



## TasCOSS Advocacy Toolkit for Organisations and Individuals

The Tasmanian State Election has been called for **Saturday 23 March 2024** and election campaigning is in full swing. TasCOSS encourages you to participate by lobbying local candidates and political parties on the issues you or your organisation think are important.

The TasCOSS Advocacy Toolkit covers off on a range of lobbying activities you can engage in individually or on behalf of your organisation to influence candidates and political parties.

### 1. Attend an election forum

You can attend a forum held by various interest groups and organisations and raise your issues directly with the candidates in attendance (ask a question, engage in discussion or make a comment). Most of the candidates will be representing political parties, so it is a good opportunity to influence not only the candidates attending but also the parties.

### 2. Media releases, letters to the editor and talkback radio

You can write a media release or letter to the editor addressed to your local newspaper about any issue you would like to raise (see Appendix B: Media Contacts). You can also contact local talkback radio programs to raise issues. The political parties and candidates take more notice of issues raised in letters to the media during an election campaign than they do at other times.

### 3. Social media




You can participate in social media commentary through Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and X using the hashtags #politas and #tasvotes.

### 4. Letters to candidates and parties

You can write a letter or an email to the political parties or to the candidates in your electorate, or in any or all electorates, detailing your particular concerns and making recommendations for policies you would like to see introduced by the next Tasmanian Government (see Appendix A: Sample Letter). You can also write to support other organisations' election asks.

#### *How to write a letter to candidates/parties*

Your letters to political parties or candidates do not need to be complicated — they can be as short as a page or a few paragraphs and do not need to be written in formal language. All you really need to do is:

-  **Provide contact details.** Letters or emails should have a header or signature with your organisation's contact details and your name or the name of a representative to contact in relation to the letter.
-  **Introduce yourself and/or your organisation.** Give readers a brief outline of your or your organisation's role. Additionally, if it is relevant, you can provide a short description of your organisation's membership, location, size and staff/volunteer numbers.
-  **Provide a brief summary of your key points and recommendations.** This only needs to be a few sentences long to summarise the key issues you are concerned about and the commitments you would like the parties or candidates to make in relation to those issues.



• *Discuss your issues of concern in more detail and make specific recommendations.* This is where you can explain in more detail your key issues and what you believe the parties or candidates can do, if they win government, in response to those issues:

- Why they should address the issue;
- What specific services, extension to services, programs, initiatives and so on you think the new Tasmanian Government should fund to help address the issue; and
- Discuss your issues of concern in more detail and make specific recommendations.

• *Seek a written commitment to your recommendation.* Ask the parties or candidates for a reply with a statement of their position on the issue you raise. If a commitment is made in writing, you will be able to use that to follow-up and continue to push for your issue to be addressed once the party or candidate that made the commitment is elected (even if they end up in opposition, you can use their commitment to encourage them to lobby the government for the change you are promoting).

**The impact of your lobbying will be stronger if you try to:**

- Stay focussed on your main point or on your organisation's area of concern and expertise;
- Keep it clear (if your letter runs over a page, consider using dot points to make your recommendations stand out);
- Provide supporting details where possible (examples from your organisation's experience can be particularly valuable as this adds a human face to the statistics);
- Prioritise your recommendations, listing the most important ones first; and
- Ask for a response.

If you would like further advice or to talk over your lobbying plans, please feel free to contact the TasCOSS team on (03) 6231 0755 or email [comms@tascoss.org.au](mailto:comms@tascoss.org.au). Good luck!



## Appendix A: Sample Letter

Utopia Healthy Living  
123 Bliss Lane, Utopia, TAS, 4444, AUS  
(03) 1234 5678 | ceo@utopiahealthyliving.org.au | utopiahealthyliving.org.au

*[Insert date]*

Dear *[insert candidate name]*,

Utopia Healthy Living is a community organisation that works to improve the health of the children of Utopia through diet and exercise. We conduct information programs at Utopia Primary School, where we also run a community garden and exercise programs — all on a voluntary basis.

While our programs have been showing clear success over the past three years, we believe they would be more effective if they were adequately resourced. Moreover, we would like to see similar programs introduced in primary schools across the country.

We write to urge you and your party to make a commitment to support education programs in schools that introduce children to the principles of healthy living. Utopia Healthy Living is very concerned about the impact of poor diets and lack of exercise on many Tasmanian children, particularly those living on low incomes. At Utopia Primary School we see many children who are not eating enough fruit and vegetables, partly because their families do not know about principles of healthy eating and partly because fruits and vegetables are very expensive at the local store.

We would like to see better Tasmanian Government support for educational programs to help Tasmanian families and children understand the importance of good diet and exercise and for community gardens to help families cope with high food prices. We urge you to make a commitment in this election campaign to address this issue by supporting the development of coordinated healthy eating education programs to be delivered in all Tasmanian schools.

We would like to hear your views on this issue and we would like to share your views with our members and the broader community. Please reply to this letter with your views on the issue.

Thank you and best wishes for your election campaign.

Yours sincerely,

XXXX XXXX  
Chief Executive Officer  
Utopia Healthy Living



## Appendix B: Media Contacts

### Media Releases:

- Mercury ([mercuryonline@news.com.au](mailto:mercuryonline@news.com.au))
- The Examiner ([news@examiner.com.au](mailto:news@examiner.com.au))
- The Advocate ([news@theadvocate.com.au](mailto:news@theadvocate.com.au))
- ABC News ([tasmania.news@abc.net.au](mailto:tasmania.news@abc.net.au))
- ABC Rural ([tasmania.regional.news@abc.net.au](mailto:tasmania.regional.news@abc.net.au))
- Seven Tasmania News ([7tasnews@sca.com.au](mailto:7tasnews@sca.com.au))
- WIN News Tasmania ([winnewstas@winnetwork.com.au](mailto:winnewstas@winnetwork.com.au))
- Tasmanian Broadcasters ([news@tasmanianbroadcasters.com.au](mailto:news@tasmanianbroadcasters.com.au))

### Letters to the Editor:

- Mercury ([mercuryledletter@themercury.com.au](mailto:mercuryledletter@themercury.com.au)) or [online](#)
- The Examiner ([editor@examiner.com.au](mailto:editor@examiner.com.au)) or [online](#)
- The Advocate ([letters@theadvocate.com.au](mailto:letters@theadvocate.com.au)) or [online](#)

### Talkback Radio:

- *ABC Radio Tasmania* Statewide Mornings with Leon Compton (8:30am-11am, Monday to Friday)
  - Frequency: Bicheno 89.7 FM, Burnie 102.5 FM, East Devonport 100.5 FM, Fingal 116.1 AM, Hobart 93.6 AM, King Island 88.5 FM, Lileah 91.3 FM, North-East Tasmania 91.7 FM, Queenstown/Zeehan 90.5 FM, Rosebery 106.3 FM, Savage River/Waratah 104.1 FM, St Helens 158.4 AM, St Marys 102.7 FM, Strahan 107.5 FM, Swansea 106.1 FM, Waratah 103.3 FM, Weldborough 97.3 FM
  - Talkback: 1300 222 936 (SOUTH) or 1300 361 688 (NORTH)
  - SMS: 0438 922 936 (SOUTH) or 0467 922 917 (NORTH)
- *Triple M* Breakfast with Kaz & Tubes (9am-9am, Monday to Friday)
  - Frequency: Hobart 100.3FM
- *LAFM* Mornings with Fairsy (9am-12noon, Monday to Friday)
  - Frequency: 89.3FM

### Hashtags:

- #politas
- #tasvotes