



FOOD POLICY COUNCILS:

Food justice, democracy, and civic engagement

MARCH 24, 2026



**FOOD POLICY
NETWORKS**

WHAT IS A FOOD POLICY COUNCIL?

An **organized group of people** from various sectors that may be sanctioned by a government body or may exist independently of government, which works to address **food systems issues** and needs at the local (city/municipality or county), state/provincial, regional or tribal nations levels through **policy**, programs and partnerships.

Selected Sample of Food Policy Council Initiatives













 State Legislative Agenda	 Food Policy Voter Guide	 Treaty fishing rights
 Land use and urban agriculture policies	 Grocery site protections	 Food is Medicine initiatives
 Watershed protections	 Farm-to-school efforts	 Civic Engagement 101 training
 Farm finance training series	 Food and Farm Scorecard	 Food system assessments

Image courtesy of the Better Food Policy Fund

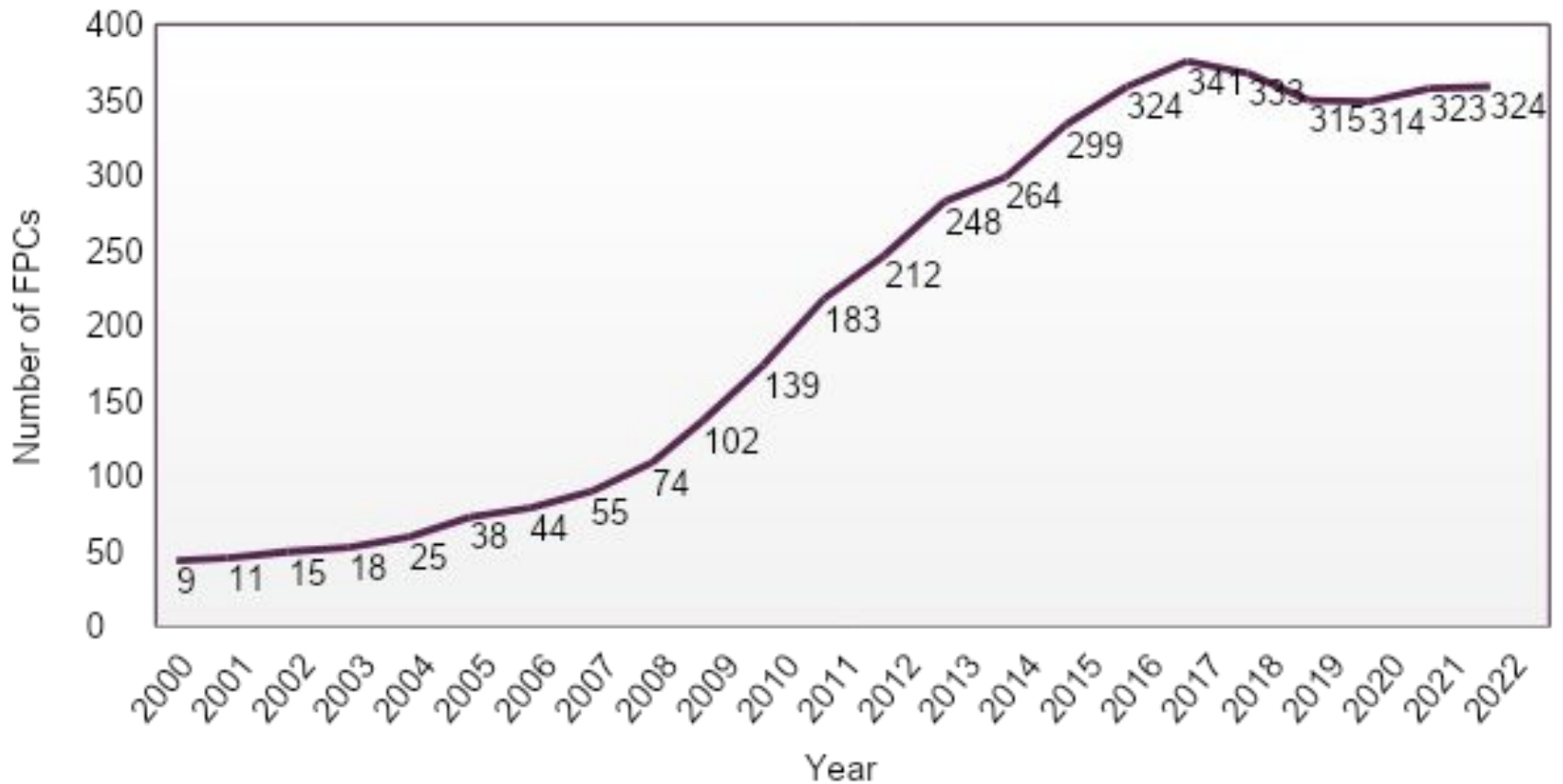


Food Policy Council Goals

For The Knoxville Food System

- ✓ Ensure that an adequate and nutritious food supply is available to all citizens.
- ✓ Strengthen the economic vitality of the private food industry.
- ✓ Improve the quality of food available to all citizens.
- ✓ Encourage citizens to accept and consume nutritious food.
- ✓ Minimize food-related activities which degrade the natural environment; limit wasteful use of scarce resources needed for future food production and distribution.

