

# A GUIDE TO LOBBYING



IN NEW BRUNSWICK

***CUPE·SCFP***



*Guide to Lobbying, 2017*  
*Canadian Union of Public Employees*

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# CUPE Lobby Kit

This kit is designed to assist your lobby efforts with the labour movement and in your community. All evidence points to the fact that elected officials are most persuaded by pressure from the people who elect them.

CUPE members are in a unique position to provide MLAs with insights into the workings of the provincial and local government, insights on services citizens depend on and the impact any legislation could have on individuals and communities.

All MLAs must better understand the challenges facing workers in today's labour market. Lobbying is one way –amongst many others- where we do this. It has already been an important tool in our numerous fights, such as campaigns to stop privatization, to push for better labour laws or to enhance public services.

This kit aims to build on CUPE's tradition of being a democratic member-driven union. We therefore encourage rank-and-file participation in our tactics, and that includes lobbying. Together, we can make meaningful changes to improve the conditions of work for thousands of workers.

Thank you for your participation and activism.

In Solidarity,

**Daniel Légère**

President, Canadian Union of Public Employees – New Brunswick

# Why Lobby?

## Introduction

Lobbying is the process of trying to influence decision makers. It is as old as politics itself, and just as legitimate. Lobbying is the art of persuasion. We do it every day in many areas of our lives. A formal lobby session can be carried out as a small group or an individual either through meetings, letter writing, phone calls or brief presentation. All politicians can and should be lobbied. It is their duty to know what their constituents think and to hear all sides of an issue.

Those who are friendly to your position may give you more time. However, even those who are opposed can be affected by a direct show of community support for an issue. You don't have to be an expert to lobby a politician.

## It's easier than you think

### Politicians must serve their constituents

Many of us believe politicians know more than we do or they wouldn't be in decision-making positions. Possibly we even think we aren't articulate enough or that we'll freeze when we approach the politicians. Often, we forget that the politician's job is to serve their constituents. That's why they get elected to office. We forget that it's we, the voters, who hold the power. The act of lobbying is reclaiming some of that power and expressing the desire for action on a particular issue.

Credibility in a lobby session comes with first-hand experience and knowledge of an issue. Average citizens should feel empowered to lobby their elected officials on issues that matter to them. As a worker and union member, you know about the challenges in finding and securing a decent job and the benefits that being a member of a union can bring. You also know about the value of the services you provide to New Brunswickers.

# Setting up a Lobby Meeting

## Find your local MLA

Here is how you can locate your MLA and contact Constituency Offices to request a meeting:

1. If you are unsure, look up your riding name by searching the Elections New Brunswick web page for provincial election information: <http://www1.gnb.ca/Elections/en/provstreetkey/provskinformation-e.asp>
2. Note your riding and MLA's name in the results, and then go to the New Brunswick Legislative Assembly members page: <http://www1.gnb.ca/legis/bios/58/index-e.asp>. There you will see the complete list of MLAs. Click on an MLA's name and you will be directed to their contact information.

## Set up an appointment with your MLA

Contact your MLA's Constituency Office to arrange an appointment to meet. It is often best to submit a request in writing by mail or email and follow up with a phone call. MLAs are usually available on Fridays in their constituency office. If the Legislature isn't sitting, they are available most workdays.

Formally schedule an appointment through the politician's assistant. Remember, lobbying starts with your first contact, so be nice to the receptionist and the executive assistants. They are the gatekeepers to your MLA. The more respectful you are, the more likely they are to help you get a meeting with your MLA. Be persistent. If at first you don't get a meeting arranged, follow up. Emphasize how many people you represent that are affected by the issue you wish to discuss. You will have to prove to the appointment coordinator that meeting with you is a good use of the politician's time.

## Inform CUPE

Please keep CUPE informed about all meetings so we can coordinate efforts, avoid duplication and help you prepare for your meeting. Meeting details should be sent to your Local's executive and to whomever CUPE NB has assigned to the campaign.

## Decide who will attend the meeting

It is a good idea to bring one to three advocates with you to the meeting, especially those with a relevant personal story. It's also best for all the people who attend the meeting to live in the MLA's Electoral District.

## Preparing for the meeting

Call your MLA's Constituency Office to confirm the date, time and who will be at the meeting, about three to five days before the meeting. If the appointment needs to be rescheduled, be understanding. Let the office know who will attend with you and find out how long you will have to meet with your MLA. Most appointments will be 15 to 30 minutes in length, so be clear on what you want to discuss. When preparing for the meeting, think about your personal experiences. Facts and data are important, but personal stories are often more convincing. Reflect on what the future holds for the next generation of New Brunswick workers. Discuss these challenges and don't be afraid to make the issue personal. Be sure to arrive a few minutes early for the meeting so you can give yourself time to get settled.

