

Lobbying Tips

Goal : Increase awareness of the need to establish an Ontario Social Enterprise Trust

Why should you lobby?

Letters, emails, and in person meetings are all avenues for lobbying. Meetings with MPPs, Candidates, and/or their staff in your riding will help raise awareness of CED/social enterprises and highlight the main issues within the movement. Educating and informing legislatures about needs within the social enterprise and CED movement will help persuade the government that their support is important and required.

The following are a few key points these meetings would help achieve:

- Acquainting your local MPP and Candidates with social enterprises in their riding
- Enlisting your MPP and Candidates' support for your cause and influencing their agenda
- Raising awareness of CED and your social enterprise
- Highlighting the need for CED funding and an Ontario Social Enterprise Trust

1. Meeting Prep

- **Know your audience** (the person you will be meeting with) – Online research and newspapers are good sources of background information. Find out about their affiliations and what their views on your issue might be.
- **Be well informed** - Know your cause and goal and be ready to discuss the issue in a quick and concise manner. Know the pros and cons of the issue and be ready to defend it.
- **Prepare a package** – This should contain some background information on your social enterprise (pamphlets/factsheets) and can be left with the MPP/Candidate for their reference. Attach your business card.

2. Meeting

- **Be focussed** – Remember that you are there as a representative of the sector and that you are there to promote the establishment of the Ontario Social Enterprise Trust. Keep it simple and to the point as you will only have about 20 minutes to push your agenda and secure a commitment of support. Mention small anecdotes from the community that would add a human touch to the conversation (stories of how the Trust would help a member in your community).
- **Etiquette** – Be polite and kill them with kindness! Be honest and never lie. If a question is posed to which you do not know the answer to, tell them you will do some research and follow-up within the week. Be persuasive and passionate (not emotional! Do not leave with angry comments- remember you are a representative of your sector).
- **Closing** – Thank them for their time and ask for a commitment of support. Leave your package of information and inform them that you will follow up in the near future. Remind them that the CED movement is eager to work with the government and that we all share similar goals and strive to develop policies that will help build sustainable communities. Remember to thank any political staffers or executive assistants who may be present- they might be advisors!

3. Meeting Follow-up

- **Thank you letter** – Write a thank you letter addressed to the MPP/Candidate you spoke with. Thank them for their time and support of your issue. This would be a good time to inform them of answers to any questions they might have had to which you did not have the answers to at the time. Remind them again that you will follow up on any commitments they might have made to you.