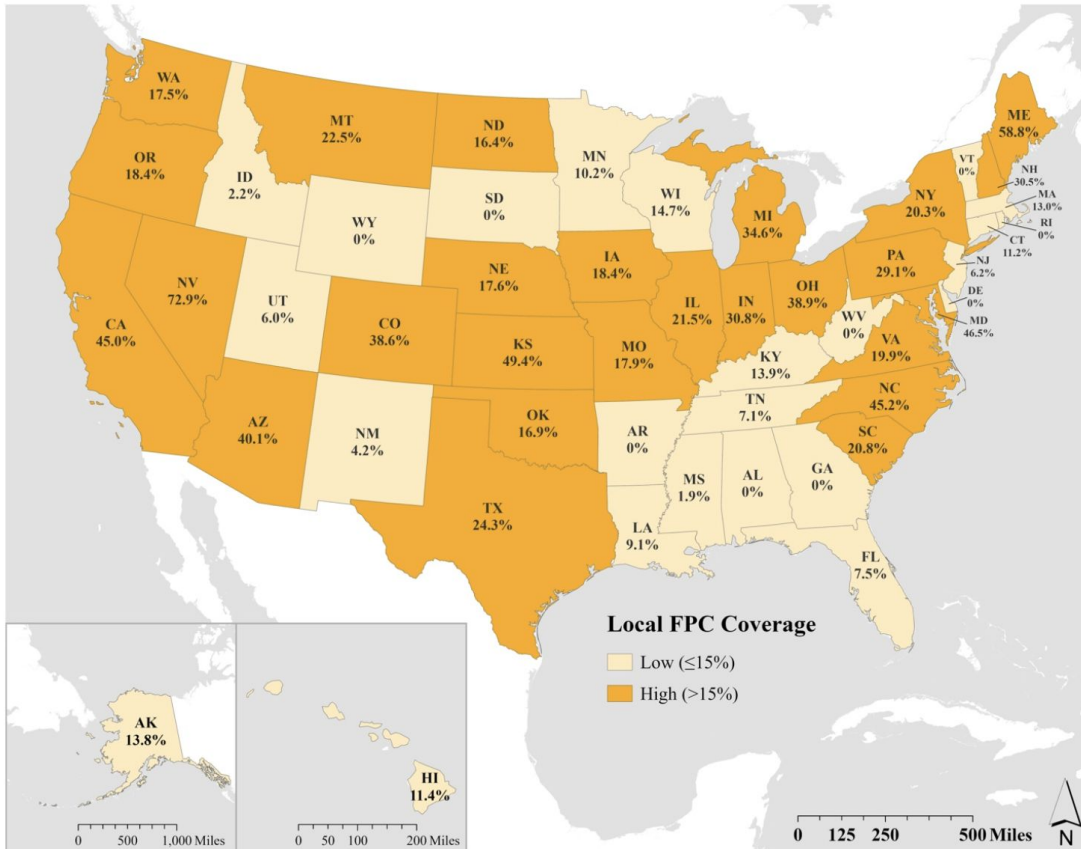
ACTIVE FPCs SINCE 2000



Count of FPCs active at the end of 2022 (n=539)

