

GREENPEACE

# THE “REVOLVING DOOR” BETWEEN BIG OIL AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

## OVERVIEW

New research from Greenpeace shows there exists a massive “revolving door” between Canada’s federal government and the fossil fuel industry.

Every year and most notably after elections, federal officials leave their public roles to take jobs in the private sector (or vice versa). For individuals leaving government, the practice allows those who possess insider knowledge and networks to exploit the public policies they themselves helped put in place and benefit their new corporate employer. When it comes to the energy sector, our research raises questions about the integrity of Canada’s environmental commitments as the impacts of climate change are felt more and more with every passing year.

Greenpeace has identified 15 fossil fuel lobbyists - all but one former appointees or staffers in Stephen Harpers’ government - who disclosed in 2023 that they’d previously been employed as “designated” public office holders, i.e. senior government staffers like ministers, ministerial staff and policy advisers.

## BY THE NUMBERS

### *Big Oil's top government officials turned lobbyists*

*Lobbyists current position and selected past public offices*

**Robert Klager | Shell Canada, Head of Corporate Relations**

Chief of Staff, Minister of Natural Resources (Jul 2009 - Feb 2010)

Chief of Staff, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs (Oct 2008 - Jul 2009)

**Scott Wenger | Suncor Energy, Director, Government Relations**

Director of Regional Affairs, Environment Canada's Calgary Regional Office (Jan 2009 - Dec 2010)

Special Assistant, Office of the Minister of the Environment (Oct 2008 - Feb 2009)

**Mark Cameron | Pathways Alliance, Vice-President, External Relations**

Senior Policy Advisor & Director of Strategic Initiatives, Prime Minister's Office (Jul 2008 - Sep 2009)

**Marie Rajic | Pathways Alliance, Director, Government & Community Relations**

Senior Advisor, Government of Alberta (Jun 2019 - Jul 2021)\*

Executive Assistant, Office of the Minister of the Environment (Oct 2008 - Jan 2009)

Executive Assistant, Office of the Minister, Industry Canada (Aug 2007 - Oct 2008)

**James Kusie | Imperial Oil, Vice-President, Public & Government Affairs**

Director of Communications and Issues Management, Government House Leader, Minister's Office (Aug 2010 - Dec 2010)

Deputy Director Issues Management, Prime Minister's Office (Apr 2008 - Oct 2009)

**Patrick Muttart | TC Energy Corporation, Senior Vice-President, Stakeholder Relations**

Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Prime Minister (Jan 2006 - May 2009)

**Chris McCluskey | TC Energy Corporation, Manager, Federal Government Relations**

Director of Communications, Office of the Minister of Natural Resources (Apr 2014 - Sep 2015)

**Andrea Smotra | Imperial Oil, Government Relations Advisor**

Advisor, Regional Affairs, Prime Minister's Office (Sep 2013 - Nov 2015)

Director of Regional Affairs, Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Office of the Minister (Mar 2008 - Sep 2013)

**Mark Livingstone | Irving Oil, Government Relations Specialist**

Special Assistant - Regional Advisor (Atlantic), Health Canada, Minister's Office (Jan 2016 - Nov 2016)

Special Assistant - Operations & Outreach, House of Commons, Office of the Leader of the Liberal Party (Oct 2012 - Jan 2016)\*

**Liam O'Brien | Irving Oil, Manager, Government Relations**

Director of Parliamentary Affairs and Policy. Privy Council Office, Office of the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons (May 2011 - Dec 2015)

**Madi Murariu | Parkland Fuel Corporation, Senior Manager, Policy, Indigenous Affairs, and Government Relations**

Special Assistant, Natural Resources Canada, Minister's Office (Jul 2009 - Feb 2010)

**Allan Murphy | Canadian Propane Association, Senior Vice President**

Senior Advisor, Minister of National Defence/ACOA, Halifax office/ACOA Minister's office (Ottawa) (Jan 2009 - Apr 2010)

Regional Affairs Director, Minister of Foreign Affairs /ACOA, Halifax Regional Office (Feb 2006 - Sep 2006)

**Chris Crawford | Canadian Propane Association, Vice President, Ontario & Manitoba**

Policy Advisor, Caucus Liaison and Stakeholder Relations, Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario, Office of the Minister of State, (Nov 2013 - Oct 2015)

**Chris Montgomery | The Explorers and Producers Association of Canada, Senior Manager, Regulatory and Policy**

Director of Parliamentary Affairs, Leader of the Government in the Senate, Privy Council Office (Sep 2007 - Aug 2013)

**Alexander Retfalvi | Heartland Generation Limited, Manager, Stakeholder Relations**

Office Manager, House of Commons, Office Manager, Office of Blake Richard, Member of the House of Commons (May 2013 - Jan 2014)

*\*not a federal designated public office*

## A REVOLVING DOOR LIKE NO OTHER

The full scale of Big Oil's revolving door remains unknown as the federal registry of lobbyists doesn't offer open data on the government employment status of hundreds of lobbyists who previously served as non-designated -- yet still highly connected -- public office holders.

For example, while one of the country's most prominent oil advocates, the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) does not currently have anyone on its 23-person lobbying team who previously served as a designated public office holder, one in three have disclosed holding other public office roles. This year the Investigative Journalism Foundation (IJF) found that CAPP was the fourth largest lobbying organization to employ former federal public officials since the Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying started publishing records.

According to the IJF, the federal departments CAPP hires from the most are the House of Commons, the National Energy Board, Natural Resources Canada, and Crown-Indigenous Relations, all of which have a hand in regulating the activities advocated by the lobby group.

## THE FUTURE OF BIG OIL'S REVOLVING DOOR

The practice of individuals seamlessly transitioning between government and the fossil fuel sector undermines faith in Canada's ability to act on climate change. Revolving doors result in blurred public and private interests and concentrate the implementation of policy into the hands of a select few.

Yet, the current lobbying commissioner Nancy Bélanger is seeking to loosen lobbying regulations, notably reducing "cooling off periods" for lobbyists doing political work. This year, the federal Standing Committee on Access to Information, Privacy and Ethics agreed with recommendations from Belanger seeking to reduce the amount of time a lobbyist must wait between helping on a politician's campaign and lobbying them in government.