## Before the meeting

Before going into the meeting, you should meet with the other people who will be in the meeting to discuss what points each of you will address. You should have a good idea about the person you will be meeting with, their riding and department or critic portfolios, and the party they are a member of. These elements will inform how you approach the meeting. Effective lobbying relies on the exchange of information. Having the right kind of information makes all the difference, especially when you are trying to influence public policy.

# Sitting Down to Meet

## Use Your Time Wisely

When meeting with politicians and policymakers you rarely have a lot of time to discuss your goals and proposals. Most lobby meetings will only last about half an hour. You should avoid conversations that distract from the proposals we are putting forward. Politicians often got elected because they're pleasant and good at small talk with constituents. Don't waste too much of time chatting about the weather, sports or your hometown. It can sometimes be used as a distraction and only leads to less time to talk about the issues. It is also crucial to consider the political context, both broadly and for each political party.

Understanding these nuances can help you to approach your arguments in ways that are more attractive and relatable to each party without compromising your principles or underselling your demands. New Brunswick's government is currently headed by the Liberal Party, who holds a majority in the Legislative Assembly. This reality means we must approach our arguments with each party from a particular angle, while keeping in mind the upcoming election in fall 2018.

## During the Meeting

### 1. Introduce Yourself and Your Organization

Begin by introducing yourself and your union or organization. Tell them your name, your position, your union/organization and how many workers/people you represent. Try to determine areas of overlapping interest and agreement. Avoid arguments and don't lecture. While you may not share the same political views as the MLA, it is important to remain courteous at all times. It is best to have a positive working relationship with your MLA. Keep these remarks brief.

### 2. Present Your Concerns, Demands and Proposals

One person should explain each issue you wish to address and present the proposals. You will also leave this information behind. It is important to adjust your approach and comments to the MLA you are meeting with depending on their regional or portfolio interest, as well as the priorities of the party they are affiliated with. Your approach should vary depending on whether their party forms government or sits in opposition.

### 3. Get a Commitment

It always best to get some kind of commitment from politicians to how they will support the cause. Ask your MLA where he/she stands on each issue. If they are opposed to your proposals, respectfully ask why this is the case.

- a. If your MLA is a government Cabinet Minister, ask them to bring up your issues in Cabinet Meetings.
- b. If your MLA is a member of the Governing Party, ask them to bring up the issues you have raised at one of their Caucus Meetings.
- c. If they are a member of an Opposition Party, ask them to bring up the issues you have raised during Question Period in the legislature or submit a Private Members' Bill.

There are also several ways your MLA can support your issue in the community:

- Hold a community meeting in their riding;
- Mail out information to their constituency.
- Ask for reports/research from their staff.
- Invite guest speakers (you) onto the local cable channel or to community meetings.
- Hold media conferences with partners (you) on key issues

### 4. Leave on a Positive Note

Thank the MLA for their time and leave behind the regional information and any leaflets that have been designated as 'leave-behinds.' Do not give this kit to the MLA.

### 5. Following-up on Your Meeting

After the meeting, designate one person from your team to write a report on your meeting with the

MLA. Please follow the report sheet in the Annex. Submit this report to your respective CUPE campaign leader and a copy to the political action committee, so we can track advocacy progress. Use your report to write letters to thank the MLA for the meeting and to remind them of what they committed to do. At a later date, call the MLA's office to see if the MLA followed through on the commitments they made.

## Lobbying tips

### Don't wing it

It is important to be well prepared when meeting MLAs. You should know what an MLA has said about labour unions and where they stand on our issues.

- Decide in advance what you want from that person: an opinion, information, a commitment, etc.
- Lobbying is not negotiating. Union activists meet with elected officials and bureaucrats to exchange information. The desire to “cut a deal” with a politician is common, but it is important to remember that easy wins are rarely “wins” at all!
- Be prepared for the argument that “your position is interesting, but money is short”. It is important not to be intimidated by these or other dismissive arguments. All governments have access to resources and constantly make political choices on how to spend them.
- Friendly MLAs are often hungry for new information. Facing limited resources, they will be glad to use solid research findings to better argue their case with their colleagues.
- Lobbying also involves gathering new information from those you are meeting with. MLA's staff people can be helpful in this regard.
- No matter how much you are provoked, do not become angry, sarcastic or discourteous. You are there to gain support.
- Take careful notes about any commitments that you are given and anything else that the politician says that might be helpful in the future.
- Be sure to follow up on any action items.
- Regular meetings with local MLAs are an essential part of an overall lobby strategy. Government representatives are more likely to sit up and listen when they hear the same message at home and in Fredericton.