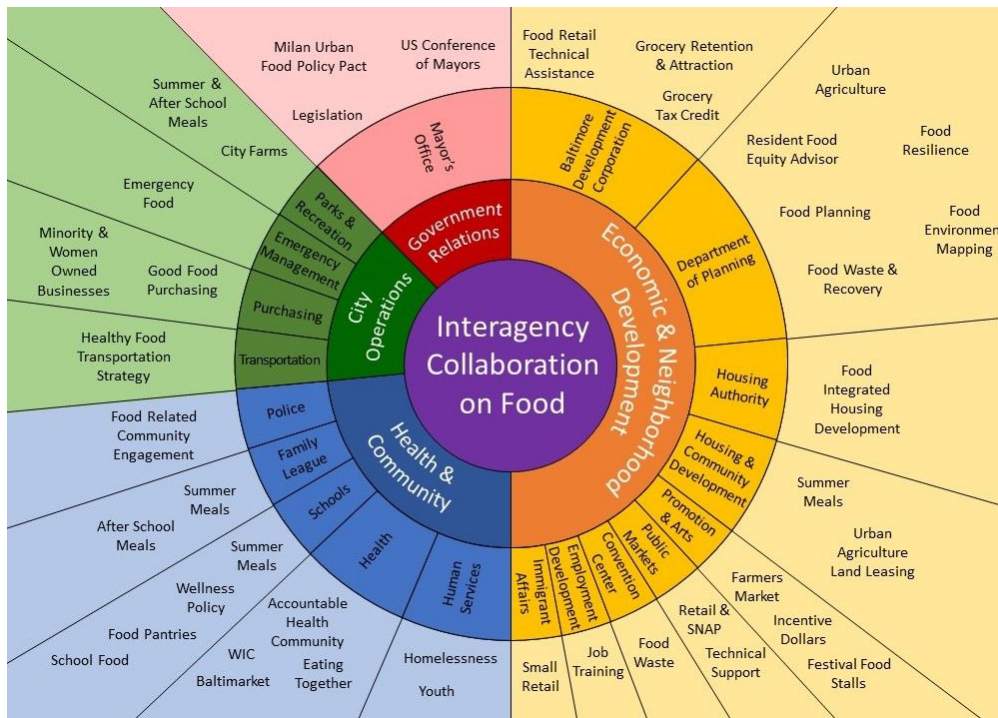
COVERAGE OF FPCs BY STATE POPULATION

Fig 1. Map of the United States a) showing the percent of a state's population that resides in an area where there is an active, local Food Policy Council (FPC) in 2021 and b) showing states categorized as having low ($\leq 15\%$) or high ($>15\%$) FPC coverage.



Calancie L, Pan Y, Bassarab K, Cooksey-Stowers K, Palmer A, Eliasziw M. Association between Local Food Policy Council Coverage and Longitudinal Household Food Insecurity During COVID-19, Stratified by Race, Ethnicity, and Income. Under review

IMPACT OF FPCs



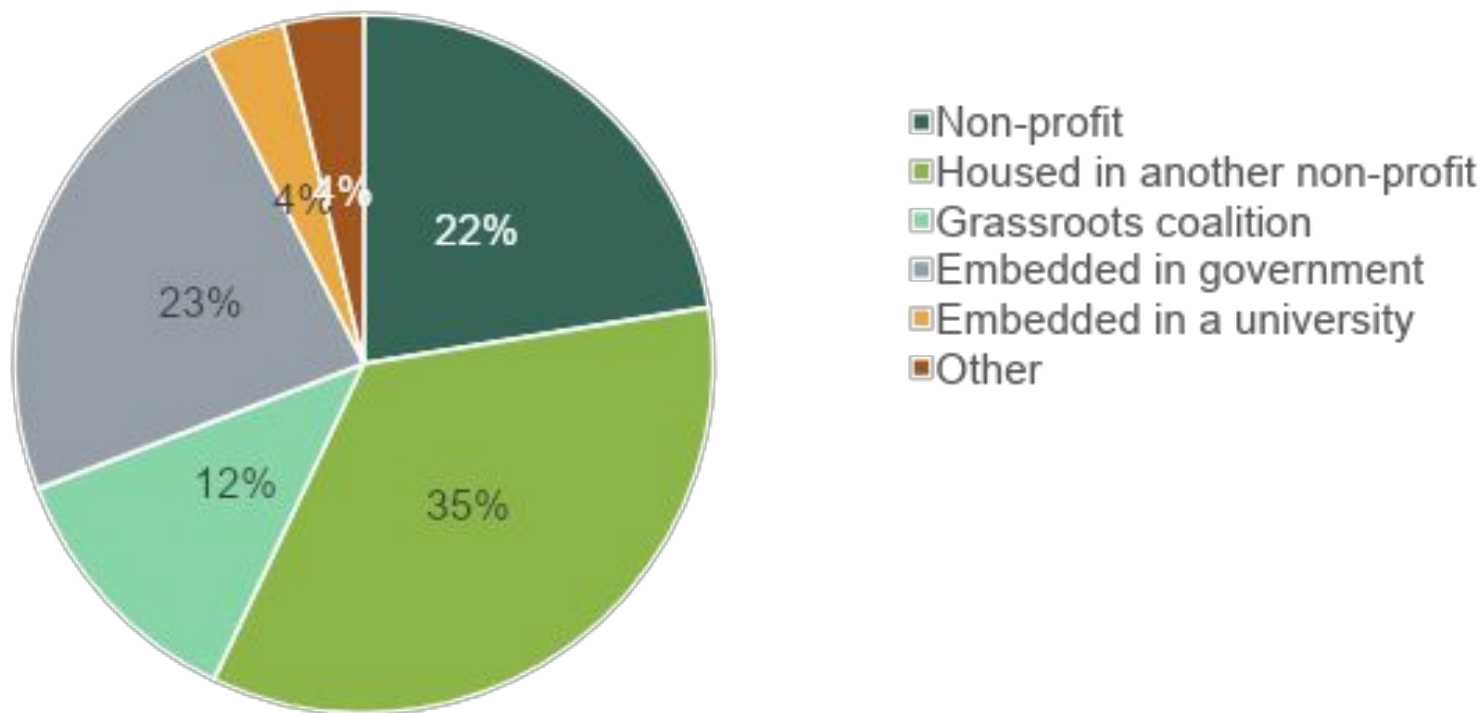
Evidence consistently shows that regions with active FPCs and supportive food policies experience significant improvements in access to healthy foods, regardless of population size, geography, poverty rates, or demographics.¹

During crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, FPCs proved to be lifelines, mobilizing emergency food access and leveraging partnerships for rapid, compassionate problem-solving.

