

# Whose house? Our house!

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LOBBYING 101 – DEMYSTIFYING GOVT RELATIONS | CAEH 2023

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# Agenda

- \* Why prioritize government relations
- \* Engaging MPs and Senators
- \* Other decision makers

# Why prioritize government relations?

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ELECTED OFFICIALS WORK FOR YOU

A solid orange horizontal bar at the bottom of the slide.

# Higgs says New Brunswick is not facing rental 'crisis' as 90-day review is launched



By **Silas Brown** · Global News

Posted February 11, 2021 5:09 pm · Updated February 11, 2021 5:39 pm

Higgs says New Brunswick not facing a rental crisis, launches review  
During his State of the Province address, Premier Blaine Higgs announced a 90-day study of the rental ...



Why prioritize  
GR

CANADA

## Erin O'Toole won't say whether he believes there is systemic racism in Canada



By [Andrew Russell](#) · Global News

Posted August 29, 2020 6:40 pm ▾



WATCH: Erin O'Toole won't say whether he believes there is systemic racism in Canada – Aug 30, 2020

Why prioritize  
GR

# Why prioritize GR

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Photo: Daniel Blaikie on X

# Why prioritize GR

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## Democratic Engagement

- You are the Boss

## Influence & shape policy and legislation

- You are the expert

## Establish positive relationships with decision-makers

Goal: You become their consultant

Necessary, Empowering, Effective

# Types of Engagement

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# Types of Engagement

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Direct Action/ Civil Disobedience

Demonstrations and Protests

Citizen-organized issue-based townhalls

Direct Engagement with elected officials  
(Phone/In-Person)

Petitions/ Letter Writing Campaigns

Media Engagement

- Op-eds
- Letters to the Editor
- Blogs
- Press Conferences
- Earned Media

<p>Grassroots NB - Hafsah (She/...)</p>	<p>Raven Blue</p>	<p>Sarah Lunney</p>	<p>www</p>
<p>Peter J</p>	<p>www.nbtenants.ca - Aditya Rao</p>	<p>Ty Wolfe</p>	<p>Jason</p>
<p>Ronald Batt</p>	<p>Syd</p>	<p>Justin</p>	<p>Chery</p>
<p>Marley Caddell</p>	<p>Chris Thompson</p>	<p>Mark Cunningham</p>	<p>Kathe</p>
<p>Reid Lodge</p>	<p>Jenn Wambolt</p>	<p>MP Atwins assistant</p>	

# Engaging MPs

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# MP Meetings: Setup

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1. Email Request (a couple of weeks in advance is good for virtual, at least a month in advance for in person)
  - Save the date in advance of that is better, if organizing a lobby day where you are targeting several MPs
  - Do you want this to be a constituency meeting or a hill meeting – check the house sitting calendar
2. Phone Follow-up (Critical)
3. Expect to be rescheduled
  - Expect half an hour
4. Constituents are worth their weight in gold
5. 2's company, 3's a (perhaps manageable) crowd.

# MP Meetings: What to take with you?

## One-Pager

- Keep it Simple
- Rule of 3: 3 issues, 3 ideas, etc
- Include your Contact info

## Asks

- Know your elected official's capacity
- Govt Backbencher vs Opposition Shadow Critics vs Senior Bureaucrat etc
  - Understand the role of critics in opposition parties

## Commitment Tracker

- Write down any commitments
- Follow-up after the meeting reiterating those commitments

# Committee Meetings: Why Bother?



Two main functions: Reports & Committee stage



Reports

Committees undertake reviews of certain issues



Committee Stage

If a bill goes through committee, there is an opportunity to testify

# Committee Meetings: Why Bother?

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Space for in-depth public policy debates

Get your recommendations into the committee's reports

Help shape legislation

Position yourself as an expert on the issue, become known to MPs and their staff, and be called back for future studies

Opportunity to engage your membership

# Engaging Senators

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# The Senate

The Senate has changed. The Independent Senators Group has meant that the Senate is now an important part of lobbying.

Relationships with Senators is a little trickier

- The accountability aspect is very different
  - No elections, as such no incentive to engage with you
  - We must rely on “sober second thought” principle, and hope they believe it
- Every senator is different

# The Senate (contd)

Much of the same rules apply in terms of *how* to get a meeting. But what are some strategies?

