IDENTIFYING POLICYMAKERS FOR IMPACT

To advance your campaign, you will need to identify policymakers who have power, interest, and connections to champion your effort. *Tools of the Game, Volume One,* offers a number of considerations when identifying policymakers, including whether your goals are to shape legislation or administrative agency regulations. An effective tool in deciding this is completing a power map. A power map gives you a landscape view of where power relationships stand in relation to your issue and how the campaign team plans impact.

*Step 1:* Identify potential policymakers. These elected officials generally include:

❏ Those who have the power to fix the problem
   a. For example: Those who chair committees in Congress or your state legislature (e.g., Chair of the Public Health or Criminal Justice Committee)
   b. Leadership within a county or city executive agency (parks and rec, development, etc.)
   c. Chairs or commissioners of boards who create and approve organizational policy
❏ Those who are geographically relevant to the issue
   a. Districts where there are prisons/jails
   b. Those who are in the same service area
   c. Districts that can "flip" and change power dynamics in policymaking
❏ Those who are working to fix the problem
   a. Legislators who have strong policy backgrounds in criminal justice reform, health, prisons/jails, etc.
   b. Justice policy professionals in agency leadership
   c. Community-based organizational leadership who contract with agencies and/or serve on committees
   d. Faith and other civic groups
   e. Policy analysts, chiefs-of-staff, and others who support elected officials work
❏ Those with whom you may already have pre-existing relationships
   a. Pre-existing relationships make it easier to identify values that drive change
   b. Is there a member of your team who has past wins with a target?
   c. Those who are in the same service area

Your list may not be perfect; however, identifying the right stakeholders as you start your campaign will help you in the long run to achieve your policy advocacy goals.

Step 2: Research the list of individuals you identified in Step 1.

☐ Do they agree or disagree with you on this issue?
☐ How much power do they have over this issue?
☐ How have they previously voted on related policies?
☐ Are they in the middle of an election campaign (is this the right time to approach)?
☐ How do they stand to benefit or lose if your goals are met?
☐ In what ways can the public hold their decision making accountable? (this is power)

Step 3: Plot your elected officials using the [power mapping graphic](#), based on the support and power of each elected official from your list.

Power Mapping Tool

More Power

Disagrees Strongly ←——————————→ **Strongly Agrees**

Less Power
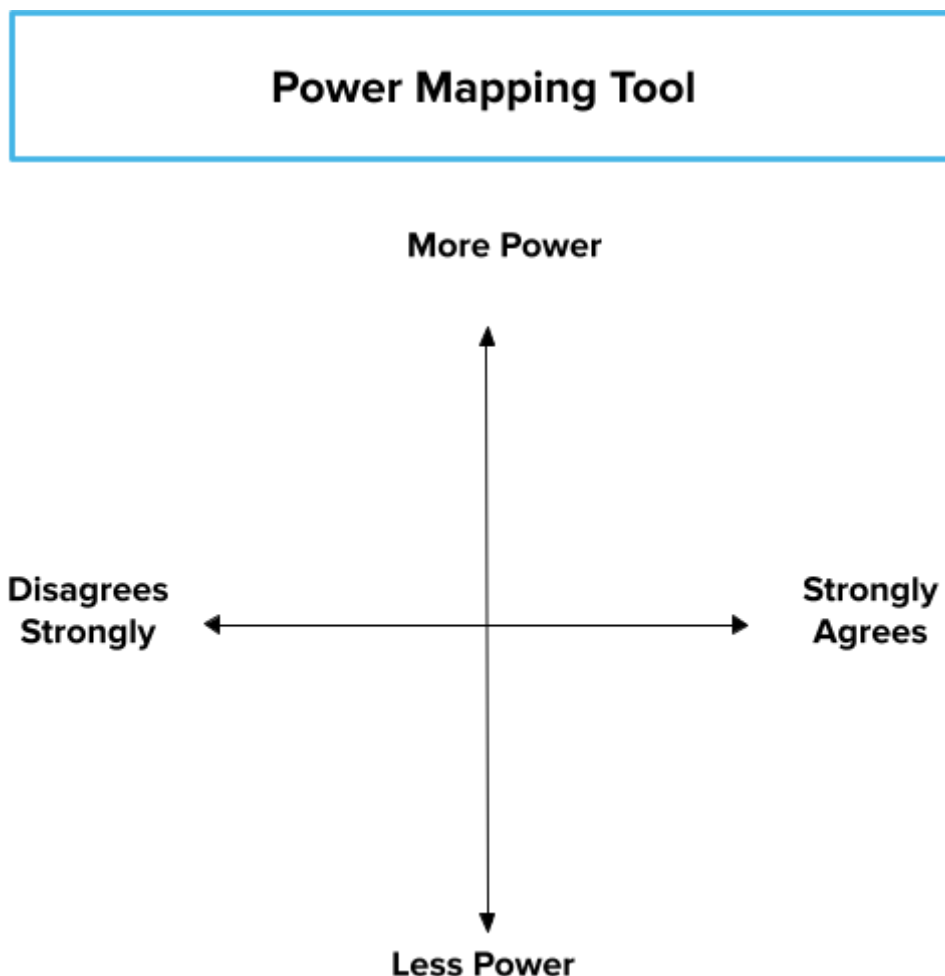
Step 4: Identify your primary target. Based on the power map you have created, ideal targets will be in the top right quadrant — *those with high power and high support for your position.* These are the people you want to champion your policy.

Step 5: Map strong relationships connected to your supporter(s).

☐ Are they influenced by any of the other names you have written down?
☐ Who can sway them? *(People who can sway them may be other organizations or allies)*
☐ Does the time needed to sway them fit within your campaign timeline?

Step 6: Revisit and revise. Power and support are constantly shifting, so regularly revisit and revise these lists as needed. You'll know when!