Baltimore Food Policy Initiative

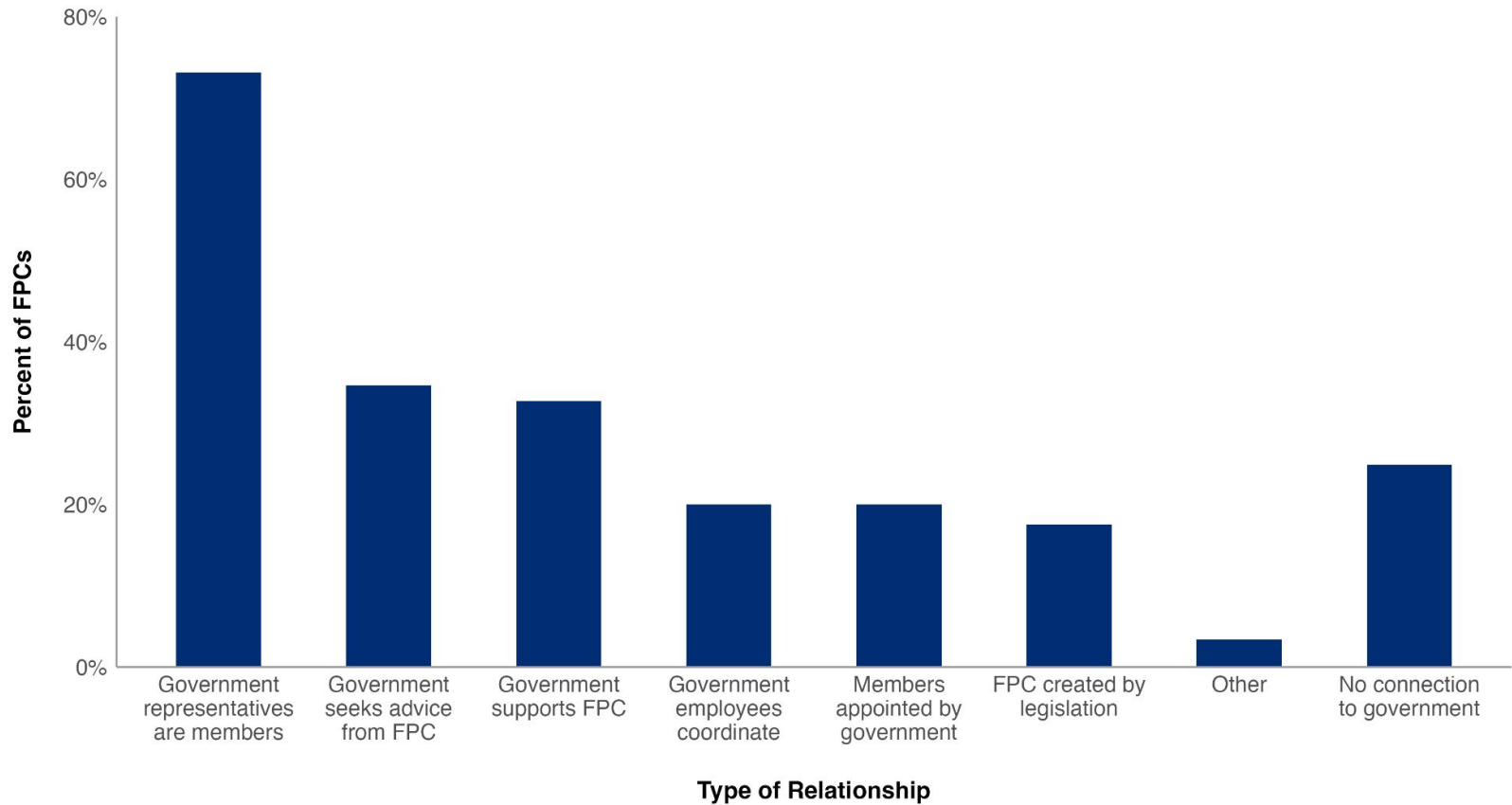
¹ Lange, S., Calancie, L., Onufrak, S., Reddy, K., Palmer, A., & Lowry Warnock, A. (n.d.). Associations between Food Policy Councils and Policies That Support Healthy Food Access: A National Survey of Community Policy Supports. *Nutrients*, 13(2). 10.3390/nu13020683

