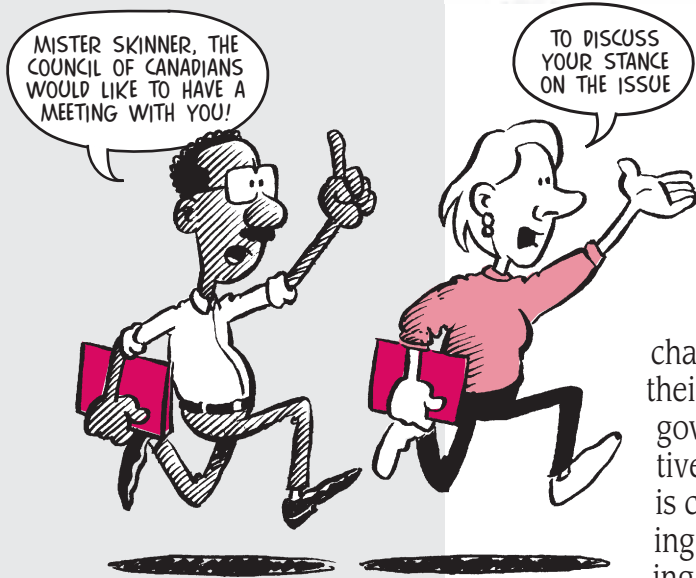


# Lobbying the government

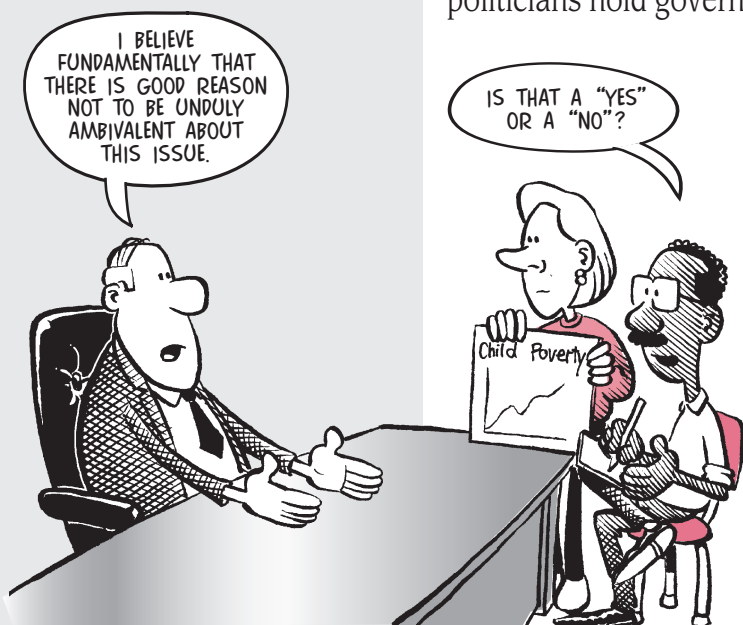


One of the most common tactics chapters use to make their point is to meet with government representatives or committees. This is called lobbying. Lobbying can be good for revealing an elected representative's



stand on an issue, for getting her/his position on record, and occasionally for getting media attention if the issue is current and controversial enough. But people tend to overrate the impact of lobbying on the elected representative's stand on an issue or piece of legislation. Unfortunately, lobbying is often seen as an end-in-itself, instead of as a small part of a larger strategy.

Nonetheless, lobbying is important. It's a good way of getting to know your politicians and of making them aware of your issues. If your lobbying is non-confrontational and informative, it can lead to the politician coming on board with your campaign—an important step, since politicians hold governmental power and are big media draws.



## Tips for effective lobbying

- ➔ Never lobby alone—always go with a friend, neighbour or member of your chapter
- ➔ Prepare a few clear points you want to raise on the issue
- ➔ Be specific about what you want the person you are lobbying to do. Do you want him/her to support your position publicly, or to raise your issue in

a session of municipal council, provincial legislature or national parliament?

- ➔ Before going, rehearse your lobbying by role-playing with a friend
- ➔ Be sure you can back up your arguments
- ➔ Take Council materials about the issue with you and leave them with the representative to read
- ➔ Stick to your points—don't get sidetracked
- ➔ Take careful notes of what the representative says and commits him/herself to doing
- ➔ Ask for some follow-up to the representative's action, for example, a copy of a letter sent or a copy of the comments made on our behalf
- ➔ Don't overwhelm the representative with information or requests
- ➔ Stick to your allotted time
- ➔ Follow up your visit with a thank you note which restates your point of view

