

How to Lobby your MPP

Anyone can lobby a politician. Lobbying simply means informing politicians of our concerns and holding them accountable to do something about them.

You do not have to know everything about the issue you're lobbying for. Concentrate on your experience working as a Conservation Officer, and that you want your classification and compensation to be in line with similar OPS jobs, and to reflect the actual work you do.

There is no more important time than now to lobby your MPP – even on Zoom! It's never a waste of time to lobby a PC MPP. Pressuring Doug Ford's backbenchers and ministers in their own backyards is worthwhile. And opposition MPPs can become strong allies.

Before the meeting:

1. **Call the constituency office:** Identify yourself as a constituent and ask for an appointment to speak about the longstanding compensation issues for conservation officers.
2. **Prepare your main points ahead of time.** Fill out the "Talking Points for MPPs" sheet ahead of time and use it to take notes at your meeting. Make sure to share your personal experience. Keep it short and simple: you may only get a few minutes to talk to your MPP.
3. **Know your audience:** What political party does the MPP belong to and what has the MPP said or done on the issue already?
4. **Meet with lobbying members an hour ahead of the meeting.** Choose someone to steer the conversation. Assign a note-taker. Decide what each person will talk about.

At the meeting:

5. **Introduce everyone to the MPP:** Tell them you're a constituent and the work you do.
6. **Don't be intimidated by an MPP.** You know as much as they do, particularly when it comes to your work as a conservation officer. It's their job to listen to your concerns.
7. **Tell your MPP why you're concerned.** How has the current level of compensation affected you personally, and your colleagues? How has it affected retention in your office?
8. **What's your "ask"?** Ask your MPP to commit to a specific action on the issue and tell them what you're doing. Write down what they say they'll do.
9. **Get a screenshot with your MPP** on Zoom and post it on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram.

After the meeting:

10. **Debrief with your group after the meeting:** Discuss how it went. Then visit opseu.org/cold/lobby-report-back and let OPSEU/SEFPO know how it went!
11. **Keep in touch with your MPP:** Send a thank-you note. Follow up with the MPP on any commitments they have made.