



Public Money Private Agendas

Circular Lobbying
in Canada



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Introduction

Circular lobbying is a problem for every Canadian. Each taxpayer gives money to the government, which in turn hands it over to charities, and the charities then use that money to circle back to the government and lobby it on public policy. On many policy fronts, the taxpayer in Canada is paying the government to fund charities that influence how those taxpayers live their lives. In other words, the government is paying to lobby itself.

This is a deeply problematic, corrupt, and undemocratic system for many different reasons. By paying to lobby itself, the government is destroying the essence of civil society, which is supposed to be unbiased and independent, manipulating what the public learns about different issues, and allowing the government to maneuver politically on sensitive issues while citing advocacy they have essentially paid for.

This mission creep and corruption of civil society organizations, funded by government money to lobby the government, erodes Canadians' trust in supposedly non-governmental organizations, which in turn leads to a further breakdown of community, democracy, and policies grounded in actual evidence rather than political maneuvering. Many of these charities also use their funds to hire external, private lobbyists from big-time Public Relations firms, further showing that their aim is to influence the public policy process with the money they receive from the government itself.

This report covers four key areas where these practices are prevalent: social organizations, climate action organizations, public health organizations (particularly in the anti-tobacco harm reduction space), and anti-alcohol organizations. As this report shows, each of these major actors in the world of non-profits is very closely in touch with the government, and many employ outside lobbyists to help them get the ear of politicians and officials using the government's own money, all in a bid to influence policy. The report also shows how much free advertising for their policies and advocacy each organization gets through its massive media presence, allowing them to gain even more exposure for their lobbying activities.

The main question that this report asks is, why are Canadians paying for this, whether they want to or not? Canadians are being sold the illusion that grassroots organizations are supporting new legislation by the government, when in reality, the government is investing in charities to pat itself on the back, and sometimes even to be publicly undermined. Looking through many of the lobbyist registries, it becomes apparent that these organizations often lobby

governments for policies that would result in greater control over people's lives, a larger nanny state, and, of course, more funding for their work. This not only destroys trust in civil society but also puts grassroots organizations working to make Canadians' lives better at a severe disadvantage if they don't take millions in government money. Circular lobbying threatens to hurt charity work in Canada and destroy the foundation of civil society for generations to come, as the government pays for its own illusion of evidence and support.

Climate Organizations

1. International Institute for Sustainable Development

Federal Money	\$18,501,673.00
Provincial Money	\$1,534,602.00
Percentage of the overall budget	29.90%

(Fiscal period: April 01, 2024, to March 31, 2025)

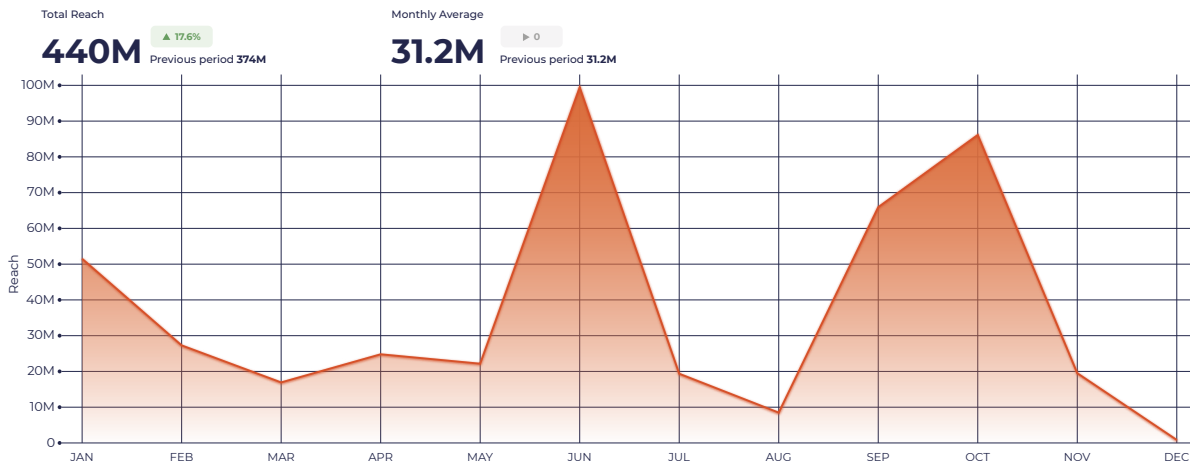
Public Policy Advocacy

[Advocate](#) against LNG pipelines and fossil fuels in general

IISD regularly advocates against oil pipelines in Canada and against the use of fossil fuels more generally. They receive over \$18 million from the same government that is working to build pipelines. Prime Minister Mark Carney has [indicated](#) that “...given the scale of the economic opportunity, the resources we have, the expertise we have, that it is highly, highly likely that we will have an oil pipeline that is a proposal...” The Prime Minister is underlining the fact that a pipeline project would be a positive economic step for Canadians, especially at a time of great economic uncertainty, worldwide gas price increases, and a cost-of-living crisis. Taxpayers are paying the IISD to find ways to make life more unaffordable for them, and to criticise the efforts of the Liberal Party of Canada to build more pipelines.

[Advocate](#) for municipal policies that add red tape to building homes in a housing crisis

While protecting Canada’s climate is an important goal, the country is also facing a massive housing crisis: Canadians lack enough housing to live in and cannot afford the housing that is available. One of the main reasons for the slowdown in housing development, as shown by the Consumer Choice Center’s [research](#), is the massive amount of bylaws and red tape that prevent developers from building housing, which would help alleviate the housing crisis. In spite of this, the IISD is championing new bylaws and regulations created by municipalities that will likely cost developers more money or will not be achievable at all. This, in turn, exacerbates and prolongs the housing crisis in Canada. Taxpayers are footing the bill for advocacy that will make it impossible for many of them to own a home in their lifetimes.



Do they employ registered lobbyists?