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



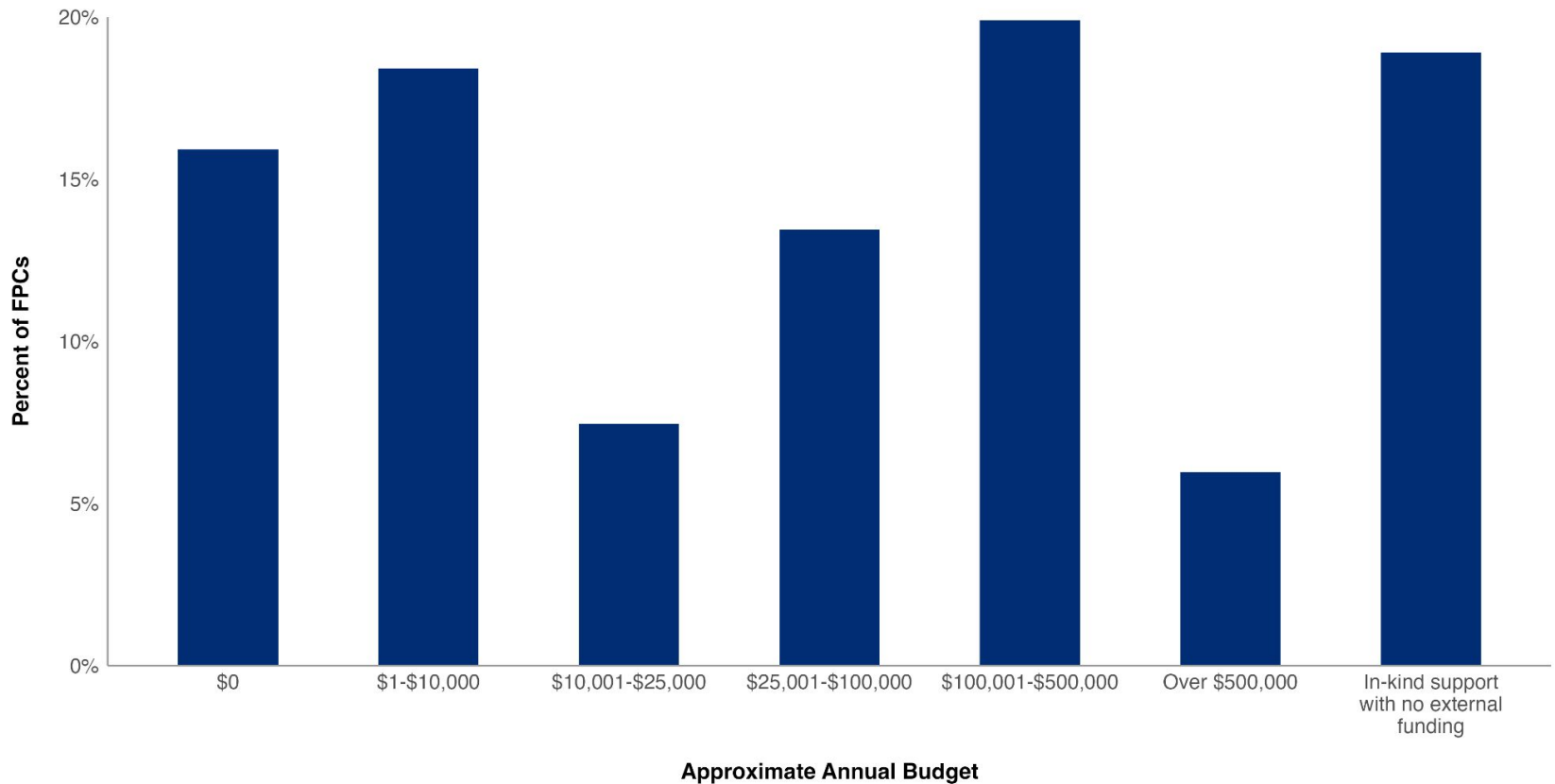
*Percent of FPCs by organizational structure, 2025 (n=214)
Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future biennial FPC census (2025).*

