

From: [Jeff Sterzuk](#)
To: [AEFCommittee.Admin](#)
Subject: Review of the Lobbyist Act
Date: Thursday, December 2, 2021 8:03:57 PM

Good Evening:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into the review of the Alberta Lobbyists Act. Prairie Sky Strategy is a public affairs consulting firm that serves our clients in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and federally. With this experience in multiple jurisdictions, we are in a position to compare and contrast our experience with that in other jurisdictions.

Given this experience, we would submit three recommendations for your consideration;

- 1. Standardization Across Canadian Jurisdictions** – There are major registration differences between the four jurisdictions we operate in, and managing the different rules and requirements takes time and expertise to stay on top of. As a result, any effort that could be made to standardize rules, especially in relation to reporting on the respective lobbyist registries would be helpful. For example, in Alberta, there is a requirement to report any funding that has been received *or requested* from any government anywhere in the world. Saskatchewan, on the other hand, only requires reporting on funding that was received from the Saskatchewan government. Often times, getting the information from multiple jurisdictions from large multi-national organizations is a long and arduous process that can be very difficult to complete in the 10 day window to register. We recommend harmonizing this practice with how Saskatchewan applies it. Beyond this one example, however, there are many other differences in the rules and registration process and we would recommend standardizing both across all Canadian jurisdictions.
- 2. Organization/Consultant Lobbyist Inconsistency** – Consultant lobbyists in Alberta have 10 days to file a lobbyist registration after the date a consultant lobbyist enters into an undertaking. Organizational lobbyists must file a return within two months of meeting a 50 hour threshold. This inconsistency places a more significant administrative burden on consultant lobbyists and also allows organizations who utilize part-time in-house lobbyists to not register (as long as they are below the 50 hour threshold). We recommend a consistent approach be followed.
- 3. Industry Events and Gifting Limitations** – Public office holders and Industry both benefit from ongoing, direct and transparent communication. As well, often times public office holders are not subject matter experts in their portfolios. Attending industry association conferences is often an effective way for public office holders to learn about an industry and to communicate with stakeholders in that industry. However, in Alberta, if an industry association were to invite a public office holder to attend an annual conference and either speak at the conference OR simply attend with the intention of sitting in on educational sessions or touring an association exhibition, the cost of a conference registration is considered a “gift” under Alberta’s gifting limitations and since most conference registrations are above Alberta’s gifting limitations, it is almost impossible to invite a public office holder to

attend an industry conference for the industry they are involved in. This limits communication that could be beneficial for both the public office holder and the industry.

I hope this input is useful. If you require clarification, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Otherwise, once again, thank you for the opportunity to participate in your review and best wishes with your deliberations.

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