

# TARGET ENGAGEMENT TIP SHEET

## What is target engagement?

Your target is the person who can give you what you want in order to achieve your campaign goal. Most of the time, this person is an elected official. Engaging with your target is imperative to your campaign.

Policymakers generally respond to two types of input in the course of making public policy:

1. Persuasive information like studies, reports, and opinion polls. These could include a traffic safety study, individual testimony, or fact sheets.
2. Public pressure like constituent letters, group endorsements, petitions, and emails. This category includes a letter-writing campaign, a large rally or bike ride or a letter-to-the-editor.

The best campaigns will utilize both types of input!



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## Tactics

### Create a Petition

- **Keep it simple:** Write your petition in a brief and simple way, but be prepared to explain it in detail to people who are genuinely interested. A good petition can act both as a base building tool and a target engagement tool.
- **Base building:** Be sure to ask for phone numbers and email addresses from signers and follow up with them in a few days with any news or opportunities to engage.
- **Target engagement:** Delivering signatures from a petition during a meeting with your target or at a city/town council meeting can demonstrate support beyond the people who were able to attend the meeting in person. Delivering a large number of signatures can be a good reason to invite local media.

### Write, email, or call your elected official

- **Use available resources:** See the Petitions and Letter Writing Best Practices document for examples and templates.
- **Use your voice and tell your story:** Add to existing resources by adding a personal touch. Statistics are nice, but personal appeals make the difference.
- **Request action:** State exactly what you would like the policymaker to do.

## Meet with your elected officials

- Nothing is more effective than a face-to-face meeting between your members and your elected officials. A good meeting with 5 to 10 supporters behind you is enough to get your issue on the policymaker's radar.
- **Prepare:**
  - Know your target's hobbies and background, small talk can help make people comfortable.
  - Prepare an elevator pitch or a brief, persuasive speech to spark interest in your elected official and get the conversation started.
  - Outline your priorities beforehand and have one spokesperson do most the talking.
  - Put together a packet of materials to leave behind.
- **Request action:** Have a specific demand as well as a fallback demand. Always ask for what you want, but be prepared to hear “no” and regroup.

## Testify before elected officials

- **Practice:** Prepare for your presentation and focus on including two or three key points.
- **Organize:** Recruit supporters of your policy goal to attend the meeting. Make sure that members of your group are identifiable in the crowd - wear same color t-shirts, buttons, stickers, etc.
- **Promote:** Have a fact sheet or flyer to hand out to everyone at the hearing so that they can find out more information about your group and policy goal.