An Emergency Medicine physician (Dr. Em) on staff at a hospital in upstate New York recently returned from the 2019 American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) meeting where there was a great deal of discussion about physicians’ role in gun violence prevention. During the meeting the ACEP governing council passed a resolution to “devise strategies to help emergency physicians work with stakeholders to mitigate patients’ risk of self-directed or interpersonal harm, particularly when guns are accessible.” These conversations resonated with Dr. Em. She has become increasingly frustrated by her inability to effectively intervene with her patients who present with underlying behavioral (anger, substance use, etc.) and mental health issues that are beyond the scope of emergency care. The New York doctor remembered hearing that lawmakers in Albany (capitol of New York) passed an Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) law that creates a mechanism for civilians to petition the court for help when an immediate family member poses an imminent risk of harm to themselves or others. Law enforcement and school administrators are also included as petitioners under New York’s law. Dr. Ed would like to see New York lawmakers amend their ERPO law and include emergency medicine physicians among those authorized to petition the court when someone in their care is behaving dangerously and is at risk of committing gun violence. Given ACEP’s new resolution, she believes the time is right for New York to include physicians working in emergency departments among those authorized to request an ERPO.

Dr. Em contacted state Senator Brad Hoylman and requested that he sponsor such an amendment. As the lead staffer to the Senator, it is your responsibility to brief him on existing state ERPO laws and assess the viability of Dr. Em’s request for New York. He will be meeting with Dr. Em next Monday afternoon. To prepare the Senator for that meeting, please write a background memo summarizing the issue for him and assessing the politics of this policy proposal. **You are not being asked to recommend a course of action, but rather to conduct a preliminary assessment of the policy in the context of the political landscape of the state.**

Your memo should include the following elements.

1. A clear statement about the purpose of the memo.  
   **This statement should be two or three sentences.**

2. A description of the problem of gun violence in New York and the role of physicians in gun violence prevention. (You will need to identify external sources for this information.)  
   **This description should be 1 or 2 paragraphs.**

3. A description of existing ERPO law, and an assessment of whether emergency department physicians should be authorized to request an ERPO for patients they determine to be at risk of violence.  
   **This description should be 1 or 2 paragraphs.**
4. An assessment of two stakeholders: One who you believe will support an ERPO bill and a second who is likely to oppose it, and what their main argument to support their position will be.
This assessment should be 2 paragraphs.

5. A brief concluding paragraph that summarizes your findings.
This conclusion should be 1 paragraph.

Your response to this assignment should be approximately 750 words and written in paragraph form. We are looking for you to synthesize the class lectures, class discussions, and readings and apply the concepts you learned. You may use additional written source material in formulating your answer. Where you rely on written materials, please provide a reference and use quotation marks where appropriate.

In writing your assignment, we expect you to write an original paper on your own. That is to say, this is not a group assignment – students are not to work together in writing their assignments. If we receive submissions that are enough alike so as to raise the question of joint authorship, we will feel obliged to refer the matter to the School’s Academic Ethics Committee.

Please submit your assignment to the Drop Box labeled “Assignment #1” on this course’s CoursePlus page. We must receive your assignment by 9am on Monday, November 11th, 2019. If you don’t turn your assignment in by 9am on November 11th your grade will be penalized.