

Ensuring Your Voice is Heard

Shaping Government Policy

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Introduction - Lee Funke



- 30 years experience in public policy
- Worked in the Department of Environment for 8 years
- Started his own company in 2000
- Clients include the oil/gas industry, land developers, municipalities, industry associations, not-for-profits
- From 2010-2013 he was a Member of Executive Council and Managing Director of the Public Affairs Bureau
- Worked as an advocate for the oil sands (OSCA/CAPP)
- Currently a GR/PR consultant to clients in various industries

Before you start it is important to be clear on
What is Advocacy





It's about making a strong case

Public policy development is a **complicated and sometimes emotion-driven process of establishing goals, decisions, and actions** in an environment of people **with different and competing interests**.

Why is Advocacy Important?

- Key decision makers react to those credible groups or individuals who most effectively bring their issues to the forefront of the public agenda (or shape the agenda itself)
- Governments have competing interests and concerns (including their own priorities)
- If you don't engage, someone else will
- You have the power to affect change around your issues

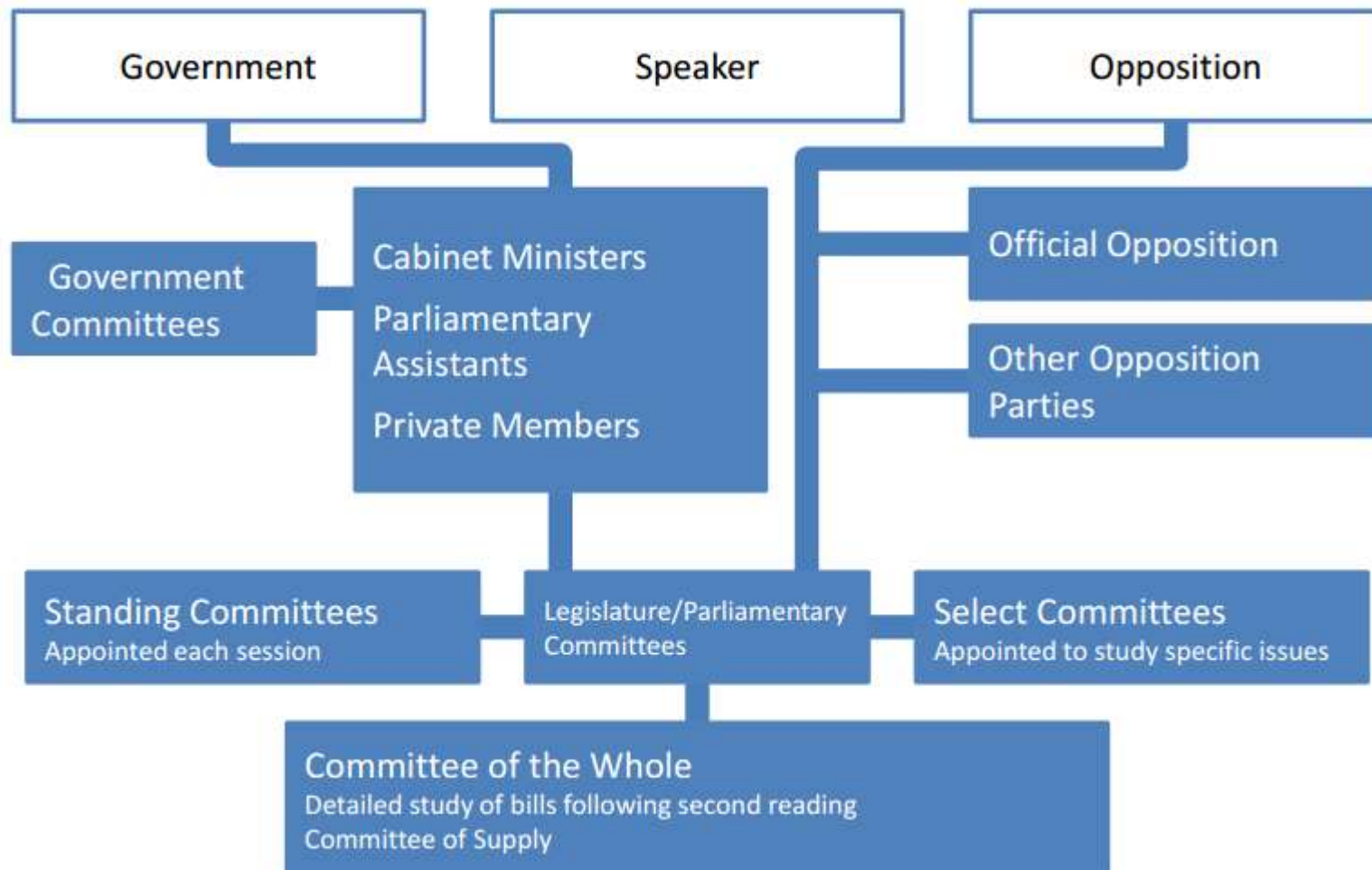
The Essence of Good Advocacy

- Identify and be able to explain your issues (messages) using the tools at your disposal
- Know your issues better than anyone in government (beware of the Curse of Knowledge)
- Be able to position your issues so that they fit within the government's agenda and election cycle, or be able to set a new agenda
- Build on existing relationships with policy influencers, or create new relationships

