



ALBERTA COUNSEL

Legal and Lobby Professionals

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Engagement Proposal



ALBERTA
LIQUOR STORE
ASSOCIATION

February 28, 2024

Dear Allison and Ivonne,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with us and for the opportunity to prepare an engagement proposal for Alberta Liquor Store Association (ALSA). We highly value your time and consideration.

Given Danielle Smith and the UCP's four-year mandate to govern, Alberta Counsel is in a prime position to assist ALSA to help navigate the risks and opportunities presented by the result of the recent provincial election. We can provide the best and most up-to-date political intelligence and strategic advice. This will be crucial for ensuring that ALSA maintains and strengthens its esteemed position within the province.

Alberta Counsel is a unique, home-grown Alberta firm with a proven track record of delivering results for companies like ALSA. Our success stems from our skilled and diverse team, which offers a range of perspectives and possesses knowledge of internal party dynamics and decision-making processes. What sets Alberta Counsel apart is our ability to cultivate strong relationships with both major political parties—a particularly advantageous approach during the current politically uncertain times in Alberta given that with 38 seats the NDP is the largest opposition in our province's history.

We believe that no other firm in Alberta can provide the same comprehensive range of services under a single roof. As outlined in this proposal, Alberta Counsel will:

1. Advocate for the cessation of liquor sales in both grocery and convenience stores.
2. Enhance AGLC regulations in a way that supports local Alberta liquor retailers.
3. Exploring potential grant funding opportunities.
4. Strengthen ALSA's standing as a key stakeholder and develop strong connections with key political figures.
5. Hands-on support to ensure key ALSA priorities can be achieved in a timely fashion.
6. Provide intelligence and briefings on the NDP Opposition.

We eagerly anticipate the opportunity to discuss this proposal with you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,



Jennele Giong
Associate

About Alberta Counsel

Alberta Counsel was founded after the historic 2015 Alberta election. We are a multi-partisan firm with deep roots in Alberta, specializing in government relations. Our staff have a wealth of concrete political experience as well as extensive educational backgrounds focused on political science, communications, public relations, government relations, law, community development and public administration. Our team has been assembled to ensure we have good rapport with the provincial government as well as with the opposition parties and other levels of government.

What makes Alberta Counsel unique:

- Alberta Counsel is one of the largest government relations firms in Alberta, and the only firm who can offer a truly multi-partisan roster of staff and advisors.
- Our roster of staff and advisors is unrivalled in depth of experience, networks, and professionalism.
- Alberta Counsel is committed to Indigenous reconciliation and is privileged to serve many First Nations and Metis communities.
- We offer cost certainty to our clients by charging a set monthly fee rather than on an hourly basis.

Why hiring Alberta Counsel can help expedite your success: Lobbying is about ensuring your message gets through to the right people, at the right time, in the right way.

Political decision-makers are bombarded daily with countless messages, meeting requests, funding demands, and policy ideas by a vast number of stakeholders. Partnering with Alberta Counsel gives you credibility at the Legislature. In other words, we help you cut through the noise. We have long standing relationships with key political decision-makers and know how to present your issue in a clear, concise, and politically malleable way. Ministers and their staff know that Alberta Counsel clients will be properly prepared for meetings and will be constructive partners with the Government of Alberta.

Our services:

- Full suite of government relations services, including:
 - **Situational Analysis:** Alberta Counsel can leverage its connections to determine the current state of a stakeholder, as well as the potential appetite to move on relevant issues.
 - **Increasing visibility with the governing party or opposition:** Alberta Counsel can increase the stakeholder's presence with the UCP or NDP, including organizing meetings with key ministers, to ensure they are a credible and valued stakeholder that must be consulted as part of any relevant policy and regulatory developments.
 - **Strategic Advice:** Alberta Counsel can provide ongoing guidance and support to the stakeholder as it engages with the Government of Alberta and/or Opposition. Direction can be provided on any correspondence, meetings, or any other contact with the Premier, MLAs, staff, or any other key decision-makers related to the Government of Alberta.
- Fund development

- Public relations – digital strategies
- Indigenous relations
- Legal support, if required

How we interact with clients

Alberta Counsel is a client-centric firm that prioritizes the unique needs and preferences of the stakeholders we work with. We do not have a one size fits all approach in terms of how we interact with clients, instead preferring to let the client take the lead in how we structure our engagement.

