

FEDERAL ELECTION FUNDAMENTALS

Membership Guide



BRITISH COLUMBIA
HOTEL ASSOCIATION

INTRODUCTION

BCHA'S 2019 FEDERAL ELECTION GUIDE THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Dear Members,

As we look ahead to the upcoming federal election, we look at an opportunity to make an impact regionally, provincially, and nationally on the issues that our industry is currently facing.

Let's unite as an industry in the coming months, and raise our voice from a grassroots level. Take the time to acquaint yourself with your local candidates, and educate them on our industry's top priorities – pull from your personal experiences, sharing anecdotes from your daily operations to help candidates understand the degree to which some of these issues are impacting hoteliers, and the local economy.

We are here to support you during this time of outreach and will equally be meeting and connecting with regional candidates. We hope this guide will help inform your conversations and provide you with a framework for how to approach these meetings.

Thank you for your ongoing support!

Warm Regards,

The BC Hotel Association

NEED TO KNOW

KEY DATES & RESOURCES

KEY DATES

Leading up to the 2019 Federal Election, there are key dates and resources that you should be aware of. Mark your calendars with the below dates in advance of this year's Federal Election.

Election Day - Monday, October 21

*Polls will be open from 7am PT to 7pm PT

Advance Polls:

Advance polls will be held on the 10th, 9th, 8th and 7th days before election day (a Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday). They will be open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. local time.

RESOURCES

Visit www.elections.ca to find all the details you need to know relevant to your grassroots advocacy efforts, and for voting matters. The website will cover:

- Official Candidate List
- Voter Registration Information
- Ways to Vote

Visit www.hotelassociation.com for additional toolkit resources from the Hotel Association of Canada, and for information and efforts being executed on a federal Association level. The BCHA supports HAC and their federal efforts. Much of the messaging in this document reflects work being conducted on a national level.

Visit www.bcha.com as a local resource to review some of the issues we have been working on and are continuing to pursue. You can also contact Agata Kosinski, Manager Government Relations, directly at agata@bcha.com.

GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY

HOW YOU CAN HELP

WHAT IS IT?

Simply put, it involves the public communicating and engaging with local, provincial, and federal political party candidates to raise awareness of issues and positively advance these causes to enact change in regulation and policy. The key to successful citizen-based activism is consistent, strategic contact with the government, outlining clear issues and an evidence-based narrative.

FIND YOUR LOCAL MP

To find your local member of Parliament (MP), visit [Elections Canada](#).

CONSISTENT CONTENT

Successful advocacy efforts are a result of consistent contact and cohesive messaging from advocate groups. Outlined below are examples of a strategic approach to connecting with your local candidates.



SEND A LETTER

Draft a letter to your local candidate(s) outlining the top issues the industry is facing. This package contains messaging to help you draft your letter. Add a personal touch to increase the likelihood of it getting read & considered by various parties.



SCHEDULE YOUR MEETING

Allow your candidates enough time to review your letter, and subsequently follow up and request an in-person meeting or phone call. Candidates will be keen to hear from local voters, as they will be looking to better understand varying industry issues within their riding.



CONNECT

When meeting with your candidate(s), and educate them on the current issues the hotel and lodging industry is facing. Thank your candidate for taking the time to meet with you. Lastly, ask if this issue would be put forward as part of the party platform post-election. Remember the goal is to raise awareness, create change and build a movement for our industry's cause.



ENGAGE ONLINE & OFFLINE

Identify opportunities to connect at events, local campaign offices, and through social media accounts. Ask them what they, and their party will commit to, pushing to demonstrate federal leadership on furthering tax fairness and addressing labour shortages in the hotel sector.

PRIORITY BRIEF

ADDRESSING THE LABOUR SHORTAGE SUPPLY

One of our highest priorities will be addressing the Temporary Foreign Worker Program. In the hospitality sector, temporary foreign workers, on average, have accounted for less than 1% of tourism workers. While that number is low, the roles they fill are essential, as they provide immense value in helping fill some of the more challenging positions, like housekeeping and front desk roles.

The hospitality sector needs the Temporary Foreign Worker Program to open up to our sector and offer a similar program like the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program, which allows employers to hire temporary foreign workers when Canadians and permanent residents are not available. Without significant changes to the Temporary Foreign Worker Program, we will continue to see more positions unfilled, putting further stress on existing employees, and ultimately damaging the viability of Canadian businesses.