Yes

Meltwater Reach (Jan 1 - Dec 31, 2025)

Total Reach: 440 Million **Monthly Reach:** 31.2 Million

AVE*: \$4,072,689.44

** For the purposes of the rest of this document, AVE is Advertising Value Equivalency, which approximates the monetary value of earned media efforts by comparing them to the equivalent cost of placing advertisements. In other words, how much they would have had to pay to get the type of advertising they received for free from media exposure.*

Canadian Climate Institute

Federal Money	\$6,993,197.00
Provincial Money	-
Percentage of the overall budget	74.91%

(Fiscal period: April 01, 2024, to March 31, 2025)

Public Policy Advocacy

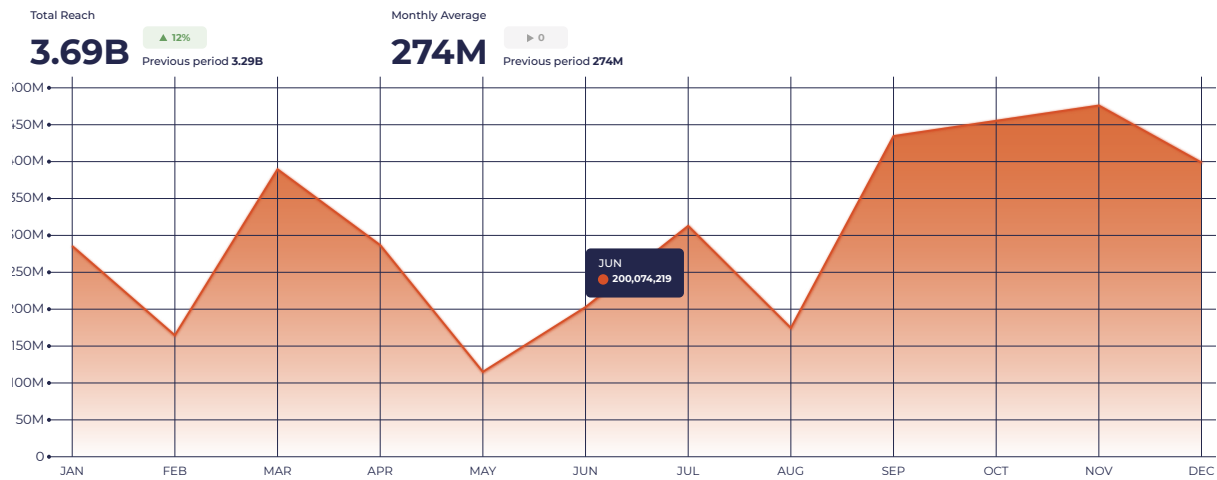
Advocate against the Canada-Alberta MOU and have been quoted as saying that Canada has been slacking off on their climate targets

The Canadian Climate Institute uses taxpayer money provided by the Canadian government to undermine the government’s climate action goals. Federalism shows us that each province is unique and understands its needs better than the central federal government does, which is why this MOU exists. By allowing a carve-out for Alberta in the Clean Energy Regulations, the federal government is acknowledging the unique perspective of Albertans, who pay taxes that help fund charities like the CCI. In fact, the government often works with provinces

individually to achieve goals important to them, and this does not lead to a “race to the bottom” because each province’s needs and political leadership differ. Using taxpayer money to criticise the work the Canadian government is doing on climate change and to say they are slacking off on their targets is simply the government paying to be undermined, with taxpayers footing the bill.

Stated that Industrial carbon pricing has negligible impacts on household costs, and in some cases is a benefit

As Canadians faced higher heating, fuel, and food costs due to the individual carbon tax, the government decided to cancel it and keep industrial carbon pricing. Unfortunately, industrial carbon pricing still has a **negative impact** on Canadians and Canadian industries during a cost-of-living crisis since those costs are still passed on to **consumers**, and have put a burden on industries themselves, who are struggling through an economic crisis and ongoing post-COVID supply chain issues. To state that industrial carbon pricing is negligible on household costs and, in some cases, a good thing shows that this advocacy is tone deaf to the needs of taxpayers and Canadian workers, the same ones who are paying out of their pocket to fund this charity while they struggle to pay for their groceries as a direct result of the industrial carbon tax.



Do they employ registered lobbyists?

No

Meltwater Reach (Jan 1 - Dec 31, 2025)

Total Reach: 3.69 Billion

Monthly Reach: 274 Million

AVE: \$34,115,685.98

Anti Scientific Tobacco Harm Reduction (Public Health) Organizations

Canadian Cancer Society

Federal Money	\$3,026,914.00
Provincial Money	\$21,554,292.00
Percentage of the overall budget	12.84%

(Fiscal period: February 01, 2024 to January 31, 2025)

Public Policy Advocacy

Advocate for banning vape flavours

The CCS takes a substantial amount of public funding as a charity to advocate for something that will undoubtedly result in many adults continuing to smoke and harm their health. Flavoured vaping products play a vital role in quitting smoking, with research showing they increase adult smoking cessation success rates by an [astonishing 230%](#). Flavours are not simply marketing gimmicks or tools for youth appeal, as often misrepresented, but powerful behavioral aids for adult smokers seeking to break free from combustible tobacco. This continuously condemns adult smokers to fewer options and higher relapse rates.

Falsely claim that youth vaping in Canada is on the rise and use that incorrect information to advocate for policies to stop it

The Canadian Cancer Society is using taxpayer money given to them by the government from taxpayers to make false claims about youth vaping in Canada. The Government of Canada's [own statistics](#) show that youth vaping is on the decline: the latest results of the Canadian Health Survey for Children and Youth show that in 2019, 13.2 percent (299,000 people) of youth aged 12 to 17 years reported vaping in the last 30 days, and this number had declined to 7.2 percent (174,000 people) in 2023. That's an almost 50% decline in youth vaping, which clearly shows youth are choosing not to vape rather than ramping up their vaping use. That means the Canadian Cancer Society is misrepresenting youth vaping information. The organization should use the money they are receiving from the government, which is meant to go towards combatting cancer, to encourage Canadians to use harm reduction tools like vaping so that they can stop smoking. This way, they are encouraging smoking to do something that is [at least 95 per cent less harmful](#) than traditional cigarettes, and that will help

them eventually to quit tobacco and nicotine products altogether. Encouraging adults to move towards a healthier alternative so that youth can have more time with their parents, as they will live longer when they quit smoking, should be the advocacy that the CCS focuses on.

