The topic: · Impact of legalizing adult use marijuana on adolescents and mental health. Final Team Project On Nov. 8, 2016, 53.2% of voters approved Issue 6 authorizing the creation of a Medical Marijuana Program. In 2021, Arkansas dispensaries sold $264.9 million worth of medical cannabis. This year, state officials certified that a sufficient number of signatures had been submitted to qualify a constitutional cannabis legalization measure for the ballot. However, the Arkansas State Board of Election Commissioners issued a ruling to block voters from seeing the measure, alleging that aspects of the language would be confusing to voters. The campaign backing the legalization proposal, Responsible Growth Arkansas, has filed an appeal with the Arkansas Supreme Court. Judges have ordered that the measure, known as Issue 4, be placed on the November general election ballot. But if the court ultimately agrees with the election board that the initiative’s language is confusing, the vote on the measure will be nullified. A local police chief has partnered with national prohibitionist lobbying group, Smart Approaches to Marijuana (SAM), to intervene in the case and present arguments against the legalization measure. If enacted the measure would allow adults 21 and older to purchase and possess up to an ounce of cannabis. The state’s Alcoholic Beverage Control Division would regulate and issue licenses for cultivation facilities and dispensaries; the state would collect revenue from a 10% supplemental tax on cannabis sales (in addition to normal state and local sales taxes). Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson, former head of the Drug Enforcement Agency, strongly opposes legalizing cannabis and is rallying police officers to oppose a marijuana legalization initiative. The governor recently tweeted, "The science is clear. Recreational marijuana leads to increased drug use among minors & more dangerous roadways. This November, I’m voting NO on Issue 4 to legalize recreational marijuana in Arkansas & I hope you’ll join me." There is no clear consensus on the ballot initiative versus competing proposals among advocates. Yet, about 54 percent of Arkansans said that they favor full adult-use legalization, compared to 32 percent who said it should be legal for medical use only—as is the case under current state law—and just around 11 percent who said it should be outright illegal. You are staff to a REPUBLICAN senator. The senator is concerned that in the next session there will be a bill proposing to legalize adult use cannabis and asks you to prepare an objective policy briefing note and a short 5-minute PowerPoint summarizing the policy briefing note. The topic: · Impact of legalizing adult use marijuana on adolescents and mental health. The policy briefing note and sample is available in the other attachments.