

Preparing for Conversation

Exercise: Replacing polarizing language with underlying needs and values

Sample Quotes: Local Decision-Making

Church & Country:

"I think that in general the government closest to the people should be the ones deciding. Sometimes they need a push from the state level. But that should be the exception. Our experience is that there have been liberal communities that tend to do things that a super-majority conservative legislature preempts. Religious freedom, gun control. Covid broke a lot of trust with giving local communities a lot of autonomy. Constituents were screaming, 'Please help us. They are making me wear a mask and get a vaccine.'"

— *State Representative, male, 55, rural*

Economic Influenced:

"(Local control) depends on the issue. And levels of expertise. I wouldn't want my local government, even if it's a big city, making decisions on what drugs are appropriate for me to take. I want the (State) Dept. of Health doing that. On the other hand, I want them to make decisions on what water line goes where, sewer lines, doing traffic studies. Things like that."

— *State Senator, male, 61, rural/suburban*

Legacy Republican:

"Local control is good but sometimes the locals supersede the state. I'm a huge local control person—but I have to answer to my friends and neighbors back home. It's when things are done that energize the base—when the city makes decisions that [go] against constituents' voices. Guess whose phone rings?"

— *State Representative, male, 54, rural/suburban*

Populist-Aligned:

"Generally, I do like local control when it is something that people can vote on—the city council is up for election every two years. But when it comes into conflict with State law, I have an issue. If it's new or an expansion of a service that they want to test out with their local dollars, sure, have at it."

— *State Representative, male, 25, rural*