[Advocate](#) for increasing advertising and promotion restrictions on vaping and [advocates](#) for e-cigarette tax increases

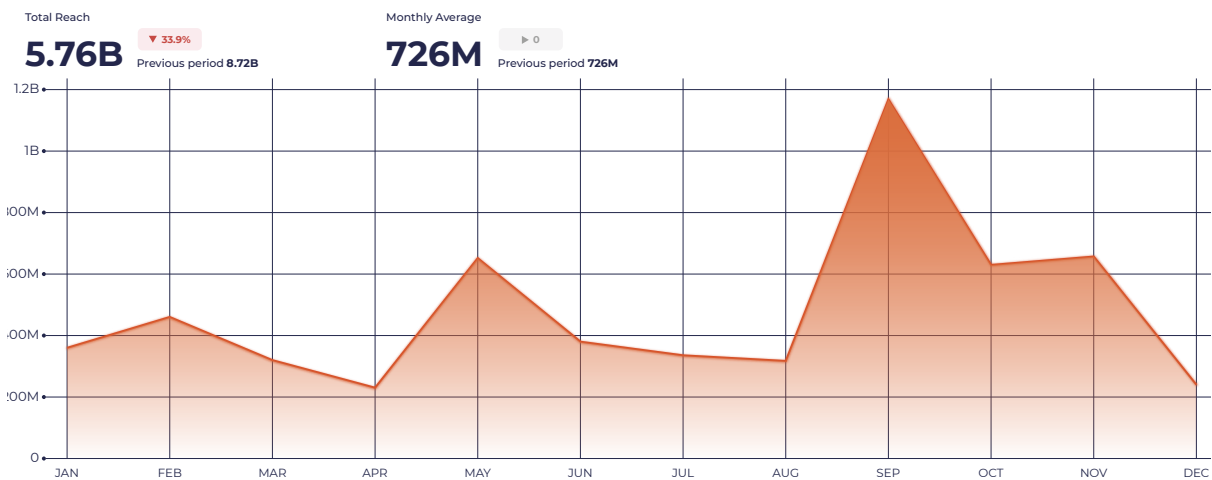
The Government of Canada itself has officially stated that “[switching completely to vaping nicotine is less harmful than continuing to smoke.](#)” Public Health England has stated that vaping is [at least 95 per cent less harmful](#) than traditional cigarettes. Vaping is also less harmful in terms of secondhand smoke, since the U.K.’s National Health Service (NHS) has [stated](#) that there is no evidence that vaping is harmful to those around someone who is vaping. Rather than advocate for more restrictions on mapping promotion and advertisement, the Canadian Cancer Society should be using the money they receive from the government as a charity to advocate for Health Canada to allow manufacturers to include comparative risk statements like “switching to vaping is 95 per cent less harmful to your health than smoking” so that consumers can make smart health choices that decrease their use of cancer-causing cigarettes. As for the retailers themselves, Health Canada’s inspections of gas stations and convenience stores found that they are in compliance with all the rules that are imposed on them at a [rate of 97 per cent](#), which shows that retailers can be trusted to sell items with comparative risk labels responsibly.

As for tax increases, sin taxes have historically led people to go underground to get what they can no longer afford legally. Illegal sales of cigarettes end up negatively affecting provinces like Ontario and British Columbia, with studies estimating [30 to 50 per cent of market share](#) from illegal sources in some areas. Illegal sources are not regulated and could harm users much more than traditional, legal cigarettes. The true path towards having more people quit and lower their chances of having cancer due to smoking is to move people away from illegal sales, and encourage them to use harm reduction tools such as vapes or nicotine pouches to move away from cigarettes and, ideally, eventually quit tobacco and nicotine altogether. Most people cannot simply quit smoking cold turkey, and that is why it is so important to have these much healthier alternatives available to Canadians who smoke. That means discouraging illegal sales through not increasing taxes on cigarettes, and dramatically decreasing taxes on e-cigarettes and nicotine pouches in order to encourage people to legally purchase harm reduction tools rather than cigarettes.

[Celebrated](#) having nicotine pouches put behind pharmacy counters

It is alarming that the Canadian Cancer Society, an organization that takes money from taxpayers for its mission to end cancer in Canada, would be

celebrating the further inaccessibility to a powerful harm reduction tool that helps people quit smoking like nicotine pouches. Pouches were once allowed to be sold in convenience stores and gas stations, until former health minister [Mark Holland](#) decided they were only to be sold behind the counter at pharmacies in 2024. What former Minister Holland did not understand, or chose to ignore, is that [tobacco is what causes cancer, not nicotine](#), so stopping people from accessing these harm reduction tools more conveniently is irresponsible in terms of their health. In fact, research shows they have [fewer harmful chemicals than cigarettes or traditional snus](#), leading to lower chances of cancer and breathing problems, and are [99 per cent less harmful](#) compared to cigarettes.



Do they employ registered lobbyists?

Yes

Meltwater Reach (Jan 1 - Dec 31, 2025)

Total Reach: 5.76 Billion

Monthly Reach: 726 Million

AVE: \$51,888,377.42

Ontario Lung Association/Lung Health Foundation

Federal Money	\$15,000.00
Provincial Money	\$2,097,300.00
Percentage of the overall budget	28.89%

(Fiscal period: April 01, 2024 to March 31, 2025)

Public Policy Advocacy

Met with the government to advocate that tobacco/nicotine taxation policies and tobacco settlement money be reinvested into respiratory health

The Ontario Lung Association used their resources given to them by the government as a charity to turn around and advise the government to use the money they have collected from taxpayers from their tobacco and nicotine taxation systems and their tobacco settlements to fund programs like lung cancer screening, chronic lung disease screening and treatment, mental health and addiction, tobacco/nicotine prevention, and cessation support. This may seem like a valiant goal, but it also encourages taxation on harm reduction products like vapes, which should be taxed considerably less since vaping helps people who are trying to quit cigarettes use a product that is at least 95 per cent less harmful to their health. If they want to truly affect healthcare in those areas, they ought to advocate for a proven harm-reduction tool that ultimately reduces the need for cancer screenings and other healthcare funding.