Quality assurance

It is standard practice for Alberta Counsel to provide the following for all clients:

- Fulsome Government Relations (GR) Plan with specific action items and expected deliverables. The GR Plan is typically updated every 6-12 months but can be adjusted more frequently if political realities change (or a change is requested by the client).
- Monthly reporting on GR Plan progress. Rather than quarterly, we like to keep our clients updated with a report at the end of each month that outlines specific steps taken on each of the action items outlined in the GR Plan.
- These regular reports provide an excellent ongoing opportunity to ensure that the progress and quality of the work, is to the satisfaction of your leadership.
- Regular team meetings with the client. Depending on the availability of the client, we like to schedule weekly or bi-weekly calls to ensure constant progress on the client's priorities.
- Ideally, we also have an opportunity to meet with your board (or other leadership) at least once a year to report directly on progress.
- Alberta Counsel staff are always available, even off hours or weekends, in case of an emergency by a client.
- The Alberta Counsel team also meets frequently to discuss progress on files, troubleshoot potential obstacles and to ensure the quality of our work remains consistently high and satisfactory to all of our clients.



Our Clients

Enbridge
 Tourmaline Oil
 Fortis Alberta
 Alberta Paramedics Association
 Metis Nation of Alberta (MNA)
 Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta
 City of Wetaskiwin
 Genesis Land Development
 Servus Credit Union
 Alberta Irrigation Districts Association (AIDA)
 Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation (SCHF)
 Edmonton Destination Marketing Hotels (EDMH)
 Insurance Brokers Association of Alberta (IBAA)
 Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations
 Alberta Bottle Depot Association
 Town of Bonnyville
 CNIB Alberta & NWT
 Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA)
 Municipal District of Opportunity
 County of Grande Prairie
 Metis Local 1935
 De Havilland
 Motor Dealers Association of Alberta
 Mountain Ash Limited Partnership
 Alberta Association of Professional Paralegals
 Alberta Bilingual Municipalities Association
 Woods Homes
 Food Banks Alberta
 Alberta Canola
 Health Cities
 Woodland Cree First Nation
 Alberta International Airshow
 PolicyWise
 Lac La Biche County
 ALIGN Association of Community Services
 Respiratory Homecare Association of Alberta
 Nurse Practitioners Association of Alberta
 Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies
 Alberta Funeral Service Association
 Optiom Inc
 Alberta Environmental Rubber Products
 Lakeland College

"A significant part of the Stollery's success in learning about advocacy, working at it, and seeing results is directly because of our work with Alberta Counsel. They bring a balanced and informed perspective to strategy and understand the people behind the positioning, which we can then apply to make our efforts count. They understand our unique perspective on neutrality, and then take our values and risk tolerance to guide us through the tricky waters of politics. We fully endorse their work and look forward to continuing our relationship with them as we move forward to support the build of a new children's hospital for Albertans."

Mike House

CEO, Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation

"Alberta Counsel has proven to be a fantastic fit for the Alberta Association of Professional Paralegal's government relations needs. Pascal and Aaron's ability to bring paralegal regulation issues before the appropriate government interest holders has been a huge step for our association. Alberta Counsel have helped the AAPP to prepare the relevant taking points to ensure that the association's goals are being addressed. In just over a year, the AAPP has made great strides in our goal towards paralegal regulation in Alberta. I would highly recommend Alberta Counsel to any non-profit organization requiring government relations assistance."

Heidi Semkowich

Executive Director, AAPP

What we heard from you

Customized support: Politics is a realm of rapid change, and we understand that your needs for our support may evolve accordingly. By partnering with Alberta Counsel, you are not locked into any specific set of services. We are equipped to adapt our offerings as swiftly as the political landscape transforms.

1. Advocacy against liquor sales in grocery and convenience stores:

- ABC will actively work to influence and halt government actions permitting liquor sales in these outlets.
- Our approach includes launching a focused campaign to sway government policy and public opinion against selling liquor in grocery and convenience stores.
- Highlighting the adverse effects on community health, safety, and the local economy to argue for a policy rethink.
- Our plan includes rallying stakeholder support, initiating public awareness campaigns, and delivering compelling, data-backed cases to decision-makers. The goal is to safeguard local businesses and promote responsible liquor sales environments.