# Where Do They Stand?

## Rating your MLA

Identifying where MLAs stand on your issues is vital for focusing your efforts. As much as possible, your goal is to move them up one level.

### 1. **Champions**

These politicians are committed activists for your cause.

**Goals:** Arm them with your arguments to be able to make the case to their colleagues. Develop relationships so they become your “inside” track at the Legislature.

### 2. **Allies**

They are generally on your side, but can be pushed to do more.

**Goals:** Help them understand the imperative and develop their arguments. Get them to speak up in closed and public meetings.

### 3. **Fence-Sitters**

They are uncommitted to your cause, but have the potential to swing. They are most often your primary targets.

**Goals:** Get them to take a stance and make a commitment to you.

### 4. **Passive Opponents**

They are clearly against your cause, but are not motivated to lead the attack.

**Goals:** They may be influenced by public opinion, so emphasize the voter support for your issue. Lobby enough to make them think about your issues, but not enough to motivate them to become active.

### 5. **Active Opponents**

These politicians are the leaders of your opposition. You will get more pushback from these people, so be prepared.

**Goals:** Point out the extremes of their position, rhetoric and alliances.

# Meeting Guide

## Proposed Format

Every lobby meeting is a bit different and it is often hard to keep politicians to your agenda. However, maintaining some discipline and coordination within your team is the best way to navigate any dynamic. Here is an outline for an ideal meeting format.

### **INTRODUCTIONS.....5 MIN**

Introduce yourself, your union/organization and highlight who you represent. Don't forget to highlight your connection to their riding.

### **YOUR PROPOSALS.....10-20MIN**

Briefly outline each issue and present your solutions. Talk about local impacts of provincial policies as much as possible.

**Issue 1 - presented by speaker A**

**Issue 2 - presented by speaker B**

**Issue 3 - presented by speaker C**

### **THEIR PLANS.....5-10 MIN**

In government relations, listening is as important as talking. You would be surprised by what you can learn when you ask the right questions.

## **TAKING LOBBY MEETING NOTES**

- Who attended the meeting (including the MLA's staff)
- Information that is useful or helpful, or arguments that may be good to address
- Any commitments made, as specifically as possible (timelines, etc.)
- Rank the MLA: Champion/Ally/Fence-Sitter/Passive Opponent/Active Opponent
- Submit your lobby meeting notes and a photo to CUPE

# Social Media

## Guidelines

Be prepared to ask to take a picture of your team with the MLA holding your lobby documents when you conclude your meeting. Post the picture on social media after your meeting, but also email a copy of the picture to [souellette@cupe.ca](mailto:souellette@cupe.ca)

Here are some guidelines to follow in your social media messages about your meetings with MLAs:

- Be accurate and respectful in your social media messages about your meetings with MLAs.
- Share your pictures as a message to the CUPE NB Facebook page [facebook.com/cupeNBscfp/](https://facebook.com/cupeNBscfp/)
- Tweet at the MLAs when possible, by using their Twitter handle (eg. [@BrianGallantNB](https://twitter.com/BrianGallantNB)).
- Use the hashtag [#cupeNB](https://twitter.com/hashtag/cupeNB) in all your social media messages about your lobbying meetings.
- To tweet at CUPE New Brunswick, use [@CupeMaritimes](https://twitter.com/CupeMaritimes)

