

Government Relations & Advocacy

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Overview

1. What is government relations / advocacy
2. Why does it matter to the recycling sector
3. Why it should matter to you
4. How to be effective
5. Political update
6. Q & A

Government Relations / Advocacy

Defining Advocacy and government relations

Advocacy: “The act or process of supporting a cause or proposal” (Merriam-Webster)

Government Relations: “the process of influencing public policy at all levels of governance: local, regional, national, and even global.”

- ▶ Pushing for systemic change
- ▶ Speaking out and taking a public stance
- ▶ An attempt to influence decisions of government or other rule creating body
- ▶ Education a key component
- ▶ Sometimes referred to as lobbying



Lobbying vs. Advocacy

The term was coined in the 18th century, when English Members of Parliament would try to influence each other by having discussions in the lobby inside Parliament.

Lots of commonalities but viewed quite differently:

- ▶ Sharing and ‘translating’ front-line knowledge
- ▶ Influencing systemic change
- ▶ Professional vs grassroots
- ▶ Reputation

Today's lobbying (in Alberta)

- Less about wielding influence, but rather about taking advantage of the limited opportunities for interaction with political decision-makers
- Maximizing opportunities and amplifying voice as much as possible.
- Repeating a message over and over and packaging it in a format that is acceptable to the party in power



Why government relations matters to the recycling sector

There are numerous challenges to overcome

- ▶ Inconsistent standards across jurisdictions
- ▶ Lack of private sector support for initial investment
- ▶ Greenwashing vs effective methods
- ▶ Lack of awareness among general public (and politicians)
- ▶ Lack of R&D funding
- ▶ Pushback from established industries
- ▶ Red tape

So what can be done? What's realistic?

Macro

- ▶ Building awareness
- ▶ Changing the conversation
- ▶ Shifting regulations to make 'doing the right things' more competitive (red tape reduction)
- ▶ Infrastructure investment
- ▶ Data gathering / research support
- ▶ Risk reduction

Micro

- ▶ Physical space
- ▶ Zoning
- ▶ Tax rebates

Planning & executing effectively

Approach varies based on stakeholder:

- Member-based organizations
- Corporations
- Coalitions





How to do advocacy right

- ▶ Be internally aligned
- ▶ Know the rules of engagement
- ▶ Keep it issue-based
- ▶ Make a plan (and stick to it)
- ▶ Focus on a few key messages
- ▶ Talk to everyone



But first things first...

- Defining your advocacy objective(s):
 1. Be realistic
 2. Narrow down the list
 3. Know the cost
 4. Understand the path
 5. Be specific
- Be Internally Aligned
 - Ensure membership and leadership are in agreement



Member-based organizations

- Harness your membership
- Internal & external political audit
- Amplify your voice
- Engage the public
- Use the media
- Be prepared
- Be persistent



Corporations

- Let your MLA be your champion
- Know your ministry
- Tell your story
- Apply for grants

Coalitions

- Bringing together diverse groups with a common interest can be very powerful
- No need for formal structure





Political Update

- Cabinet Shuffle
- Fall Session starting Nov 28
- Sovereignty Act
- Budget 2023
- Gloves are off

Questions?

