PUBLIC POLICY
Definition- a specific course of action that government takes to address a problem.

How to convey:

1. Laws passed by Congress and signed by President
2. Opinions issued by the Supreme Court
3. Rules written by administrators (Federal Bureaucracy)
1. DISTRIBUTIVE POLICY- benefits ALL groups in society such as Social Security or Medicare; National Parks

2. REDISTRIBUTIVE POLICY- Takes resources away from one group (taxes) to distribute to another group; Welfare (zero sum games)

3. COUNTERDISTRIBUTIVE POLICY-takes resources away from ALL groups to solve a common problem- improved mileage on cars; carbon emissions
1. MAKING ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT THE WORLD-pessimistic in defining problems; optimistic in announcing solutions

2. SETTING THE AGENDA- POLICY AGENDA- list of issues the Federal Government pays attention to and wants to solve

3. DECIDING TO ACT- Hardest step; ISSUE-ATTENTION CYCLE- leaps into prominence then fades
   - Pre-stage problem; alarmed discovery and enthusiasm; change will incur cost; gradual decline of public interest; post stage problem

8 STEPS IN MAKING PUBLIC POLICY
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4. DECIDING WHAT TO DO- INCREMENTAL OR COMPREHENSIVE- immigration and/or Affordable Care Act- Iron Triangles and/or Issue Networks

5. CHOOSING A TOOL- Spending money, using taxes to regulate economy or behavior, providing goods and services directly (National parks and museums), providing protection against risk (federal loan guarantees), creating standards, incentives or penalties
8 STEPS IN MAKING PUBLIC POLICY

6. DECIDING WHO WILL DELIVER THE GOODS AND OR SERVICES- Private businesses (Blackwater in Iraq), Colleges and Universities (research), state and local governments (police and fire protection), charities (American Cancer Society)

7. MAKING RULES FOR IMPLEMENTATION- regulations and rules put forth in the Federal Register

8. RUNNING THE PROGRAM- Federal department or agency
8 STEPS IN MAKING PUBLIC POLICY

ORDER OF ACTION:
- Can start at any step and move forward or backward
- Policy streams are shaped by citizens, interest groups, presidents, Congress, and always in a state of flux
- Some policies are efforts to terminate a current program
HOW TO PARTICIPATE:
• VOTING
• JOINING INTEREST GROUPS
• WRITING LETTERS AND EMAILS
• CONFRONTING LEGISLATORS- Town Hall meetings
• RUNNING FOR OFFICE