# MLA Contact List for 2017-2018

<b>ELECTORAL DISTRICT</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>PHONE</b>	<b>EMAIL</b>
Restigouche West	Gilles LePage ( L )	826-6120	Gilles.LePage@gnb.ca
Campbellton-Dalhousie	Hon. Donald Arseneault ( L )	685-5252	Donald.Arseneault@gnb.ca
Restigouche-Chaleur	Daniel Guitard ( L )	542-2424	Daniel.Guitard@gnb.ca
Bathurst West-Beresford	Hon. Brian Kenny ( L )	549-5355	Brian.Kenny@gnb.ca
Bathurst East-Nepisiguit	Hon. Denis Landry ( L )	358-2530	Denis.Landry2@gnb.ca
Caraquet	Hédard Albert ( L )	726-2929	Hedard.Albert@gnb.ca
Shippagan-Lamèque-Miscou	Wilfred Roussel ( L )	336-9169	Wilfred.Roussel@gnb.ca
Tracadie-Sheila	Hon. Serge Rousselle, Q.C. ( L )	394-4038	Serge.Rousselle@gnb.ca
Miramichi Bay-Neguac	Hon. Lisa Harris ( L )	778-8713	Lisa.Harris@gnb.ca
Miramichi	Hon. Bill Fraser ( L )	624-5516	Bill.Fraser@gnb.ca
Miramichi-Bay du Vin	Jake Stewart ( PC )	843-7729	Jake.Stewart@gnb.ca
Kent North	Bertrand LeBlanc ( L )	876-3592	Bertrand.LeBlanc@gnb.ca
Kent South	Benoît Bourque ( L )	743-0335	Benoit.Bourque@gnb.ca
Shediac Bay-Dieppe	Hon. Brian Gallant ( L )	869-7000	Brian.Gallant@gnb.ca
Shediac-Beaubassin-Cap-Pelé	Hon. Victor Boudreau ( L )	533-3450	victor.boudreau@gnb.ca
Memramcook-Tantramar	Bernard LeBlanc ( L )	758-4088	Bernard.LeBlanc@gnb.ca
Dieppe	Hon. Roger Melanson ( L )	869-7000	Roger.L.Melanson@gnb.ca
Moncton East	Monique LeBlanc ( L )	386-2014	Monique.A.LeBlanc@gnb.ca
Moncton Centre	Hon. Chris Collins ( L )	856-2595	Chris.Collins@gnb.ca
Moncton South	Hon. Cathy Rogers ( L )	869-6824	Cathy.Rogers@gnb.ca
Moncton Northwest	Ernie Steeves ( PC )	383-2164	Ernie.Steeves@gnb.ca
Moncton Southwest	Sherry Wilson ( PC )	382-6567	Sherry.Wilson@gnb.ca
Riverview	R. Bruce Fitch ( PC )	869-6117	Bruce.Fitch@gnb.ca
Albert	Brian Keirstead ( PC )	856-3006	Keirstead.Brian@gnb.ca

<b>ELECTORAL DISTRICT</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>PHONE</b>	<b>EMAIL</b>
Gagetown-Petitcodiac	Ross Wetmore ( PC )	488-3577	Ross.Wetmore@gnb.ca
Sussex-Fundy-St. Martins	Bruce Northrup ( PC )	432-2686	Bruce.Northrup@gnb.ca
Hampton	Gary Crossman ( PC )	832-5700	Gary.Crossman@gnb.ca
Quispamsis	Blaine Higgs ( PC )	848-5422	Blaine.Higgs@gnb.ca
Rothsay	Hugh J. (Ted) Flemming, Q.C. ( PC )	848-5440	Hugh.Flemming@gnb.ca
St. John East	Glen Savoie ( PC )	658-6333	Glen.Savoie@gnb.ca
Portland-Simonds	Trevor A. Holder ( PC )	642-2588	Trevor.Holder@gnb.ca
St. John Harbour	Hon. Ed Doherty ( L )	643-2918	Ed.Doherty@gnb.ca
St. John Lancaster	Dorothy Shephard ( PC )	643-2900	Dorothy.Shephard@gnb.ca
Kings Centre	Bill Oliver ( PC )	738-6586	Bill.Oliver@gnb.ca
Fundy-The Isles-St John West	Hon. Rick Doucet ( L )	755-4200	Rick.Doucet@gnb.ca
Saint Croix	Hon. John B. Ames ( L )	466-7484	John.Ames@gnb.ca
Oromocto-Lincoln	Jody Carr ( PC )	357-4141	Jody.Carr@gnb.ca
Fredericton-Grand Lake	Pam Lynch ( PC )	444-3322	Pam.Lynch@gnb.ca
New Maryland-Sunbury	Jeff Carr ( PC )	368-2938	Jeff.Carr@gnb.ca
Fredericton South	David Coon ( GP )	455-0936	David.Coon@gnb.ca
Fredericton North	Hon. Stephen Horsman ( L )	444-5687	Stephen.Horsman@gnb.ca
Fredericton-York	Kirk MacDonald ( PC )	206-6343	Kirk.MacDonald@gnb.ca
Fredericton West-Hanwell	Brian Macdonald ( PC )	453-8461	Brian.T.Macdonald@gnb.ca
Carleton-York	Carl Urquhart ( PC )	575-6060	Carl.Urquhart@gnb.ca
Carleton	Stewart Fairgrieve ( PC )	325-4462	Stewart.Fairgrieve@gnb.ca
Carleton-Victoria	Andrew Harvey ( L )	273-4598	Andrew.Harvey@gnb.ca
Victoria-La Vallée	Chuck Chiasson ( L )	475-1124	Chuck.Chiasson@gnb.ca
Edmundston-Madawaska Centre	Madeleine (Mado) Dubé ( PC )	735-2528	Madeleine.Dube@gnb.ca
Madawaska-Les-Lacs- Edmundston	Hon. Francine Landry (L)	735-7222	Francine.Landry@gnb.ca

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