- Going before committee
- Some senators work in groups with other senators – You can ask to present to that group
- Some groups follow one leader
- Other groups don't
- Some senators are happy to be a thorn in government's side. Others have strong relationships with government.
- Know them, work with them.

# Do's and don'ts

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I'VE GOT THE MEETING! NOW WHAT?

# Do's

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Prepare in advance, designate your “chair”

Introduce yourselves

Say something nice about the MP's work

- For example, maybe they said something good recently in the House about housing policy

Short summary of the issue.

Bring a personal story – Stories make a big difference

Bring solutions – rule of three

Make time to listen to the MP, note down commitments

Leave behind a one-pager

Take photos, promote on your networks, tag the MP

Follow up!

# Don'ts

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Do not forget/mess up the MP's name, the constituency or the party

Do not react negatively if you end up meeting with a staffperson instead of the MP

If at all possible, do not disagree with your colleagues that are in your delegation

Do not go over time unless specifically invited to do so by the MP

If at all possible do not interrupt the MP

Do not panic if you are suddenly having a conversation you did not plan on having – you have your leave-behind!

Do not berate the MP's party if you can avoid it. Try not to be rude about other parties even if the MP baits you into it

# Other decision-makers

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# A note on the law

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NOT LEGAL ADVICE

# Federal lobbying rules

Not legal advice

In general, you are covered by federal lobbying rules if

1. You are being paid to communicate with federal office holders
2. You are doing so to advocate for the creation or amendment of policy or legislation, or for the awarding of government funds

In general, this is not covered under lobbying rules:

If you are a volunteer

Oral or written communications to a committee

Emails and calls about the implementation of a certain law



Remember: You're the  
expert

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# Remember

You are the expert

Nova Scotia

## Tory MP sorry for 'no-good bastards' remark

Opposition MP calls for resignation

CBC News · Posted: Nov 24, 2009 12:07 PM EST | Last Updated: November 24, 2009



Conservative MP Gerald Keddy is apologizing for referring to some unemployed Haligonians as "no-good bastards."

Keddy, MP for the Nova Scotia riding of South Shore-St. Margaret's, issued a statement Tuesday saying he was sorry for the "insensitive comments."

# Remember

You are the expert

Politics

## James Moore sorry for remarks about hungry children

Industry minister apologizes for saying federal role doesn't include feeding poor children

Laura Payton · CBC News · Posted: Dec 16, 2013 9:24 AM EST | Last Updated: December 16, 2013



Industry Minister James Moore is feeling the wrath of Canadians for saying it's not the federal government's job to feed hungry children

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# Remember


You are the expert


## Quebec housing minister apologizes for insensitive remarks on lease transfers

The Canadian Press  
Staff  
[Contact](#)

Published June 14, 2023 4:00  
p.m. EDT

Share  


Minister for Housing France-Élaine Duranceau said she is sorry if she appeared insensitive when she made [comments in recent days about her desire to tackle lease transfers](#) .

"You can't use a right that isn't yours to assign a lease to someone else on terms that you decide when it's not your building. A tenant who wants to do that has to invest in real estate and take the risks that go with it," she said earlier this week in an interview with [Noovo Info](#) .

"I'm sorry if that sounded insensitive. I was describing things in legal and economic terms," she said by way of an apology. "On the contrary, I'm very sensitive to what's happening in housing."

# Remember

You are the expert

CTVNEWS

## MP apologizes for response to napping accusations

CTVNews.ca Staff

Published Friday, March 2, 2012 10:58PM EST

SHARE: [Tweet](#) [Reddit](#) [Share 0](#)

Conservative Calgary MP Rob Anders has apologized for the comments he made after he was accused of falling asleep during a presentation on homeless veterans this week.

In a statement released late Friday, Anders said he has "enormous" respect for those who have served their country.

# Campaigns

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CUPE: Housing is for people – not for profit!

<https://cupe.ca/housing-people-not-profit>

Canadian Labour Congress: Digital lobbying day

<https://canadianlabour.ca/campaigns/digital-lobby/>

National Right to Housing Network: Write to your MPs to reclaim the National Housing Strategy:

<https://housingrights.ca/take-action/reclaiming-the-housing-strategy/>

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# Questions?

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