

## **Lobbying in B.C: Five Things You Should Know**

*“Lobbying is defined, narrowly, as communicating for pay with a public office holder in an attempt to influence a limited number of outcomes.”*

– Elizabeth Denham, Registrar of Lobbyists for British Columbia

### **1. Lobbying is a legitimate, democratic right.**

Individuals, groups or companies have a right to communicate with elected or appointed government officials. The purpose of the *Lobbyists Registration Act* (LRA) is to support greater transparency and accountability in the lobbying of provincial public office holders.

### **2. Lobbyists in B.C. who meet the criteria must register online.**

The LRA requires lobbyists in B.C. who meet the criteria to register in an online public registry maintained by the Office of the Registrar of Lobbyists. Members of the public can view this registry at [www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca](http://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca) to learn who is attempting to influence government decisions, and on which issue.

### **3. There are two types of lobbyists.**

**"Consultant lobbyist"** means an individual who, for payment, undertakes to lobby on behalf of a client. **"In-house lobbyist"** means an employee, an officer or a director of an organization who receives a payment for the performance of his or her functions, and whose lobbying or duty to lobby on behalf of the organization or an affiliate, either alone or together with other individuals in the organization amounts to *at least 100 hours annually*.

#### 4. The key elements of lobbying are:

- a) To communicate
- b) For payment
- c) With a public office holder
- d) In an attempt to:
  - Introduce, repeal or modify legislation, a bill or regulation;
  - Develop, establish, change or end any program, policy or decision;
  - Influence a decision to transfer interest in a government enterprise or to privatize services
  - Influence the awarding, amendment or termination of a contract, grant or financial benefit (outside established procedures)
  - For in-house lobbyists only, to arrange a meeting with a public office holder for the purpose of lobbying
  - For consultant lobbyists only, to arrange a meeting between a public office holder and any other individual

#### 5. The LRA is enforced by the Registrar of Lobbyists.

The LRA was amended on April 1, 2010, granting Registrar Denham increased powers to enforce the requirement that all lobbyists who meet the criteria register. Under the LRA, the Registrar or her delegate also have the responsibility to report non-compliance and can issue administrative penalties of up to \$25,000 if, after an investigation, an individual is found to be non-compliant.

#### MORE INFO:

To learn more about lobbying in B.C., visit [www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca](http://www.lobbyistsregistrar.bc.ca). For a quick snapshot of new lobbyist registrations, check out “Who’s Lobbying Who.” The ORL publishes this monthly summary of new registrations on its website, including the names of consultant lobbyists or organizations submitting registrations, the aims of their lobbying efforts, and their targets.