One of their apparent subsidiaries, the Lung Health Foundation (LHF), claims that vaping is part of “Big Tobacco 2.0”

The LHF describes itself as “building on the century-long legacy of the Ontario Lung Association, LHF invests in innovative research, advocates for policy change, and provides essential programs and support for individuals and families affected by lung conditions.” However, that does not include promoting harm reduction tools like vaping, which have been proven to be at least 95 per cent less harmful than cigarettes, and an essential tool that helps transition smokers away from cigarettes, with the goal of eventually quitting cigarettes altogether. Instead of talking with smokers about the benefits of harm reduction tools, the LHF uses the funding that is funnelled to it through the Ontario Lung Association to claim that vaping is part of “Big Tobacco 2.0”, or the next phase of profit for tobacco companies that will create lifelong nicotine customers. This is not only conspiracy-level thinking that downplays a life-saving innovation for

smokers, but shows that the money taxpayers are putting into circular lobbying efforts is actually working against their own interests.

What makes LHF even more questionable as an anti-harm-reduction advocate is that, although it bears a different name, it is still registered under the same charity number as the Ontario Lung Association as a secondary charity. Furthermore, the LHF lists itself as a registered charity on its website, but on the Government of Canada charity search its charitable status is [listed](#) as revoked, voluntary. It is now supposed to be just the Lung Health Organization, but Canadians wanting to look it up for transparency on the Canadian Charity Search won't find it listed under its current name. The OLA is not being transparent as it takes millions of dollars of government funding from the very taxpayers that will have a hard time deciphering what is going on with the charity itself.

Do they employ registered lobbyists?

No

Meltwater Reach (Ontario Lung Association)

Meltwater Reach (Jan 1 - Dec 31, 2025)

Total Reach: 38 Million **Monthly Reach:** 1.46 Million

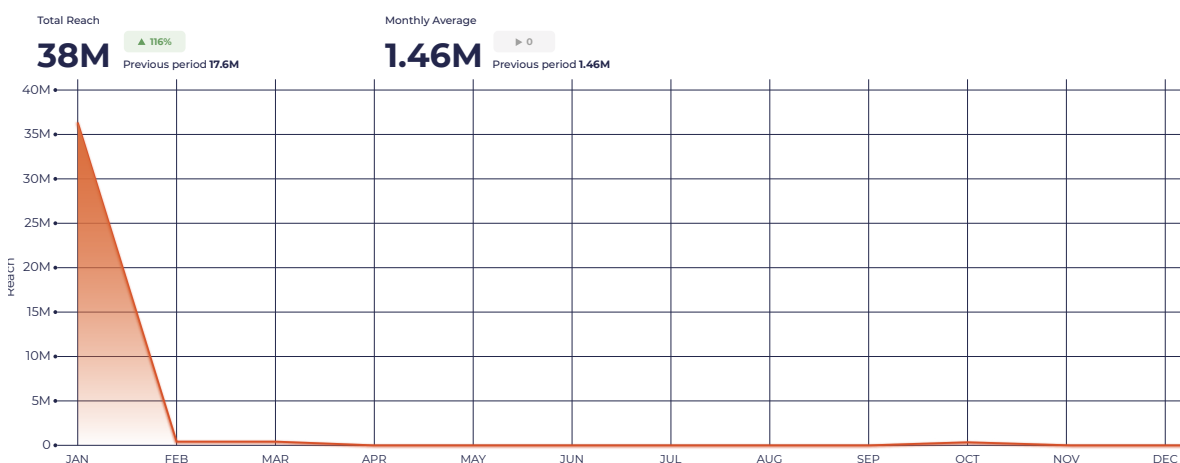
AVE: \$351,692.66

Meltwater Reach (Lung Health Foundation)

Meltwater Reach (Jan 1 - Dec 31, 2025)

Total Reach: 590 Million **Monthly Reach:** 24.5 Million

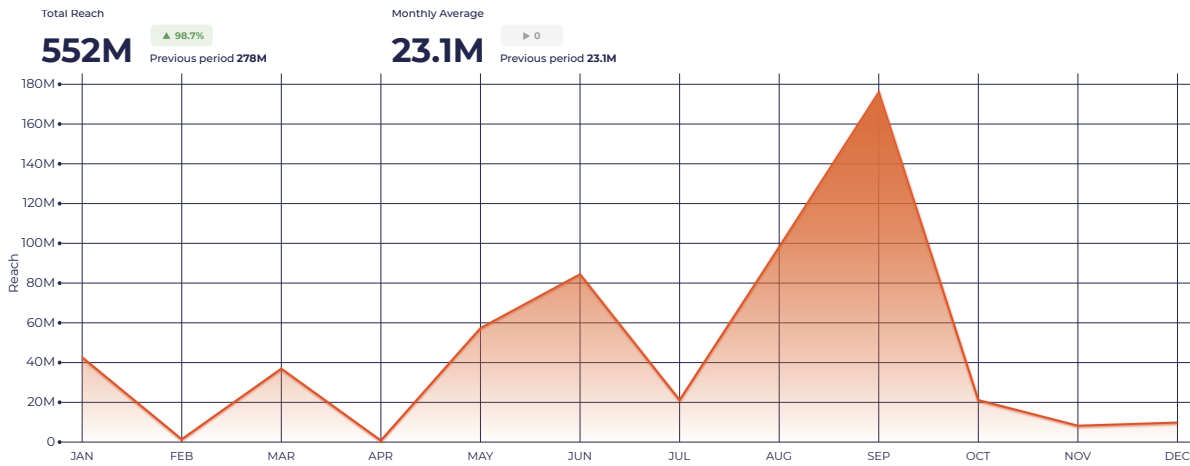
AVE: \$5,205,210.42



Meltwater Reach total between the OLA and the LHF (Jan 1 - Dec 31, 2025)

Total Reach: 552 Million **Monthly Reach:** 23.1 Million

AVE: \$5,556,903.08



Canadian Lung Association

Federal Money	-
Provincial Money	\$132,672.00
Percentage of the overall budget	7.11%

(Fiscal period: April 01, 2024 to March 31, 2025)

Public Policy Advocacy

[Advocate](#) for a flavour ban on vaping

The Canadian Lung Association, which has a mandate to advocate for the betterment of Canada’s lung health, advocates against a tool that has been proven to help people quit smoking, something that has a massive effect on lung health. Vaping itself has been proven to be [at least 95 per cent less harmful](#) than traditional cigarettes. What’s more, flavoured products for vaping encourage smokers to switch to vaping at a much higher rate. Flavoured vaping products play a vital role in quitting smoking, with research showing they increase adult smoking cessation success rates by an [astonishing 230%](#). Flavours are not simply marketing gimmicks or tools for youth appeal, as often misrepresented, but powerful behavioral aids for adult smokers seeking to break free from combustible tobacco. This continuously condemns adult smokers to fewer options and higher relapse rates. In the same [TVPA submission](#) where they demonize vaping, they also include a recommendation to “Increase access to cessation to help Canadians quit, including approved cessation products as part of National Pharmacare program”, but one of the most effective ways of quitting smoking is not included in this plan.

