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February Edition

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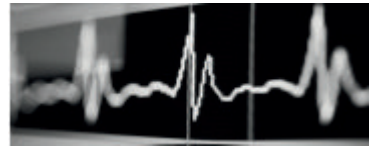
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The Outlook

Economic ([jump to](#)).

Trade interaction with development strategies, climate change, and financing for development takes centre stage as senior officials convene.

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Borders, bytes and trade agreements intersect as global experts work to modernize customs procedures and boost international transport. [Read more](#)

Uniting through diversity of tastes - representatives of wine regions come to Geneva to discuss trade barriers and their impact on micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. [Read more](#)

Global trade agenda takes shape as Ambassadors convene to tackle subsidies, e-commerce, and sustainability in the multilateral trading system in their first top-tier meeting since Trump took office. [Read more](#)

Road freight's future takes focus as experts forecast volumes, trends and opportunities for the EU and global markets. [Read more](#)

Industry leaders converge to unlock systemic efficiency, exploring innovative approaches to energy management, digital solutions and sustainable operations. [Read more](#)

Trade truths revealed: WTO shines a light on Ukraine's policies, testing the nation's commitment to global cooperation and economic transparency.

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Standards and Regulatory ([jump to](#)).

The customs process is adapting to an increasingly digital world with the further development of eTIR. [Read more](#)

Road and Rails: Experts meet to discuss how to ship to you your favourite food and other matters, and how to do it safely, sustainably and timely.

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Is driving in the snow dangerous? Less so if you have good tyres. These experts are keeping us safe while also considering measures to reduce vehicle noise emissions. [Read more](#)

Communications and Digital ([jump to](#)).

Shaping the next generation of mobile telecommunications, experts meet to refine technical frameworks for international mobile telecommunications (IMT) systems. [Read more](#)

Telecommunications experts tackle key issues in disaster management, AI and global communication standards. [Read more](#)

Principals from around the globe converge to tackle key telecommunications issues, shaping the future of ICT governance and innovation. [Read more](#)

Combatting counterfeits and refining standards take centre stage as telecommunications experts convene to drive innovation. [Read more](#)

Health ([jump to](#)).

Policy shifts and resilience challenges, shaping care and equity amid WHO's evolving dynamics of its biggest contributors engages in withdrawal process. [Read more](#)

Tackling big ideas for little ones—experts take on childhood obesity with plenty of food for thought. [Read more](#)

The adolescents are growing. Literally. Global experts convene to advance strategies for tackling adolescent obesity. [Read more](#)

For the world to enjoy immunization through vaccines, research is needed, and its global coordination and advice is vital. Experts shape the future of immunization research. [Read more](#)

Environment and Sustainability ([jump to](#)).

Endangered species are awaiting results of this pivotal week for international wildlife trade governance. [Read more](#)

Do you sometimes wonder what's in the truck next to you? You should, it can be toxic. A call to action for toxic trade regulation. [Read more](#)

A lot is traded, sometimes harming the environment, sometimes helping it. International trade experts discuss trade-related climate challenges. [Read more](#)

It would be great to turn tyre waste into sustainable solutions. That is a dream that experts want to make a reality around the globe, through technical guidelines. [Read more](#)

The world's use and movement of mercury is regulated, and it is essential to strengthening compliance to achieve a desired effect. [Read more](#)

What POPs? Not funny, although they sometimes pop. Experts meet to strengthen global fight against persistent organic pollutants (POPs). [Read more](#)

Social ([jump to](#)).

Why would one's (intellectual property) right matter if not enforced. Experts meet for an annual session to talk how to build respect and enforce intellectual property. [Read more](#)

If today rains, tomorrow we may go hungry. Global food experts gather to assess weather prediction tools to enhance food security and productivity. [Read more](#)

Civil society is part and parcel to international Geneva. And thus international Geneva's top official engages with civil society to gather their priorities and concerns. [Read more](#)

Global Labour Leaders Convene in Geneva to Enhance Access to Justice. [Read more](#)

Science and Technology ([jump to](#))

The leading international body in quantum physics explores its creative side, sharing how quantum science has permeated art, film, literature, philosophy and culture. [Read more](#)

The group of renowned experts tasked with managing one of the world's most prominent isotope separator facilities join minds to determine the near future of particle physics. [Read more](#)

Do you (want to) know what is the future of transport? The leading international authority on intellectual property shares its insights into the future of transportation technology and innovation. [Read more](#)

Leading particle physics experts join to discuss the latest breakthroughs in antimatter research. [Read more](#)

Intellectual property thought leaders make determinations on how best to advance the only system for global patents. [Read more](#)

Youth and Sports ([jump to](#))