OUR ASK

- That the Federal Government develop and execute a strategy to address the labour shortage in the accommodation sector.
- That the Federal Government review and update the Temporary Foreign Worker Program to reflect the labour shortage realities that many industries like the accommodation sector now face through the lowering of application fees, streamlined re-application for workers and the establishment of a pathway to permanent residency for workers.
- That the Federal Government replicate the new three-year immigration pilot program for the agri-food sector – which provides temporary foreign workers the opportunity to become permanent residents - for the accommodation sector, to help alleviate the negative impacts of labour shortages in the industry.

KEY TALKING POINTS

- There is a labour shortage in Canadian hotels. These shortages are a challenge year-round, but are hyper-focused during seasonal peak periods, and are felt all across Canada.
- Front line jobs (and others) are hard to fill despite hoteliers commitment to hiring Canadians first, having gone to great recruitment efforts.
- The advantage of working in hotels is more than just the simple fact that jobs are available. Hotel jobs are a springboard to build a lifelong and fulfilling career.
- We want to be and can be the employer that helps the federal government get under-represented groups into good jobs.
- Hotels offer a variety of positions, strong upward mobility, training and investment in employees. When you work in a hotel you quickly improve language and customer service skills and learn cultural nuances. There is no better place to cultivate these skills than working in a hotel environment.

PRIORITY BRIEF

TAXATION OF DIGITAL PLATFORMS

The second big issue that we would like to raise is taxation of the digital platforms, like Netflix, Airbnb, and Facebook, which impact our everyday lives. As short-term rental platforms have grown, local politicians have been forced to intensify regulations in a bid to keep living conditions affordable for local workers. It is precisely the local workers that face the burden of the high cost of living in many communities where they cannot afford to work and live. Unlike hotels, commercial operators, that in fact operate as ghost hotels, do not pay income tax nor remit HST or GST. Many of these ghost hotels are directly responsible for removing rental housing off the market, further contributing to greater unaffordability in our local communities. In an atmosphere where it is already difficult to recruit and retain employees, hiring staff where there is a potential housing shortage is near to impossible.

It is fair to say that as we participate in a new sharing economy, these recent digital platforms have become major disrupters in the hospitality industry, but also with unintended spillover effects in our communities. It is within this new environment that we need to have our government recognize the issues arising and influencing the quality of life in our communities. We need the government to keep up to date with new digital innovations and industry disruptors, in order to ensure that digital businesses contribute their fair share of tax revenue to the Canadian government.

OUR ASK

- Ensure all corporations that operate in Canada through a digital presence pay corporate income tax on Canadian earnings.
- Amend the Excise Tax Act to: a) Require short-term rental platform companies operating in Canada to charge GST/HST to hosts and guests on all fees. b) Eliminate the use of the small-supplier threshold for short-term rental accommodations, paralleling the treatment for ride-sharing

KEY TALKING POINTS

- We are calling on the federal government to modernize their tax laws and take action to address tax avoidance in the digital economy.
- This growth in commercial operations is concerning. Multi-unit hosts account for over 30% of all revenue generated on Airbnb in Canada.
- Today, the short-term rental industry operates with limited regulation. Online platforms are being used to operate commercial accommodation businesses, resulting in unintended consequences including lost taxes, less housing, community nuisances and even criminal activity.
- The hotel industry is committed to working alongside governments in Canada to develop a fair, sensible and practical approach to the short-term rental industry that acknowledges the difference between true home sharing and a commercial operation.

THE MEETING

HOW TO PREPARE



BEFORE

Research your local candidates, ensuring you're familiar with the party, what their interests and opinions are, and whether they might be connected to the hotel industry in some way. Prepare your thoughts and key messages in advance, and identify some potential questions that you anticipate the candidate may ask during your meeting.



DURING

Thank your candidate for making the time to meet with you. Introduce yourself and your reason for reaching out to the candidate. Remember your key message and be ready to summarize them if your meeting is interrupted or is not as long as planned. Make the conversation personal and share your own experiences for why these issues are directly impacting you or the region. Reiterate your messages at the end and thank them again for their time.



AFTER

Follow up with your candidate if they have requested additional information, or to thank them again for their time. Share your experience with other hoteliers in the region and with the BCHA. Spread the word and encourage others to advocate at the grassroots level to help further the industry's most pressing issues.

We hope you find this guide helpful. If we can assist you or provide further clarification, please contact Agata Kosinski at agata@bcha.com or 604 443 4754.