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Advocacy Bulletin: WRLA completes first-ever Manitoba Legislative Outreach Day

Five cabinet ministers. Four opposition MLAs. One party leader, and one deputy minister. That was the result of the Western Retail Lumber Association's inaugural Legislative Outreach Day, held at the Manitoba Legislative Assembly on Friday, November 18th.

WRLA President Liz Kovach and WRLA members spent all day at the Legislature, briefing government officials on the work of the organization and the concerns of its members, while working to cultivate positive relationships for the long term.

Kovach noted, "We wanted to familiarize legislators with our industry and its contemporary challenges. Those challenges include supply-chain bottlenecks, cost escalation, labour shortages, concerns around rail capacity, and the lack of trucking backhauls. We felt that leaders were responsive to our concerns."

It was also an opportunity to advocate for a home renovation tax credit, given its success in Saskatchewan, and that it can be a powerful economic tool during an economic downturn, which is widely expected to occur in the coming months.

Chris Lee, Area Sales Manager at Owens Corning, joined in the meetings, as did Greg Stevenson, Project Manager at Treaty One Building Supplies.

"Governments hear from a variety of interests and groups every day. Therefore, it is especially important that we make our voices heard. Our industry needs to be at the table," said Lee.

In addition to meeting Deputy Premier and Economic Development Minister Cliff Cullen, WRLA representatives met with Finance Minister Cameron Friesen, Environment Minister Jeff Wharton, Advanced Education and Immigration Minister Jon Reyes, and Natural Resources Minister Greg Nesbitt.



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On the opposition side, members also met Liberal Leader Dougald Lamont, and NDP MLAs Diljeet Brar, Matt Wiebe, Jamie Moses, and Lisa Naylor.

The Deputy Minister of Transportation, Sarah Thiele, and her staff also provided a meeting. An outreach day was also held in Saskatchewan on November 22nd.