The next generation of diplomats, executives and world leaders gathers in Geneva for an international model United Nations conference. [Read more](#)

Telecommunication Coordination Group Prepares for a Global Youth Summit. [Read more](#)

Humanitarian and Human Rights ([jump to](#))

Business and human rights - yin and yang. Experts convene to discuss business accountability, AI's human rights impact and protections for vulnerable groups. [Read more](#)

Experts converge to explore the intersection of human rights and environmental challenges ahead of Human Rights Council's 58th Session. [Read more](#)

Human rights defenders gather to spotlight global crises and advocate for marginalized voices at the Geneva Summit for Human Rights and Democracy. [Read more](#)

Another marathon session starts to tackle human rights crises, inclusion and accountability on the world stage. [Read more](#)

Questions? As you read the below, please do not hesitate to [contact one of the authors](#) for more information.

Economic

The United Nations (UN) Trade and Development ([UNCTAD](#)) Board [convenes](#) its 77th executive session from 3-5 February to address a comprehensive agenda. Key items include the adoption of the agenda and organization of work, interdependence and development strategies in a globalized world, and consideration of the Trade and Development Report 2024: Rethinking Development in the Age of Discontent. The board also discusses the Least Developed Countries Report 2024: Leveraging Carbon Markets for Development, the Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean 2024: Low-growth Trap, Climate Change and Employment Trends, and the preparatory process for the 16th session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. Additionally, reports from the Working Party on the Programme Plan and Programme Performance, the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Financing for Development, and other institutional, organizational, administrative and related matters are addressed.

The UN Economic Commission for Europe ([UNECE](#)) Working Party on Customs Questions affecting Transport [holds](#) its 168th session on 4 and 7 February. The provisional [agenda](#) includes items such as adoption of the agenda, election of officers, alignment of the Working Party's work with the Inland Transport Committee strategies, and discussions on various customs conventions and agreements, including the TIR Convention, Harmonization Convention and Customs Conventions on the Temporary Importation of Private and Commercial Road Vehicles. Other topics include the introduction of new technologies in transport, activities of other organizations and administrative matters.

Wine regions grouped under the [Wine Origins Alliance](#) hold a series of meetings with Ambassadors and senior officials at the WIPO and the WTO. A Roundtable in the WTO on February 14 invites participants to discuss the importance of international trade in allowing them to cater to wine supply chain businesses and consumers, as well as what the WTO Members can do to eliminate and avoid unnecessary barriers to trade and help sustain micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in the wine sector.

The World Trade Organization ([WTO](#)) General Council [meets](#) on 18-19 February to discuss various trade-related issues. The agenda includes matters such as the WTO Pension Plan, waivers under Article IX of the WTO Agreement and the review of WTO activities. The

council also discusses reports on trade negotiations, dispute settlement reform and fisheries subsidies. Additionally, members provide updates on various initiatives, including the implementation of the Agreement on Electronic Commerce and the development of sustainable agriculture in the multilateral trading system. The meeting also involves discussions on the appointment of officers to WTO bodies and the incorporation of new agreements into the WTO framework.

The International Road Transport Union ([IRU](#)) hosts a [briefing](#) on 18 February to discuss 2030 freight forecasts and trends for the European Union (EU) and beyond. The briefing features insights from key experts on topics such as EU road freight volumes, national distribution of road activity and 2030 road freight volumes forecasts. The briefing aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the latest road freight volume figures and projections to help industry stakeholders make informed decisions.

The UN's Economic Commission for Europe ([UNECE](#)) Industrial Energy Efficiency bi-monthly forum, [scheduled](#) for 19 February, explores structured approaches to achieving systemic efficiency and energy management in companies. The discussion focuses on the essential elements of these approaches, including energy and carbon management systems, key performance indicators, measurement and verification, and digital solutions. The forum aims to help companies develop and implement effective strategies to drive progress towards resilient and sustainable operations, and addresses key questions such as the importance of structured approaches, essential tools and frameworks, and integration of management systems and systemic efficiency principles.

The [WTO](#) conducts a trade policy [review](#) of Ukraine on 26 and 28 February. This review assesses Ukraine's trade policies and practices, based on reports from the WTO Secretariat and the Ukrainian government. The review process involves discussions among WTO members, with the goal of promoting transparency, accountability and mutual understanding. The outcome of the review is made available about six weeks after the meeting, including the chairperson's concluding remarks, minutes, and questions and answers. This review is part of the WTO's regular evaluation of member countries' trade policies, aiming to strengthen adherence to WTO provisions and facilitate the global trading system.