It's a Busy Playing Field



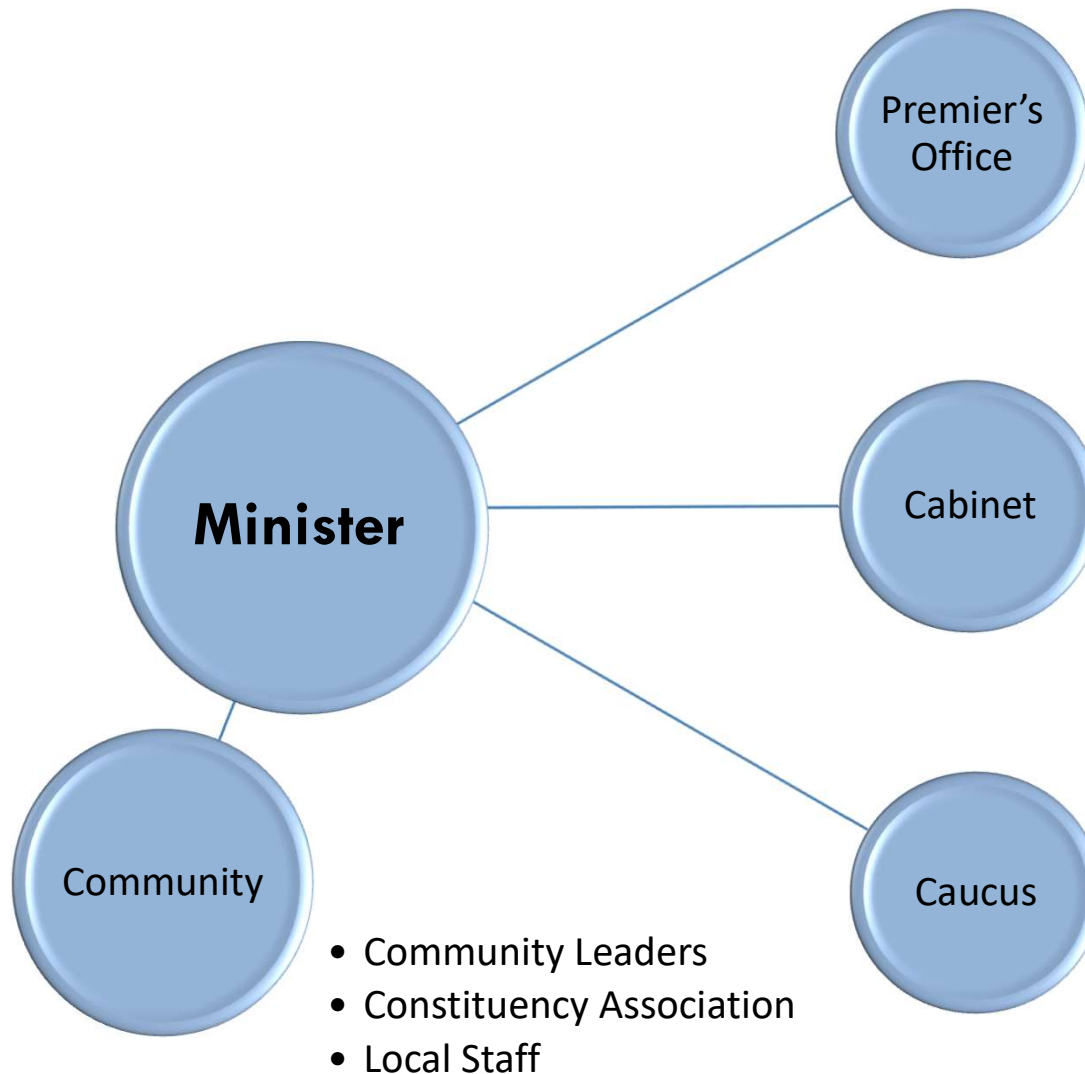
Many people involved in the process



External Public policy triggers



Minister's political spheres



- Chief of Staff
- Press Secretary
- Director of Communications
- Principal Secretary
- Deputy Minister of Executive Council

- Impacted Ministers
- Associate Ministers
- Cabinet Committees
- Chiefs of Staff / Press Secretaries

- Impacted MPs/MLAs
- Interested MPs/MLAs
- Committee Chairs
- Constituents

MLAs

- It's part of an MLAs job to listen to the concerns of constituency residents, and constituency business owners, and their staff.
- MLAs are expected to keep tabs on what issues are cropping up in their communities, and there are mechanisms in caucus to bring those forward.
- MLA advocacy doesn't replace Minister advocacy, but it amplifies it.



What can we do?

- When you are seeking a decision by government on an issue there are a number of things you can do:
 - Inform decision-makers through advocacy
 - Provide an incentive through mobilizing powerful communities
 - Hold the other side accountable through the media
 - Form coalitions or reframing your issue to make it more relevant
 - Research and refine your proposal based on feedback

Ingredients for a successful strategy?

