

From: [LAO Form Response](#)
To: [COIA Committee](#)
Subject: New form response for Conflicts of Interest Act Review Committee
Date: Wednesday, March 27, 2024 10:02:19 AM

New Form Response

Form: [Written Submissions Form](#)

A new response was submitted on 27 March 2024, 10:01 AM.

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| First Name * | Braedon |
| Last Name * | Rolls |
| Email * | [REDACTED] |
| Phone * | [REDACTED] |
| City/Town * | Edmonton |
| Please make your written submission here: * | <p>The Conflicts of Interest Act does not adequately address interference from political action committees or PACs, as they are often known. Many Albertans are concerned that government actions are being influenced or directed by PACs after their heavy involvement in especially high profile leadership races for the previous and current Premier of Alberta. Currently the COIA does not address cases where third party PACs indirectly help fund political campaigns for party membership, leadership, or election (especially by running advertising and communications, which is a large part of the cost of a campaign) in exchange for influence over decisions. Many Albertans are concerned that a prominent PAC organizer, whose PAC significantly contributed to the leadership campaign and election campaign of the decision maker, made disparaging comments about Alberta Health Services shortly before a decision was announced to radically restructure that organization and greatly diminish its mandate. Many wonder if keeping the favour of the PAC influenced this decision, especially in light of that decision maker having previously been found to have unduly influenced decision making in the prosecution of a political ally, violating the Conflicts of Interest Act. Albertans deserve to know that nobody can buy our elected members. Meaningful amendments would expand the meaning of "personal interest" to clarify that benefiting a politician's campaigns directly or indirectly would be this standard, or else defining a "political interest" that would include influence from PACs and apply alongside private interests especially in sections 2 and 3 of the COIA, and clarifying the application and operation of section 7 of the COIA. The effect would be such that members would be restricted from making decisions or allowing decisions to be influenced by repaying favours from or securing future favours from a PAC. a meaningful nexus between political actions taken by a PAC and the decisions of member needs to be enshrined in the COIA for this to be effective. This would include creating a meaningful power for the Ethics Commissioner to investigate such a case including compelling evidence from third party PACs and securing court orders or finding an offense and issuing a meaningful penalties to PACs who do not comply with investigation orders. Naturally, this should include a duty for the Ethics Commissioner to publish the findings of such an investigation, but other restrictions on handling PACs' private information should be considered as appropriate.</p> |

Agreement

Check here to indicate that you acknowledge that submissions and identities of authors may be made public.

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