Standards and Regulatory



On 3 February the TIR Executive Board, a subsidiary body of the TIR Administrative Committee, meets in its 103rd session. The TIR Executive Board supervises and provides support in the application of the TIR procedure at the national and international levels. From 5 February through 6 February, the TIR Administrative Committee [meets](#) in the 85th session to [discuss](#) an array of issues, including the latest developments in computerizing the TIR procedure, referred to as eTIR. The meeting specifically deals with eTIR as it relates to the international system and its interconnection with nation customs systems. Finally, the meeting considers financing for eTIR.

From 11-14 February, the Inland Transport Committee holds its 87th session on the successes

and challenges for inland transport on the road to 2030. Throughout the session, experts report on road and rail transportation, inland water transport, road traffic safety, the transport of foodstuffs and dangerous goods, and more. Additionally, the agenda includes time for the consideration and adoption of the draft programme of work of the Transport subprogramme for 2025 and recommend the programme to the Executive Committee for approval.

From 18-21 February, the Working Party on Noise and Tyres of the Inland Transportation Committee holds its 81st session. In total, 10 UN Regulations are discussed, including regulations on noise emissions of three-wheel vehicles (UN Regulation No. 9) and motorcycles (UN Regulation No. 41). Other regulations considered relate to an array of different tyres such as those on passenger cars (UN Regulation No. 30), commercial vehicles (UN Regulation No. 54) and mopeds (UN Regulation No. 75). Finally, experts discuss tyre installation and the performance of tyres in the snow.

Communications and Digital



From 4-13 February, ITU's Working Party 5D (WP 5D) meets to advance International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT) systems, including IMT-2030 and beyond. Key topics include updates to WRC-27 agenda item 1.7 on sharing and compatibility studies in the 7,125-8,400 MHz band, considerations for maximum power flux density levels to protect terrestrial IMT systems, and techniques to mitigate interference in IMT networks. Discussions focus on technical performance requirements and methodologies to enhance compatibility and efficiency, with contributions from global stakeholders, including the UAE, Nokia and Ericsson. Interested parties can register here.

From 5-14 February, ITU-T Study Group 2 (SG2) meets to address operational aspects of telecommunications and ICTs. The agenda includes a proposed new work item on "AI for communications: Towards natural disaster management," updates from Canada on combating illegitimate calling, and amendments from the United Kingdom to definitions in ITU-T recommendations for identifiers. The United Kingdom also proposes additional numbering, naming, addressing and identification (NNAI) definitions. The meetings include inputs for the "Machine Learning Standardization Roadmap" and discussions from a focus group on artificial intelligence (AI)-native telecommunication networks. Interested parties can register here.

From 10-21 February, the first cluster of ITU Council Working Groups (CWGs) and Expert Groups (EGs) convenes to address operational, governance and policy priorities for telecommunications and ICTs. The meetings cover sessions on World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) implementation, updates on child online protection, discussions on Internet governance and deliberations on financial and strategic planning. Participants explore topics such as disaster response, AI integration in telecommunications, and revisions to international telecommunications regulations. Interested parties can find detailed agendas and registration information on the ITU website here.

From 19-28 February, ITU Study Group 11 (SG11) meets to address signalling requirements, protocols and combating counterfeit telecommunication/ICT devices. The agenda includes discussions on the group's structure, mandates and questions for the 2025-2028 study period, as outlined by the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA-24). Participants review templates for working party agendas and reports, leadership roles, and a special Bridging the Standardization Gap (BSG) training session on 19 February. Interested parties can find detailed agendas and registration information on the ITU website [here](#).

Health

The [156th session of the World Health Organization \(WHO\) Executive Board](#) takes place from 3-11 February. The [Executive Board](#), composed of 34 technically qualified members elected for three-year terms, focuses on advancing universal health coverage, addressing health emergencies and improving global well-being. Discussions include global health policy priorities, strategies to strengthen health systems, and initiatives that promote resilience and equity in health care delivery. The board's main functions are to implement the decisions and policies of the Health Assembly and to advise and facilitate its work. This session also tackles programmatic and budgetary issues amidst United States, the biggest contributor of the WHO, having started withdrawal from the organization.

The [8th Guideline Development Group meeting](#) on childhood obesity management takes place on 3-4 February. This meeting focuses on advancing WHO's guideline on the integrated management of obesity in children aged 0-9 years using a people-centred primary health care approach. Discussions [include](#) updates on the guideline development process, evidence advances from systematic reviews on behavioural and multimodal lifestyle interventions, and drafting potential guideline recommendations. The meeting aims to achieve consensus on the wording, strength and direction of these recommendations, aligning with global health goals to ensure healthier lives for all.