2. Advocate to improve AGLC regulations in a way that supports local Alberta liquor retailers:

- Our efforts will focus on advocating for regulatory changes that bolster the position of local Alberta liquor stores.
- Aim to reform regulations to benefit Alberta's local liquor retailers, seeking a fairer business landscape.
- Our focus is on modifying licensing, taxation, and distribution rules that currently favor large chains or out-of-province companies. Collaborating with regulators, industry groups, and retailers, we'll propose reforms to even the competition.
- Our objective is to empower local shops to thrive, bolstering Alberta's economy, promoting diversity, and creating jobs.

3. Offering active support to ensure timely achievement of key ALSA priorities:

- Priority Achievement: Alberta Counsel will offer direct assistance to ensure the successful accomplishment of ALSA's critical priorities within reasonable timeframes. This proactive engagement involves supporting and advancing these priorities through various strategic actions and approaches.
- Efficient Engagement: ABC will handle logistics and coordination to facilitate productive interactions with decision-makers, expediting policy implementation and fostering valuable connections.

4. Offering assistance to ALSA in identifying potential grant funding opportunities:

- Application Support: We will assist in preparing comprehensive grant applications that effectively highlight ALSA's strengths, innovation, and alignment with the grant's objectives.

- This includes crafting compelling narratives, project descriptions, and any required supporting documents.

5. Establishing ALSA as a leading industry player by cultivating influential relationships with key political decision-makers:

- Government Relations Strategy: Alberta Counsel will create a comprehensive government relations strategy designed to position ALSA strategically in industry discussions.
- Engagement with Political Leaders: We will initiate meaningful interactions with key political decision-makers within the UCP Government. This will involve regular meetings with ministers, advisors, and influential figures to build rapport and ensure effective advocacy for ALSA's interests at the highest government levels.

6. Intelligence and briefing on the NDP Opposition:

- NDP engagement: Engaging the well-resourced NDP opposition with ALSA's ambitions is crucial for our non-partisan stance. We'll provide intelligence, support outreach, and facilitate effective communication when needed.

What it Costs

At Alberta Counsel, we always ensure our clients enjoy cost-certainty and no surprise bills. Based on what we perceive to be your government relations needs, **we propose a monthly fee of \$5,000 (plus GST) based on a one-year contract.**

Our Office

Our modern executive office right across the street from the Alberta legislature is a perfect place for clients to network with political decision-makers. We purposely designed the space to be an ideal home base for companies that may not have a permanent office location near the legislature but intend to travel occasionally to meet key individuals within the Government of Alberta. It is also a perfect location to host an event to mix and mingle with political decision-makers.





Shayne Saskiw | Principal

Born and raised in Alberta, Shayne had the privilege of being one of the youngest MLAs elected in Alberta. As an opposition member, the Official Opposition House Leader and a tax lawyer, he knows that strength in good advocacy and strategy comes from ethical relationships and a clear message. He is an expert in using various networks and strategies to achieve his client's objectives. Shayne maintains a focused determination on the client's goals with integrity and creativity. Shayne is married to Member of Parliament for Lakeland, Shannon Stubbs.



Pascal Ryffel | VP of Corporate Development & Government Relations

Pascal has worked with Alberta Counsel for eight years and has been active in Alberta politics for over two decades. Starting with the NDP caucus when Raj Pannu was leader, Pascal has experienced the rapidly changing political environment in Alberta firsthand, spending most of his time with the NDP as outreach coordinator when caucus only had four MLAs. Over the years, Pascal has had many roles with the party, including organizing (both provincial and federal), leaders tour, candidate recruitment and candidate.



Andy Popko | Senior Advisor

Andy started his career with the Alberta Energy Company Ltd, which became EnCana. In 2021, he took on a newly created role as VP of Indigenous Relations. In 2008, he took on a consulting role with Northern Gateway Pipeline and in 2012 he joined NCSG where he fosters and manages Indigenous partnerships across Western Canada. Andy is an Honorary Chief of Heart Lake First Nation and is the only non-Indigenous person to achieve a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Tribal Institute of Treaty 8.