Several ingredients make for effective advocacy, including:

- The rightness of the cause
- The power of the advocates (i.e., more of them is much better than less)
- The thoroughness with which the advocates researched the issues, the opposition, and the climate of opinion about the issue in the community
- Their skill in using the advocacy tools available (including the media)
- Above all, the selection of effective strategies and tactics



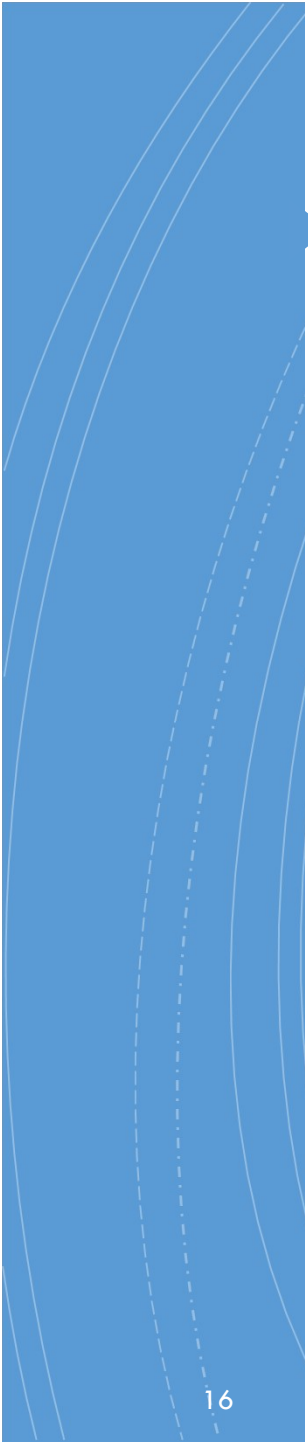
Components of an Advocacy Strategy

- A good advocacy plan should:
 - Be based on a sound understanding of government's legislative and policy priorities
 - Clear and concise policy goals
 - Offer targeted messaging to reach government bodies and officials
 - Focus on building relationships with key government officials
 - Include additional voices from a wide variety of sectors

Advocacy Requires...You Know Your Issues

- You need to demonstrate that you know your issues and core facts, in a manner that is 'consumable' to decision-makers
- Be able to discuss your issues in the context of a story, using examples of real people (like yourselves or the people you represent) who are being impacted
- Ideally, if you are advocating to a politician, your examples will incorporate constituent concerns or reflect their personal interests





