

## What Should You Do?

Imagine that you work as a policy analyst in your state's education department. You have just completed an analysis of a proposal to give grants to school districts to enable them to reduce class size in kindergarten through grade three to 15 students. (The current average size is 22 students per classroom.) After reviewing all the evidence, and conducting what you believe to be a professionally sound cost-benefit analysis, you reach a conclusion that the proposal would produce net social costs; that is, your estimate of the monetary value of the benefits produced (higher academic achievement of students from reduced class size) is much smaller than the costs of the program. You are very certain about your estimate of costs, but somewhat less certain about your estimate of benefits. Nevertheless, you are quite certain about your estimate of negative net benefits.

1. Your supervisor claims in her report to the legislature that your analysis found that the program would have positive net benefits.
2. Your supervisor asks you to testify before an assembly committee that your cost-benefit analysis shows positive net benefits.
3. Your supervisor orders you to destroy the cost-benefit analysis when inquires about it are made by the assembly committee.