ROLE OF GOVERNMENT IN FPCs



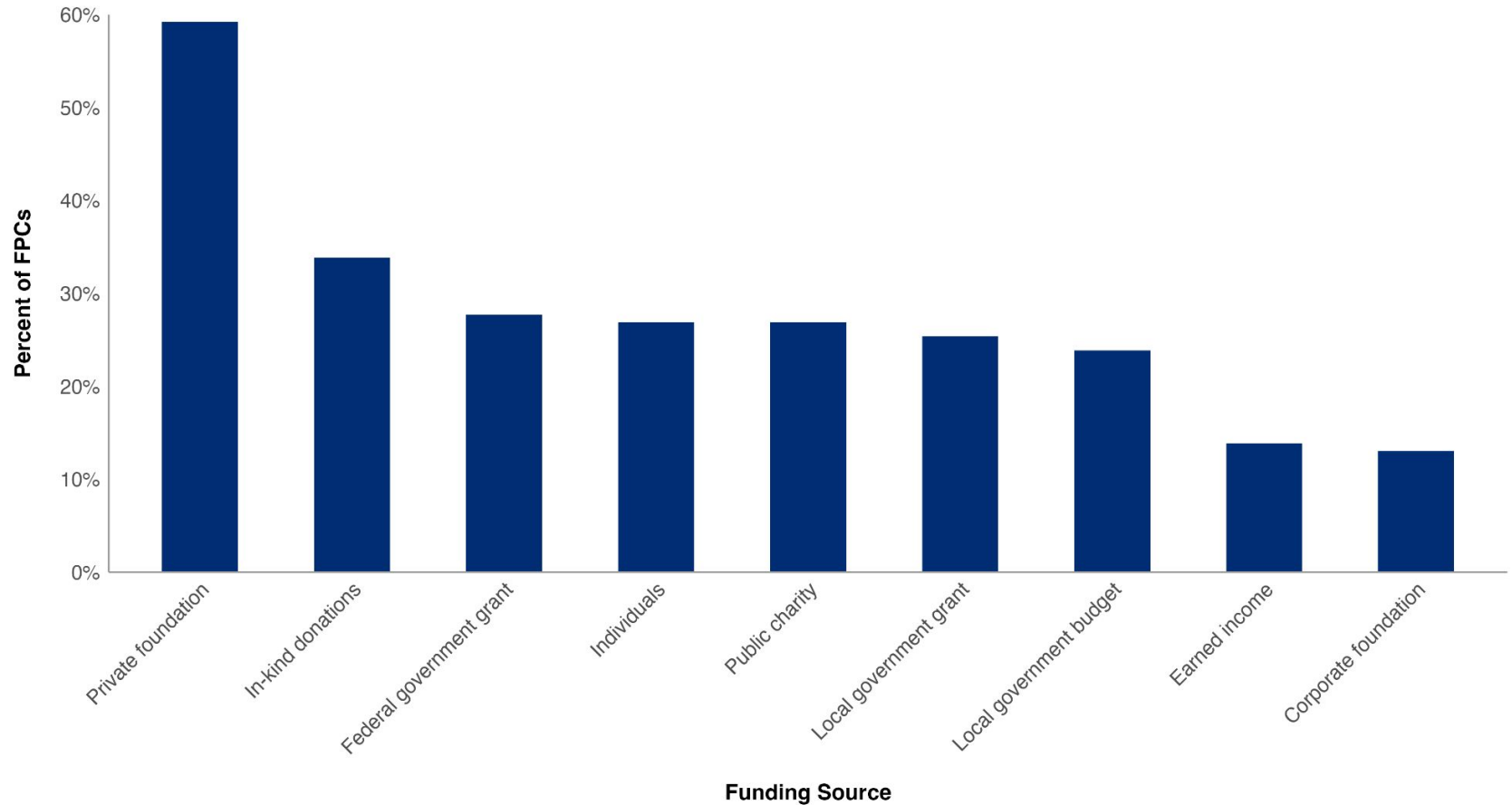
*Percent of FPCs with each relationship to government (n = 205)
Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future biennial FPC census (2025).*

ANNUAL BUDGET OF FPCs



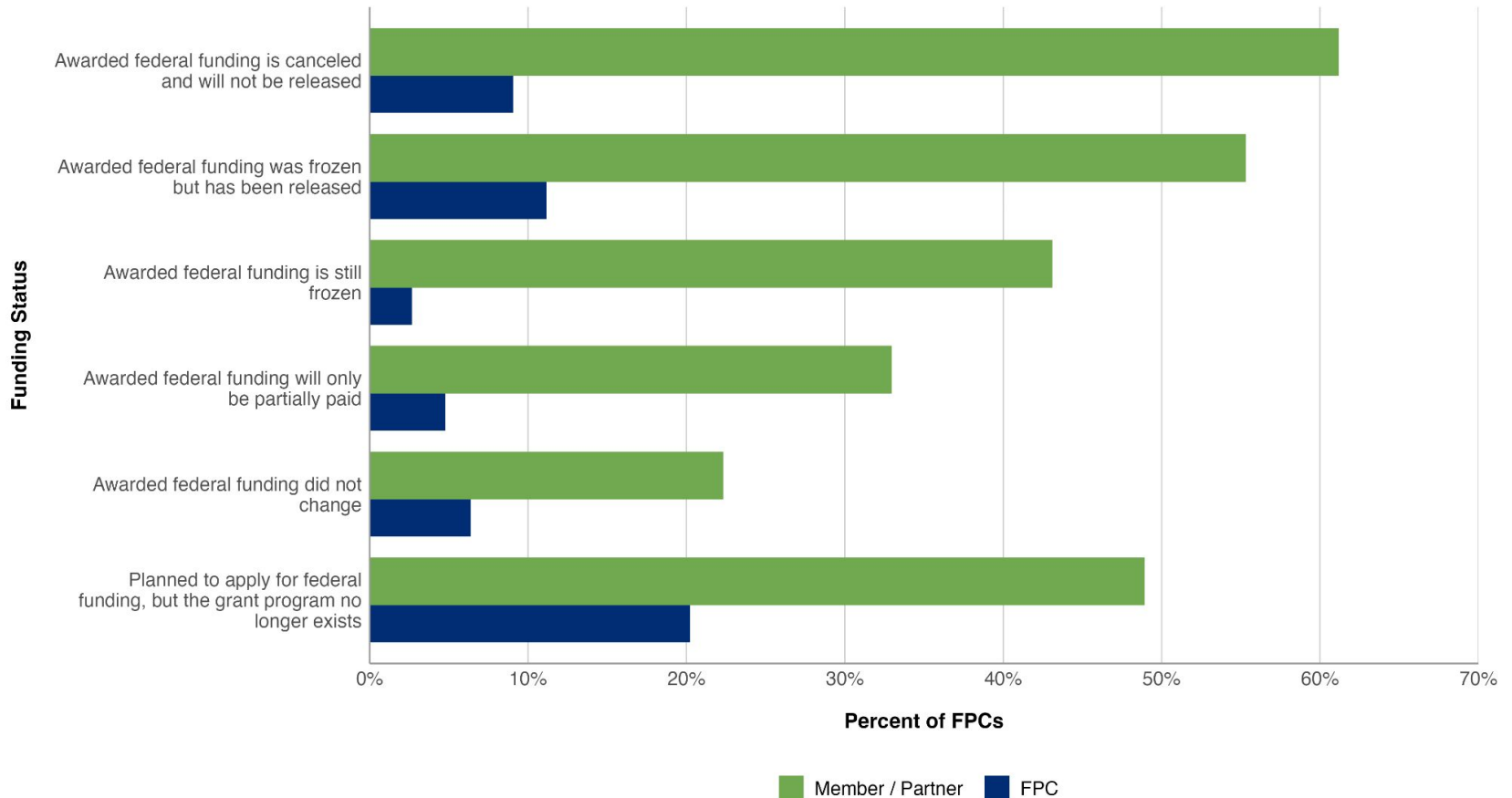
*Percent of FPCs by approximate annual budget (n = 201)
Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future biennial FPC census (2025).*