With youth vaping on the decline (according to the Government of Canada's [own statistics](#)), this powerful tool should not be banned in order for the parents of youth to live longer lives with their children by quitting smoking.

[Played a part](#) in having nicotine pouches restricted to behind pharmacy counters

It is disconcerting that a lung health advocacy group would work hard to make something that helps people move away from smoking more inaccessible to smokers in Canada. Pouches were once allowed to be sold in convenience stores and gas stations, but in 2024 former health minister [Mark Holland decided](#) they were to be sold only behind the counter at pharmacies. Former Minister Holland did this at the behest of advocacy groups including the CLA, and was then applauded for his decision, even though [tobacco is what causes cancer, not nicotine](#). Stopping people from accessing these harm reduction tools more conveniently is irresponsible in terms of their lung health. In fact, research shows they have [fewer harmful chemicals than cigarettes or traditional snus](#), leading to lower chances of cancer and breathing problems, and are [99 per cent less harmful](#) compared to cigarettes. Do they employ registered lobbyists?

Yes

Meltwater Reach (Jan 1 - Dec 31, 2025)

Total Reach: 106 Million **Monthly Reach:** 25 Million

AVE: \$977,667.62



Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada

Federal Money	\$
Provincial Money	\$
Percentage of the overall budget	84.71%

The amount is \$86,270.00, but there is no detailed financial information showing which level of government this money comes from

(Fiscal period: Reporting period ending: 2023-12-31)

Public Policy Advocacy

Advocated for former Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health, Ya'ara Saks, to adopt harmful policies for smokers

The PSFC has taken taxpayers' money and advocated for former Minister Saks to make the lives of Canadians who simply want to quit smoking much worse. In the case of vaping products, the organization warned that the Minister was setting a bad precedent if she did not adopt the recommendations to impose even more regulations on the product, including on product design. The PSFC also wants to ban internet sales, and regulate vapes the same way as tobacco products more generally. This might be one of the most harmful advocacies from this organization since it directly stops people who are trying to quit cigarettes from using a product that is at least 95 per cent less harmful, and possibly from quitting for good.

Listed as an expert who worked with a University of Waterloo professor awarded millions of dollars to perform biased research on youth vaping and lung health

Canadians would likely disapprove of this charity using their money to bolster the PSFC's reputation and secure "expert" status that allows them to work with a university professor on research into youth vaping and lung health. Asking an anti-nicotine group to help with research on nicotine use that ought to be unbiased is akin to appointing the expert fox to watch the hens. Achieving unbiased research when working with a biased "expert" group might be impossible, and depending on the extent of their input, it is also academically dishonest to present the work as unbiased research that could serve as a foundation for public policy affecting Canadians' lives and well-being.

Advocate for a federal ban on vape flavours

The PSFC, which has received government funding as a charity, used its

resources alongside a coalition of organizations to run high-profile ads in downtown Calgary and at the YYC airport highlighting the need to ban vape flavours. Other than being a bizarre use of resources that likely had little effect on actual policymakers, it is also concerning that taxpayers helped fund these billboards and other advertisements that served to possibly influence opinion against vape flavours which have been shown to increase adult smoking cessation success rates by an [astonishing 230%](#).

[Advocated](#) for plain packaging for tobacco products through a written submission

The PSFC has used its resources to draft a submission urging the government to implement plain packaging for cigarette packs. They have essentially used taxpayer money to advocate for the idea that adults in Canada are children who need visual plain packaging to stop doing something bad, when in reality they should be advocating for proven harm reduction tools that stop adults from smoking, like vaping and nicotine pouches instead.

Do they employ registered lobbyists?

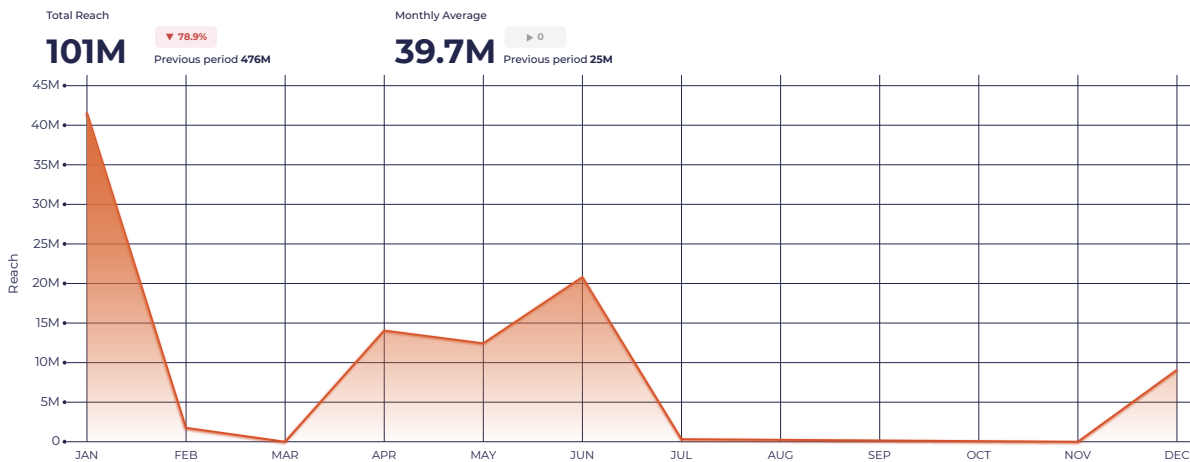
No

Meltwater Reach (Jan 1 - Dec 31, 2025)

Total Reach: 101 Million

Monthly Reach: 39.7 Million

AVE: \$931,179.46



Anti-Alcohol Organizations

Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction

Federal Money	\$11,572,666
Provincial Money	\$21,554,292.00
Percentage of the overall budget	89% of annual revenue*

(Fiscal period: 2025)

*The CCSA is different from other charities. It is not on the CRA list of charities because its existence as a charity was written into the legislation that created this organization. Therefore, their Annual Report was used to calculate the amount of money they receive from the federal government, namely from Health Canada.