Advocacy Requires...Finding Support

- People who are impacted by the issues and can articulate their stories
- Experts in the field, who can speak to the complexities of the matter
- People who have dealt with the issues in another jurisdiction or under similar circumstances previously
- Other people in government who understand and support your position



Advocacy Requires...Relationships

- Effective government relations have nothing to do with influence peddling or partisanship. On the contrary, relations are the key word.
- Advocacy is all about building relationships based on trust and mutual respect and finding solutions together to move public policy forward.
- At the heart of effective advocacy is impeccable relationships with key people in government
- Look for people in your organization or network who have established relationships with the people you need to see
- Go beyond your business circles to find connections, and use these links to secure introductions

Every Advocacy Strategy is Built on Defining
What is Your Ask



What is your Ask?

- If you had five minutes today with the Premier or the Minister of Health would you know what to say to them to properly position your business?
- Would you find the right words to have an impact and be memorable?
- And if you were granted more than five minutes, would you know how to conduct government relations strategically to support your legislative, policy, or budget objectives?

Advocacy Tips



- Tell them what you are doing, be direct:
 - that you are meeting as part of a provincial advocacy strategy,
 - that your seeking to be heard, and
 - you're committed to keeping them apprised of your efforts.
- Now is not the time to freelance.
- Do not share information or opinions that you haven't confirmed with the AAO

Advocacy Tips

- Although department officials may have time to analyse detailed reports, elected officials want messages to be as short and simple as possible.
- Politicians do not have time to review lengthy documents in great detail.
- They want a general overview and are looking for a document that is full of substance, yet brief.

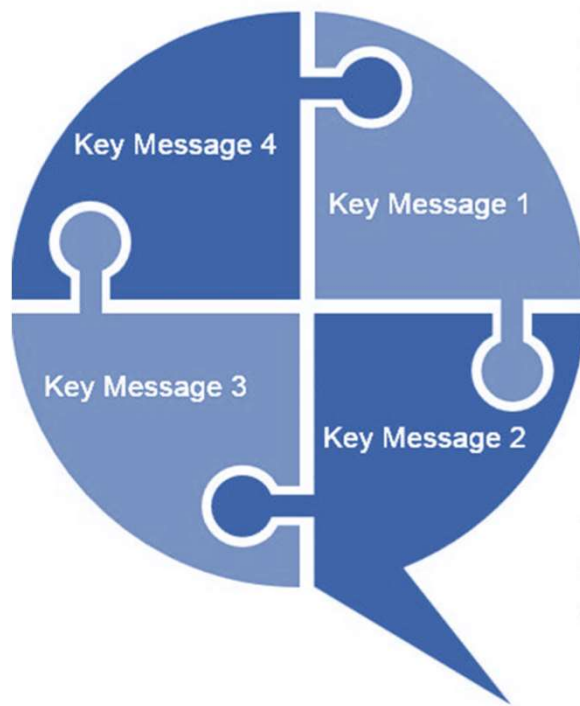


Keep it simple

Advocacy Tips

- Be relevant forthright and candid.
- Insert relevant personal facts or perspective.
- Do not overstate your case, as this goes to the heart of your credibility, now and in the future.
- Work from objective data and prepare appropriately.
- Be prepared for questions raised by other groups
- Address the other point view fairly but reinforce your point of view.
- Honesty and integrity cannot be overstated.

Know Your Message



- Make sure you have the facts:
 - About your organization
 - About your profession
 - Your priorities
 - Your role in economic recovery
 - The benefits to public health

Tracking

- Report the results back to the AAO.
- We need to know how your MLAs reacts to the information
 - Were they aware of the issue?
 - Did they understand our position?
 - Did they agree? Disagree?
 - Did they ask questions?
 - Did you agree to follow-up?

Close the Deal

- Always be working towards your next meeting or opportunity to share our message.
- Confirm the next engagement
- Could be:
 - A call
 - A follow-up email
 - A meeting



Patience, Perseverance and Professionalism

- Getting a commitment is the ultimate goal in any lobbying effort.
- As such, it is integral to recognize that this takes time.
- In effect, lobbying is like mining with hammers: both the lobbyist and client must remain patient and persevere to obtain success.
- If a decision maker is pushed too early and too hard it may destroy hopes of cooperation with that decision maker in the future.
- Never burn bridges; never patronize and never threaten. You never know when you may have to knock on that same door again.



Questions?

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