

Legislative  
Assembly  
of Ontario



Assemblée  
législative  
de l'Ontario

Office of the Integrity Commissioner

Bureau du commissaire à l'intégrité

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 24, 2012

## Integrity Commissioner Calls for Review of Lobbyists Registration Act

Ontario's Integrity Commissioner Lynn Morrison today renewed her call for a review of the province's *Lobbyists Registration Act, 1998*, and has issued a list of key issues that she believes should be addressed.

"The registration system has worked well since it was introduced in 1999, but times have changed," Commissioner Morrison said. "The roles of lobbyists and public officials have evolved, making it even more important that a registry provide clear, accessible information on who is lobbying whom, and about what. This transparency is very important to me."

Under the Act, the Integrity Commissioner is the province's Lobbyists Registrar. Among Commissioner Morrison's key recommendations for amendments:

- Provide the Lobbyists Registrar with the power to investigate complaints and issue penalties, including administrative monetary penalties, public reporting of contraventions, and restrictions against lobbying. At present, when the Office receives a complaint, it follows an informal process to resolve the issue. The Commissioner believes the ability to receive and review complaints, along with the penalty provisions, would serve to encourage compliance.
- Eliminate the "significant part of duties" threshold. The Act requires that in-house lobbyists must register only if they spend 20% or more of their time on lobbying activities. The Commissioner recommends that all paid lobbyists should be required to register, regardless of the time spent lobbying.
- Combine the two types of in-house lobbyists (persons & partnerships, and organizations). The Commissioner believes the current system is unnecessarily confusing. For example, in-house lobbyists in the first category must register individually; in-house lobbyists in the second are listed on a single form under the name of the organization's senior officer. A simplified process would increase transparency.
- Require the same type of information from all lobbyists, and permit the Registrar to introduce new categories of information if it aligns with the spirit of the Act. This would establish a common format, and allow the Registrar to ask for more information when she considers it helpful.

"I welcome a considered and thoughtful review of the Act, and look forward to participating in the discussion," said Commissioner Morrison. "Many people are affected by this legislation and I believe we can all benefit from listening to their suggestions on how to make it better."

The full list of the Commissioner's recommendations can be found at [www.oico.on.ca](http://www.oico.on.ca). An Officer of the Legislative Assembly, the Integrity Commissioner is independent of government. The Office has five key responsibilities: Members' integrity, public service disclosure of wrongdoing (whistle-blowing), expenses review for Cabinet Ministers, Opposition leaders, and 21 of Ontario's largest agencies, Ministers' staff ethical conduct and lobbyists registration.

*Ce communiqué est également disponible en français.*

Contact  
Cathryn Motherwell, Director  
416-314-7811  
[cathryn.motherwell@oico.on.ca](mailto:cathryn.motherwell@oico.on.ca)