Public Policy Advocacy

Released a report that [advocates](#) for the idea that no amount of alcohol consumption is safe

The CCSA receives millions in taxpayer money as a charity, only to release flawed research to Canadians claiming that the ideal safe alcohol consumption is zero, based on low-quality data and confirmation bias. As one Toronto cardiologist reading their report [put it](#): “only lower quality, that is to say, observational studies were included, since higher quality trial data isn’t available...the major flaw in the study was the focus only on alcohol consumption as a risk factor, thus leading to a confirmation bias. If you only look at alcohol risk, that is all you will find. There was no controlling for differences in variables known to affect cancer risk, such as diet, obesity, smoking, exercise and family history.” However, that does not change the fact that the government granted them legislative charity status and millions of dollars in taxpayer money, only to provide baseless, alarmist statistics that scare the same taxpayers for no reason. Since they have special status with the government as an entity that was created by the government itself through legislation, they also have, as an organization, the ability to influence the government’s actions on this file.

Senator Patrick Brazeau [drew](#) heavily on the CCSA’s [call](#) for alcohol warning labels in his doomed labelling bill

Based on their flawed report on alcohol, the CCSA advocates for placing warning labels on alcohol packaging in Canada like the ones found on cigarette

packages. Their reasoning is that, according to their flawed research, “three-to-six drinks a week increases the risk of developing certain cancers, including colorectal and breast cancer, and more than seven drinks a week also increases your risk of heart disease and stroke. The danger goes up with every additional drink.” However, as [pointed out](#) by the Consumer Choice Center’s David Clement, the CCSA’s own data shows that “for a man consuming two drinks a day, the absolute increase in colorectal cancer risk is 0.0028 per cent — three one-thousandths of a per cent. Add up the risks for all cancers cited — liver, esophagus, larynx and so forth — and the total increase for our two-drink male is 0.0099 per cent — one one-hundredths of a per cent. For women, factoring in breast cancer, the figure is 0.0088 per cent.” These are ridiculously low numbers that cannot be deemed a health crisis that requires a remedy like regulating warning labels. Despite this, Senator Patrick Brazeau used the CCSA’s flawed research as the foundation of his two failed [bills](#), S-202 and S-203, which would have required cancer warning labels on every bottle of alcohol, and would have completely banned alcohol promotion. This is very clear evidence of the slippery slope of circular lobbying: the government gives money to a charity, which then uses that money to do work that will allow them to lobby the government, and even if that work is flawed, it will then influence the government, and et cetera. It is a vicious cycle that taxpayers are paying for.

Registered lobbyists they employ

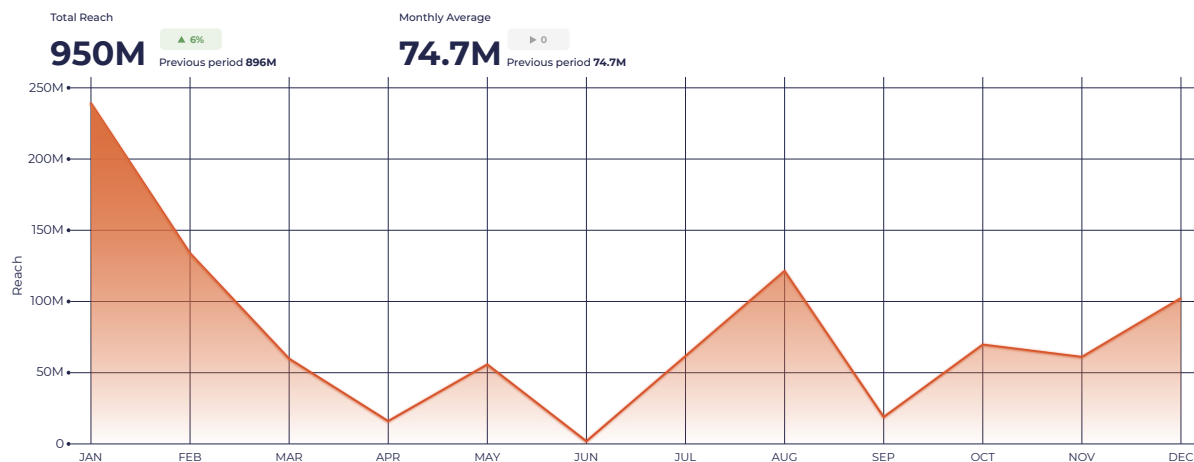
The CCSA is not required to register with the lobbying registry because they are a federal Crown-created body, created by an Act of Parliament, so they are not registered lobbyists, even though they release reports and advise the government and are usually the reason why government policies on alcohol change.

Meltwater Reach (Jan 1 - Dec 31, 2025)

Total Reach: 950 Million

Monthly Reach: 74.7 Million

AVE: \$8,796,736.64



Social Organizations

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives

Federal Money	\$605,200.00
Provincial Money	\$ -
Percentage of the overall budget	9.63%

(Fiscal period: January 01, 2024 to December 31, 2024)

Public Policy Advocacy

[Advocating](#) against entering trade deals with the UAE

The CCPA is not only using taxpayer money to advocate for an economic policy that would hurt taxpayers during a cost-of-living crisis, but also to undermine the federal government's goals that help fund their work. Advocacy against any trade deal is terrible advice, as Canada's fate with its major trading partner, the United States, remains rocky and uncertain. The Government of Canada has clearly adopted a [strategy](#) to diversify the nation's trading partners, given the relationship with the United States, yet the CCPA is advocating that Canada not enter a potentially lucrative trade deal with the United Arab Emirates, a productive and friendly nation to Canada. They take particular issue with LNG-related projects and investment in Canada's critical minerals sector.