FUNDING SOURCE OF FPCs



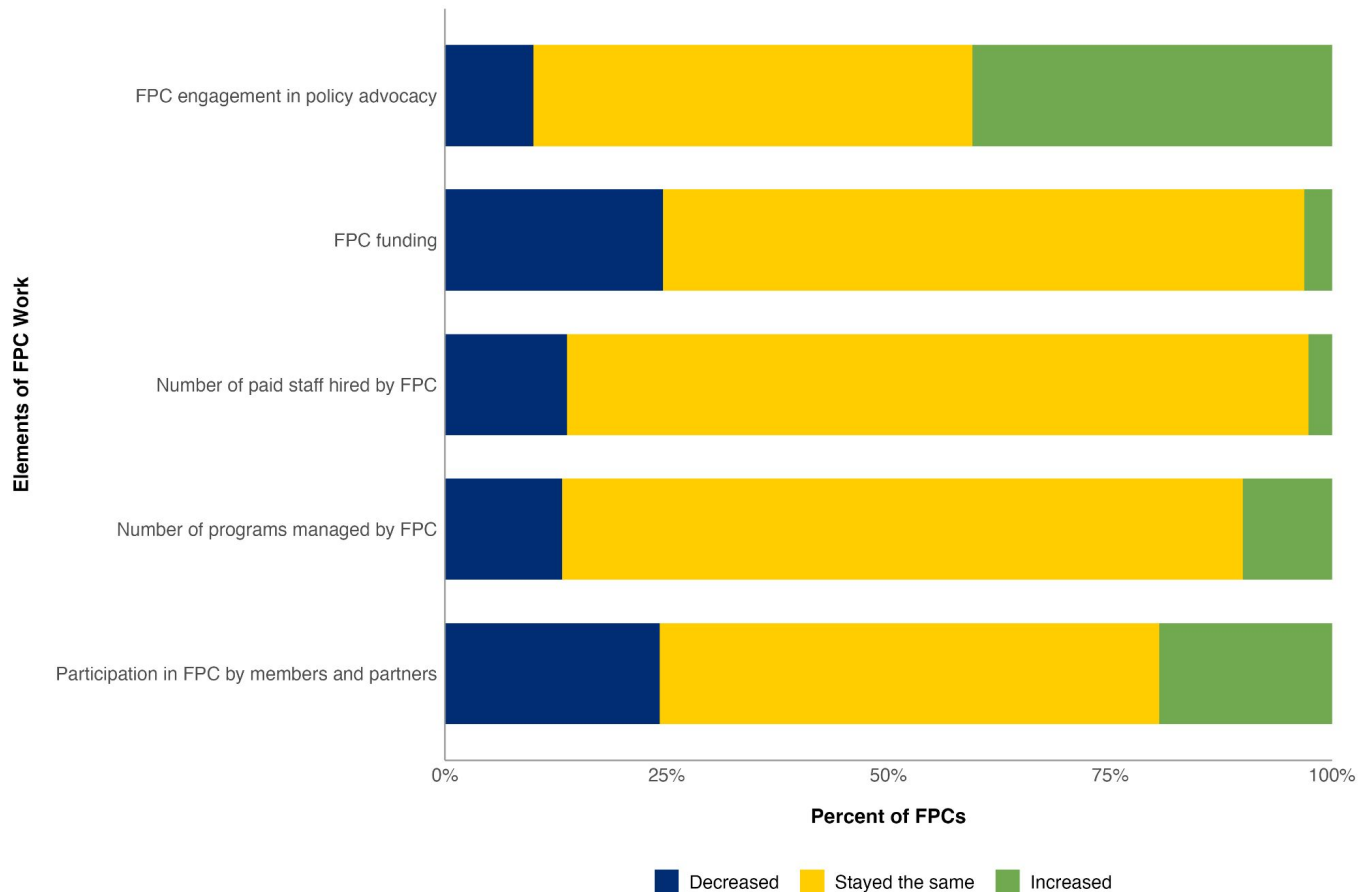
Percent of FPCs that receive funding from each source (n = 130)
Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future biennial FPC census (2025).

