it is better to use note cards OR memorize your part
✓ Use a nice, clear voice
✓ No chewing gum while presenting!

Presentations will begin on Thursday, Dec. 13th! So get busy researching!