They call this trade deal a sign of desperation and appeasement to the United States, which, even though in reality, would be taking away trade opportunities from the United States. Some of their opposition is related to human rights abuses in the UAE; these words do not appear when they discuss other countries with reported human rights abuses, [like China](#). It is the selectiveness of their concern for human rights abuses that is puzzling, and that selectiveness is being advocated for on the backs of Canadian taxpayers, helping fund their activities.

[Advocating](#) against Alberta's attempt at a two-tier [healthcare](#) system

As tens of thousands of Canadians [die](#) while on medical waitlists, the CCPA is using taxpayer money to advocate against policy innovations that could have those waiting in surgical waitlists see a surgeon more quickly. While much more must be done to fix the crumbling healthcare system in Canada, Alberta has introduced a unique solution that allows surgeons to perform more surgeries than the public system can pay for. If the public system can't pay for more, the surgeon can perform more surgeries in a private setting. This is a system that works in many European countries like France, Switzerland, and the Netherlands.

This means the public queue moves faster, as those ahead of them can opt into a private elective surgery, alleviating the backlog of [80,000](#) Albertans waiting for elective surgery. Rather than find a viable solution that would save patients' lives, the CCPA would rather use those taxpayers' money to advocate against a system that could help patients receive the care they need.

[Arguing](#) that the housing crisis is not a supply issue but an issue of financialization and distribution

The CCPA uses taxpayer money to advocate against taxpayers' interests, and one of the most transparent ways to do so is through its advocacy on housing. Canada is undoubtedly dealing with a massive housing crisis, and as our [extensive research](#) has shown, one of the main problems is a lack of supply. In fact, this organization that is taking money from the government for its advocacy work criticized the Liberal party directly, saying "solving the housing crisis has been a central plank of the Liberal party during their decade in power, but progress has been elusive." They also incorrectly claim that "There is no shortage of supply." even though one of the [major Canadian banks](#), plus the [Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation](#) itself, say there clearly is a shortage of supply. The CCPA's analysis that it is a credit problem of financialization and a distribution issue is both deeply flawed and, if taken seriously, will only serve to lengthen the time that Canadians are stuck in a housing crisis.

[Advocating](#) for public grocery stores

In the same vein of policy recommendations that will likely make Canadians struggle, the CCPA advocates for public grocery stores, while acknowledging that examples of this model have failed in several U.S. states, attributing this to stores not being large enough. An example that the CCPA uses to show the success of publicly owned stores is the LCBO, an entity which has actually been failing over the past few years and keeps Canadians restrained in their choices, something the Consumer Choice Center has extensively researched. The problem became so pronounced that in Ontario, the provincial government had to allow alcohol sales outside the LCBO. The main issue with both of these proposals is that Canadians are paying for bad advice that makes their lives more difficult and undermines the work of the government that funds this advocacy.

[Arguing](#) that every data centre is a U.S. military base and [advocating](#) for a return to Ludditism, want to hold collective control over technology

The CCPA's unreasonable opposition to technology has led it to advocate for many ideas that would harm Canadians if taken seriously. As Canada's Artificial Intelligence landscape continues to grow ([supported](#) by the Canadian Liberal government, which also has a Minister of AI), data centres are, of course, needed to power this growth. Claiming without any firm evidence that every data centre

is a U.S. military base is not only alarmist but also potentially an international relations problem that Canada does not need as it navigates its complicated relationship with the United States. It does not benefit Canadians for a government-funded charity to make claims that could hurt the work that the Prime Minister and his government are undertaking to stabilize relations with the United States, Canada's largest trading partner.

It is not surprising, however, that they would make this claim, since they also advocate for a return to Ludditism, or a society without technology, and for control by the people over technology. It is, however, private companies, through their research and development programs, that have created life-changing technologies such as medical devices, computers that advance science, and many other everyday conveniences that Canadians enjoy. Democratization would hand control over to the government, which would slow down technological innovation through its inherent bureaucracy and red tape.

They take particular issue with gig-economy technology, which has enabled Canadians to take on work and make money for their families on their own schedule. It has also transformed the way Canadians get around, in particular when they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol and should not operate a vehicle. Encouraging Canadians to admire the fictional folk hero [Ned Ludd](#) rather than face the fact that technology has vastly improved people's lives is harmful, and celebrating a fictional folk hero that encourages violence against technological innovation is dangerous. And yet, the CCPA is paying for this advocacy with money from the government they criticize and from the people whose lives have been improved by technological advancement.

Do they employ registered lobbyists?

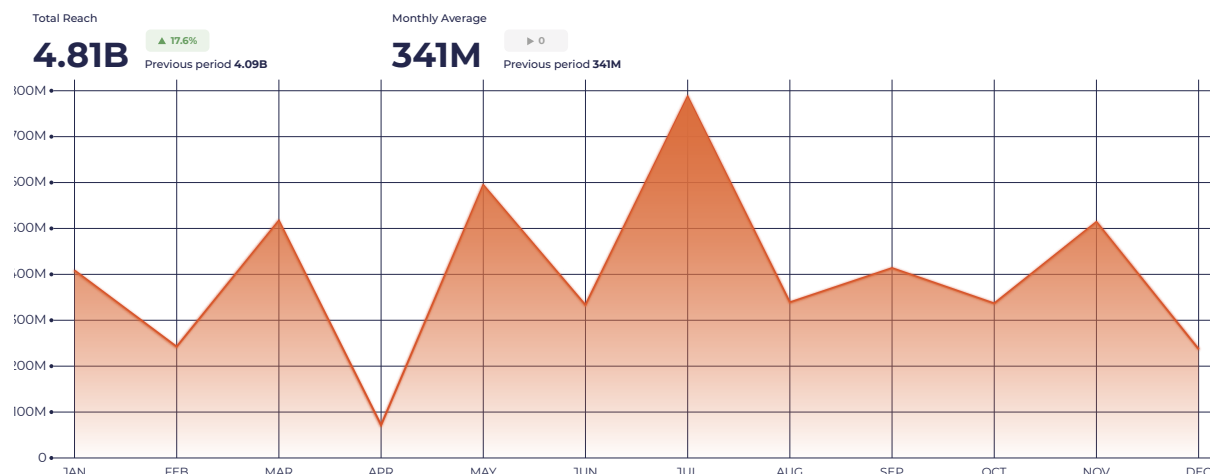
Yes

Meltwater Reach (Jan 1 - Dec 31, 2025)