FEDERAL FUNDING STATUS OF FPCs



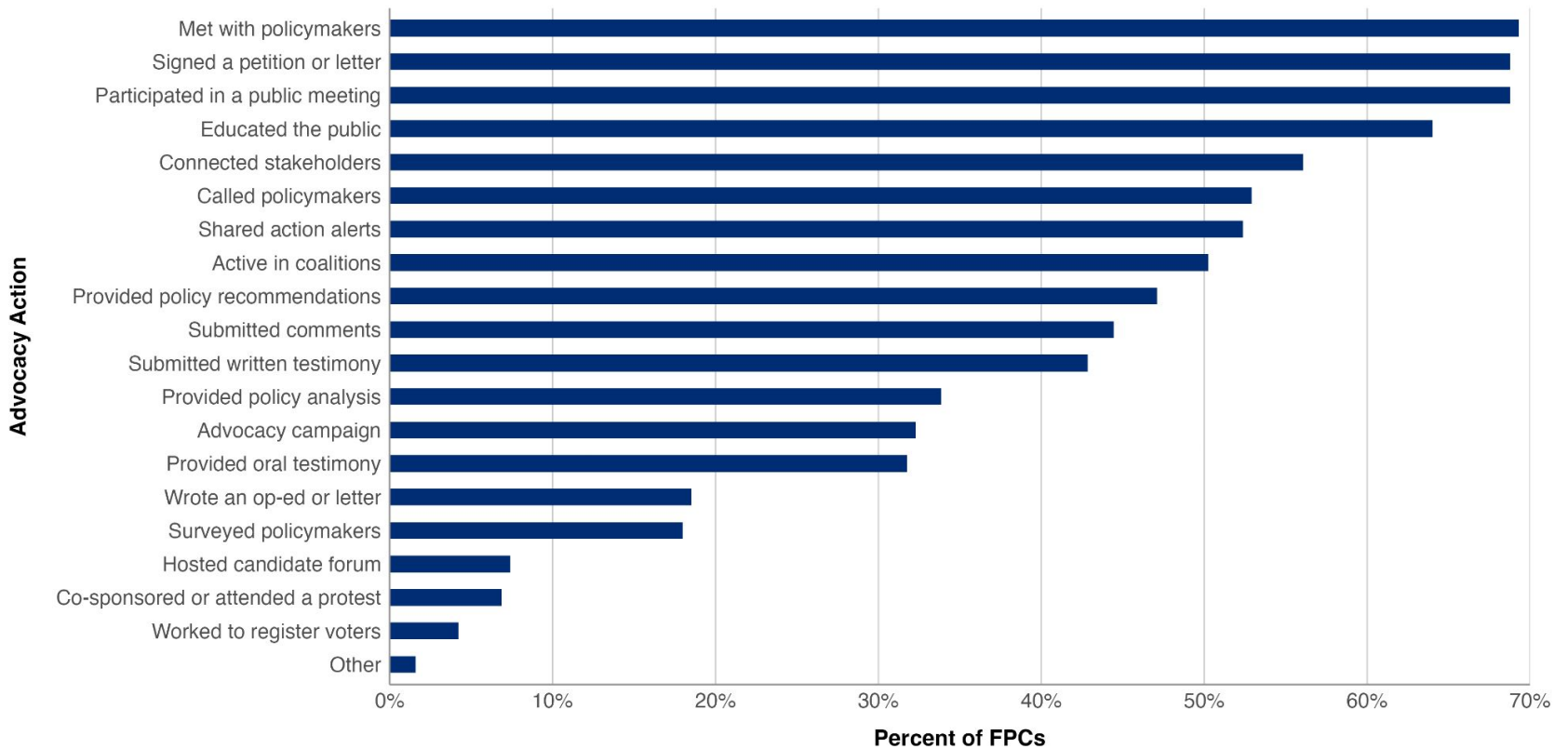
Percent of FPCs and member/partner organizations responses to statements about federal funding (n = 188)
 Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future biennial FPC census (2025).

CHANGES TO FPC WORK BASED ON THE CURRENT CLIMATE



Percent of FPCs indicating elements of work that have changed due to federal actions (n = 189-191)
Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future biennial FPC census (2025).

ADVOCACY ACTIONS OF FPCs



Percent of FPCs indicating advocacy actions within the last 2 years (n = 189)
Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future biennial FPC census (2025).

FOOD POLICY NETWORKS

Building Community | Applying Research | Cultivating Action

FPN exists to empower, connect and serve FPCs that believe in building collective power, are committed to changing local and state policy, and center just and restorative food systems in their work.

FPN is currently prioritizing five core network functions:

- **Capacity building** by building leadership and convening skills and holding space to collaborate and learn from one another.
- **Policy incubation** to empower FPCs to lead and support strategic and community-driven advocacy for policies at the city, county, state, Tribal and federal levels.
- **Convening** FPCs together to build relationships across scales, and foster networks of FPCs at various scales, like state or regional.
- **Information management** for resources, data, and research on FPCs.
- **Administrative and financial commons** to provide fiscal and administrative support to FPCs in development or transition.