Compromise On Public Policy Is Essay, Research Paper

Compromising on Public Policy Issues: Is This Good or Bad?

A public policy is a set of principles that directs government actions. The policy may take one of many forms laws, rules, programs, money, court decisions and even customs and traditions. These policies affect everyone, but not always in the same way. For example a policy that’s good for the consumer may not be good for the farmer.

Public policy is developed through a process of debate and compromise. For that process to work effectively, policy makers need to hear from a broad range of people. They need to know how a policy, or changes in a policy, will effect different groups of people and how each group feels about the change. It’s not always easy for our policy makers to find out all the different opinions; it is the responsibility of citizens to be involved.

On issues, sometimes there are no “right” answers. No purely “technical fix” exists for some problems; negotiation is an important part of the process, and to make effective policies, policy makers need to build and maintain constituencies. A feedback loop for exchange of information with society is essential.

The number-one benefit of compromise is that it serves as a forum to resolve disputes. Compromise can be fast, quick and easy, or they can drag on for years and years. Since the rules and procedures are usually relaxed in compromise meetings, the parties are also in a better position to represent themselves.

It naturally follows that compromising on public policy issues also tends to be less expensive, parties will usually end up having to relent on some issues. Benefit can be seen that serves to bridge the gap in proceedings so that the parties can get a better glimpse of where things are headed if they are unable to resolve their differences. Most cases will settle, but many times it is not until the parties are on the verge of war. Compromise may help to facilitate a settlement sooner rather than later.

Another good thing about compromise is that strict rules or procedure in reaching a decision does typically not bind an arbitrator. He or she can consider a lot more facts and circumstances. Arbitrators typically try to be practical and oftentimes look at compromise as being inherently fair. Thus, the likelihood is that an arbitrator’s decision will award something to at least one of the parties.

Compromise can also bring finality. Sometimes for the better, a decision on an issue cannot be appealed or overturned in the absence of a showing of extraordinary circumstances. Thus, once a decision is rendered on the issue(s), the issue(s) is over. Both parties will typically not be able to appeal (which can make the matter drag on for years and years).

What are some of the drawbacks of compromise? There are no guarantees that the process will be a fair process. Once a decision is reached, the parties are generally stuck with that decision. Without the right to appeal , there is always the risk of being subject to the whims and prejudices of the arbitrator. Overall, this is probably the biggest drawback to the compromise process.

Ironically enough, the rationale for compromising in the first place may actually encourage parties to fight about issues concerning environment, education, healthcare or whatever, whereas if a dispute could have been avoided and the benefits of a compromise may not have been realized. In the absence of compromises, the parties may be more inclined to pursue an expensive lawsuit or other options instead of talking about the issue(s). If compromise is an option though, the parties may elect to talk instead of fighting about something and try to work out their differences more informally.