Zack Ziolkowski | Director of Municipal Affairs

Zack is an experienced government relations professional having worked in Alberta politics for 10 years including as the Director of Research and Communications for the Government Members Caucus and managing various political campaigns. He pairs this political experience with his strong policy background having worked with the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association on developing amendments to the Municipal Government Act.



Jennele Giong | Energy, Minerals, International Strategy

Jennele Giong, based in Calgary and Fort McMurray, combines her entrepreneurial spirit and advocacy in the energy sector with her educational background in Law & Society and Business Management from the University of Calgary. Her experience in government relations and roles within the United Conservative Party, including local board directorship and ethnic outreach, equips her to address the unique challenges of Alberta's energy sector. Her keen political insight and business acumen position her to assist clients in shaping the province's energy landscape.



Justin Gotfried | Associate – Global Strategy Justin is a qualified government relations strategist with a decade of experience building connections within municipal, provincial, and federal government. He previously held roles on Parliament Hill and with the Legislative Assembly of Alberta, in addition to managing winning campaigns at the federal & provincial level. Justin also holds a Master of International Business from Queen's University, a Diploma in International Trade via the Forum for International Trade Training, a BBA in International Business from Mount Royal University, and is currently pursuing the Certified International Trade Professional designation.



Andre Despina | Senior Associate

Andre has 14 years of diverse experience between government and the private sector. From 2008-15, he worked in research & communications roles for Alberta's government caucus and served as Chief of Staff in various ministers' offices. Following this, he spent six years working with a growing Alberta-based technology company, where he led government relations, market access initiatives. Andre holds a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Economics and Masters of Business Administration from the University of Alberta.



Al Kemmere | Senior Advisor

Al started his career as a dairy farmer and was elected to the board of the Alberta Holstein Association and served on the Alberta Milk board. From 2004 to 2021, Al was elected as a councillor on Mountain View County. He was appointed Reeve for six years, developing a wealth of experience in local governance and decision-making. In 2010, Al was elected to the board of what is now known as the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) and was elected president in 2014, a position he held until 2020. He also served on the board and executive of FCM from 2008 to 2020.



Guy Boutilier | Senior Advisor

Unique executive experience with 16 years (MLA) as former Minister of Municipal Affairs, Indigenous & Intergovernmental Relations & Minister of Environment. AUMA recognized Leadership award as former mayor of RMWB/Fort McMurray. Specializing with Masters in Public Administration from Harvard University.



Heather Feldbusch | Associate

Born and raised in rural Manitoba, Heather moved to Alberta in 2003 and began her career working with businesses in the financial services industry. She has had the opportunity to serve in various roles with the UCP Caucus and the provincial government at the Alberta Legislature. Over the years, Heather has worked on various campaigns and ran as a municipal candidate herself. Her combined education and experience give her valuable perspective to help her clients achieve their objectives.



Aaron Singleton | Associate – Digital Strategies

Aaron holds a degree in Political Science from the University of Alberta with a focus on public policy development. In addition to his academic background, he brings electoral experience having worked as a campaign manager for a candidate during the 2011 federal election. Prior to joining Alberta Counsel, Aaron spent six years serving with Justice and Solicitor General as a Senior Judicial Clerk and Acting Team Lead for the Court of Appeal of Alberta.



Klay Dyer | Associate – Fund Development

Klay joined the team after a long career as an academic that saw him teaching in Europe as well as at universities across Canada. For the past 12 years, he has been an independent consultant who specialized in securing and managing grants for a diverse portfolio of Alberta groups and organizations. With a PhD from the University of Ottawa, he is a strong communicator, creative problem solver, and determined collaborator with a strong commitment to building sustainable funding platforms for community-based projects.

Concluding Remarks

Alberta Counsel is perfectly suited to represent you. We can provide you with a sound understanding of the inner workings, motivations, and intentions of the government.

Only we can offer:

- A highly respected reputation in Alberta's lobby industry;
- A keen understanding of key influencers within the UCP and NDP Caucuses;
- A cross-partisan team that regularly meets to strategize on your file; and
- Ethical, experienced, effective advocacy.

We look forward to discussing how we can best support Alberta Liquor Store Association (ALSA) in achieving its government relations objectives. To discuss this proposal further please contact:

Jennele Giong
Energy, Minerals, and International Strategy
j.giong@albertacounsel.com



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