

Fossil Fuel Lobbying Under PM Carney: A Year of Unprecedented Access



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MEDIA BACKGROUNDER

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Prime Minister Carney's Liberal Party won the April 2025 federal election, and ushered in a new direction for the Canadian government. In this new government's first year, between the months of May 2025 and April 2026, Big Oil's access to key decision-makers and Ministers skyrocketed.

Overview

Over Prime Minister Carney's first year in office, the Government of Canada dismantled much of the country's climate progress and environmental protections. This included scrapping carbon pricing and passing the Building Canada Act, which exempts major projects from environmental laws. The government also doubled down on new fossil fuel projects like oil pipelines and LNG, and scrapped the proposed cap on pollution from the oil and gas industry, as well as weakened rules to limit methane pollution from the industry. They also weakened clean electricity rules, cut funding to Environment and Climate Change Canada, weakened greenwashing rules, and expanded fossil fuel subsidies.

Many of these items came straight from Big Oil's wishlist. Who has access to government matters. By analyzing the Federal Lobby Registry from PM Carney's first year in government, it's clear that oil and gas lobbyists enjoyed unprecedented access to key decision-makers.

The federal government was lobbied by the fossil fuel industry at least 1318 times – 5 times per working day – in the first year of PM Carney's government.

Key Findings

- **Tim Hodgson, Minister of Natural Resources, took at least 83 meetings with the fossil fuel lobby in the government's first year.** This is a sharp departure from the previous administration, where former Natural Resources Minister Wilkinson's highest level of exposure to fossil fuel lobbyists was 34 meetings in 2023. It's also more than four times as many meetings as the most lobbied Minister in 2024, former Finance Minister Freeland, who met with lobbyists 19 times. **Natural Resources Canada took 413 meetings with oil and gas lobbyists.**
- **Prime Minister Carney met with fossil fuel industry lobbyists at least 14 times during his first year as PM, and over 20 since being elected Liberal Party leader.** This is also a staggering increase in exposure to lobbyists for a Canadian Prime Minister. Prime Minister Trudeau took only two fossil fuel industry lobby meetings between 2023 and the end of his term in January 2025.

- **Minister Dominic LeBlanc met with fossil fuel lobbyists at least 17 times.** In his role as Minister for One Canadian Economy, he oversees the Major Projects Office, which is facilitating the approval and development of new fossil fuel infrastructure projects like LNG facilities and oil pipelines.
- **Big Oil had 384 meetings with Members of Parliament across all parties.** 323 of those meetings were with Liberal elected officials.
- **The most active fossil fuel lobbyists were the companies making up the Oil Sands Alliance – an alliance of the largest oil sands companies, who are behind the Pathways CCS project – with a total of 305 meetings.** The alliance held 49 meetings, and the individual companies had a combined 256 meetings. For example, Suncor had 100 meetings and Cenovus had 62. Other top lobbyists included:
 - a. the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (161 meetings);
 - b. Enbridge (137 meetings), owner of the largest pipeline network in North America;
 - c. Shell Canada (104 meetings), whose LNG Canada project has received government support;
 - d. and Pembina Pipeline (72 meetings), the company taking a small stake in the proposed pipeline to the west coast.

The influence of Big Oil is not a new problem, but in the year following the election, we've observed increased alignment between the federal government's policy agenda and Big Oil's policy wishlist. InfluenceMap [research](#) shows that the regulatory rollbacks in Canada are directly traceable to coordinated oil and gas lobbying in 2025.

Methodology

This analysis is based on the federal Registry of Lobbyists. We analyzed meetings between 45 oil and gas companies and the federal government between May 2025 and April 2026. Only meetings initiated by lobbyists are recorded in the federal Registry of Lobbyists. This means government-initiated meetings go untracked, so the data in this report captures only part of the lobbying influence at play.

Environmental Defence Canada does [ongoing tracking](#) and produces annual reports on fossil fuel industry lobbying. Our most recent [annual report is available here](#).



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