**THE ISSUE**

CONCISE MAIN TITLE

**Subtitle if needed**

Month Year (e.g. June 2020)

Define your issue in 1-2 concise paragraphs. You could also frame the issue with bullet points.

* Don’t assume policymakers or staff have any previous knowledge of the topic. Briefly catch them up to speed.
* Frame the issue in a way that matters to your specific audience. How does the issue impact your audience or the things they care about?
* Focus on essential background about who, what, where, why, etc. that your audience needs to know about the issue.
* If appropriate, reference an image, map, or chart to make it easier for your audience to quickly orient to the issue.

**KEY POLICY CONSIDERATIONS (optional)**

If it makes sense, provide a concise summary of information to frame the policy dimensions of the issue.

1. Describe key aspects of an effective policy.
2. Use “if/then” statements to bring research insights to bear on the policy dialogue. “If we enacted policy A, then research suggests we could expect outcome B.”
3. Consider framing what’s at stake. What do we risk losing, or missing, or getting wrong?

Once your content is in a close-to-final version, line things up in this template and make your brief beautiful.

Think about what a reader would learn if they skimmed this in 30 seconds.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS (optional)**

If appropriate, provide policy recommendations for your audience. To avoid being too prescriptive or advocacy-oriented, you can frame as what a policymaker *could* do. Lay out potential solutions to the issue, and highlight the benefits of the solutions to specific stakeholders that your audience cares about.

**Who can do what, and when?** Identify potential solutions and recommendations that your audience has authority and jurisdiction over or that are directly relevant to them.

**Bottom line up front.** Start with your most important recommendation. Don’t bury the most important point by building up to it.

**(1) Recommendation one.**

Consider including one sentence describing each recommendation and one sentence stating why it’s important.

**(2) Recommendation two.**

Bullet lists make things easier to skim.

* You could present multiple options for the policymaker to consider.
* If you do, discuss the pros and cons of each option.

**(3) Recommendation three.**

Distill broad or complex ideas into the most important points using plain language.

In your final formatted version, notice where page breaks occur.

Present the evidence that supports your recommendations or conclusions.

One-sentence paragraphs are OK.

**(4) Recommendation four.**

Get feedback from others, especially policy experts or policy staff if possible. Gund Institute staff is here to help.

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Include a brief caption to describe images, and include attribution. Images should be high quality. Charts should be large enough to easily read.

Use figures and tables only where appropriate. You do not need to provide a large amount of numerical data. If data add value and are essential to making your points, consider using tables or figures rather than overwhelming the reader with data in text form. Keep tables simple.

**CONCLUSION**

Without being repetitive, emphasize main points.

Consider providing a brief blueprint for implementing recommendations. Be as specific as possible.

When using your issue brief to engage with policymakers, **be prepared to provide additional info or sources.**

Mention any ongoing or future research that is exploring these issues in more detail and could continue to provide insights.

Think about how you could engage for the longer-term, develop a professional relationship, and be a trusted resource for decision-makers.

*Note any key resources or if this brief is based on a published paper or summarizes a Gund Institute Issue Paper.*

contact

**Name of contact**

Email address

Phone number if you like