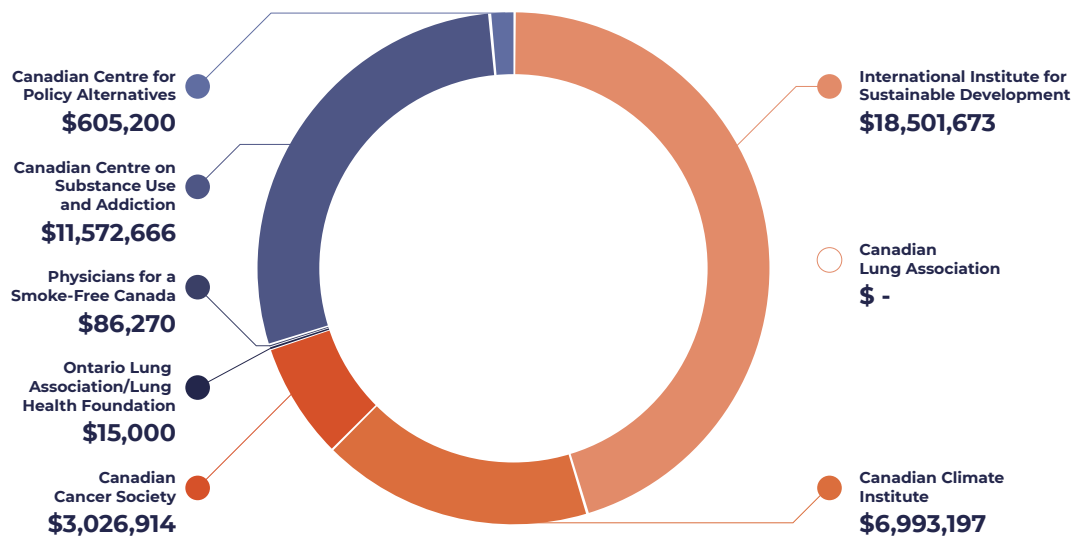
Total Reach: 4.81 Billion

Monthly Reach: 341 Million

AVE*: \$44,464,763.16



Federal Money share by Organization



Methodology

Most of the data used for this report is publicly available online. To determine how much federal, provincial, municipal money each charity was receiving, the report references information gathered from the Government of Canada's Canada Revenue Agency's [charity search](#).

In order to uncover which charities were the worst offenders of circular lobbying, the report uses data downloaded from the same website of all charities and cross-checks those receiving the highest amounts of money from government(s) with the ones that use much of that money to perform advocacy back to the government(s). This report shows the organizations that the Consumer Choice Center believed the Canadian public should know about, based on the amount of government funding they received, the percentage of their financial existence tied to the government, and the depth of their public policy advocacy.

It is also important to consider whether an organization employs independent public relations firms and lobbyists to aid it in this work. Public relations professionals know exactly who to talk to in a Minister's office, understand how to work the system to get outcomes for their clients, and have a deeper understanding of how legislation and regulation work to make a real difference in public policy. We determined whether a charity employed public relations professionals by reviewing the publicly available [lobbying register](#). This register exists because the Government of Canada requires every entity that lobbies the government to maintain a record of that interaction, accessible to the public through this website.

In terms of media reach, the authors generated a Meltwater report detailing each organization's media coverage throughout 2025. The intention is to show how much public reach these organizations advocating for public policy have in the public eye. We then generated reports from Meltwater that show what the Advertising Value Equivalency would be, or in other words, the metric used to estimate how much value of earned media coverage they would have paid for if they were paying for this attention through advertising. [Meltwater](#) is a program that helps businesses understand media trends and monitor brand and media interest across online news and social media.

Conclusion

This report shows how deeply-rooted the cycle of circular lobbying is within charities in Canada. Organizations from very different backgrounds all have one thing in common: they accept government funding and then use it to lobby the government, essentially allowing the government to lobby itself. The public policies each organization has advocated show that they do not hold back from praising or criticizing the very government that is funding them, and their use of public relations professionals enables them to do so effectively, ensuring their biases and ideas are heard by those in power.

The organizations represented in this report show that circular lobbying is, at its foundation, a deeply problematic practice on many fronts. First, it allows the public to believe a certain policy is being advocated without knowing that the government has handed over money to the organization to advocate for it. Second, this dishonesty is also rooted in the fact that it corrupts the meaning and identity of a civil society organization. People view charities as organizations that do good no matter what, but adding government money to the mix means charities often take a stance that helps a government remain in power, so the non-governmental organization can continue to receive government funding. This is not the basis upon which advocacy should be maintained.

The alternative to circular lobbying is for charities to raise their own funds and make their own decisions about what to advocate for or against, or at least not use government funds for lobbying. Any organization in Canada can advocate for almost anything it wants, and no one should stop it. It is when government money enters the process that the waters become murky, and organizations can maintain the guise of civil society independence. If a charity is not advocating for ideas Canadians support, Canadians won't donate to it, and the charity must simply fold, much as a small or medium-sized business that does not represent what the market wants must pivot or close down.

Most importantly, charities that take government funding must stop all attempts to manipulate reality in scientific advancement, discovery, and innovation. When Canadians cannot tell what is fact from fiction because the government pours money into the process, they are at risk of disinformation and corruption. The Canadian people who pay their taxes should not be paying for the dishonesty of circular lobbying.

About the Authors



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Sabine is the Canadian Policy Associate at the Consumer Choice Center.

She holds a B.A. in Political Science from the University of Toronto and an M.A. in Political Science from the University of Western Ontario. Previously, she was the Educational Programs Manager at the Institute for Liberal Studies, an educational non-profit dedicated to encouraging the discussion of classical liberal ideas in Canada. After graduating, she went on to advise Canadian federal Ministers on policy issues relating to citizenship and immigration for over four years.

Her work, both individual and co-authored, has been published by the Mercatus Center at George Mason University, the Institute for Research on Public Policy, The Hub, the National Post, The Hill, the Globe and Mail, and the Washington Post, among others.



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