The 8th meeting of the Guideline Development Group for [Adolescent Obesity Management Guidelines](#) takes place on February 5-6. This meeting focuses on advancing the development of evidence-based strategies to address the growing global challenge of adolescent obesity. Participants, including global experts in adolescent health, nutrition and policy, evaluate the latest research, assess intervention strategies, and refine recommendations to improve prevention and management. The group aims to ensure the guidelines are actionable, equitable and aligned with broader public health priorities to combat this complex and widespread issue.

The Immunization and Vaccines-related Implementation Research Advisory Committee ([IVIR-AC](#)) holds its meeting from 17-21 February. This gathering brings together leading experts in immunization and vaccine research to review progress, evaluate new studies and provide strategic guidance on vaccine implementation. Key topics include optimizing vaccine delivery systems, addressing barriers to immunization in diverse contexts and leveraging research to inform global immunization policies. The committee's recommendations aim to strengthen immunization programmes worldwide and enhance the equitable delivery of life-saving vaccines.

The [78th meeting](#) of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) [Standing Committee](#) takes place from 3-8 February, to address critical issues in wildlife trade regulation and species conservation. Topics include compliance with the [Convention](#) and preparations for the [20th Conference of the Parties \(CoP20\)](#). Discussions focus on species-specific issues like elephants, pangolins and sharks, and tackle pressing compliance concerns in countries such as Ecuador, Peru and Guinea. The Committee also explores topics like the trade in stony corals, the impact of wildlife crime enforcement, and the role of CITES in reducing zoonotic disease risks.

On 4 February, an event hosted by the [Geneva Environment Network](#) sheds light on the ongoing toxic trade in lead chromates. Despite their severe health impacts, including permanent brain damage and cardiovascular issues, lead chromates remain in use in paints in many countries. Experts discuss findings from an [International Pollutants Elimination Network \(IPEN\)](#) report, highlighting the export of lead chromates from countries like the EU to nations without adequate restrictions. The event emphasizes the need for listing lead chromates under the [Rotterdam](#) and [Stockholm Conventions](#) to strengthen regulatory frameworks and protect vulnerable populations globally.

The WTO [Trade and Environment Thematic Session on Trade-Related Climate Measures](#) convenes on 4 February. This session explores how WTO policies align with climate action and address environmental concerns without fostering trade protectionism. On 13 February, the [Dialogue on Plastics Pollution and Environmentally Sustainable Plastics Trade \(DPP\)](#) meets to advance WTO efforts in combating plastic pollution. Key agenda items include harmonizing trade-related measures for single-use plastics, supporting the UN's legally binding instrument on plastic pollution and enhancing international standards for sustainable alternatives. Delegates discuss challenges in implementing trade measures and fostering global cooperation to curb plastic pollution.

The [Small Intersessional Working Group \(SIWG\)](#) under the [Basel Convention](#) convenes 17-19 February, to draft updated technical guidelines for the environmentally sound management of used and waste pneumatic tyres. These guidelines address the significant environmental and health risks posed by improperly managed tyres, including waterway blockages and fire hazards. The outcomes guide countries in implementing sustainable practices and align with Basel Convention standards.

The [7th meeting of the Implementation and Compliance Committee](#) of the [Minamata Convention on Mercury](#) takes place from 18-20 February, focusing on strengthening compliance and supporting effective implementation of global mercury regulations. Key discussions include Mexico's submission addressing its compliance under Article 15, with strategies to meet obligations on mercury use and trade, and an analysis of the second short national reports submitted by Parties, focusing on reporting performance and mercury trade data. The Committee addresses lessons from other multilateral environmental agreements and best practices for enhancing compliance and enforcement.

From 20-21 February, the [Basel Convention](#) Working Group on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) gathers to update technical guidelines for managing POPs wastes. These chemicals, known for their long-term environmental and health risks, are the focus of efforts to minimize their production, trade and disposal. The updated guidelines align with both the [Basel](#) and [Stockholm Conventions](#) to enhance global governance on POPs.

Social

From 4 -6 February, policymakers, enforcement officials, and intellectual property (IP) experts convene in Geneva for the [Seventeenth Session of the Advisory Committee on Enforcement](#) (ACE) organized by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). Global stakeholders gather to discuss strategies for building respect for IP, combating counterfeiting and piracy, and strengthening enforcement mechanisms. Delegates examine legal frameworks, technological advancements, and international collaborations aimed at safeguarding IP rights and fostering innovation.

From 10-12 February, experts from the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Commission for Observation, Infrastructure and Information Systems (INFCOM) and the Commission for Weather, Climate, Hydrological, Marine and Related Environmental Services (SERCOM), convene for their [Global Food Pilot](#). Members examine the utility of and challenges associated with existing weather prediction tools with the goal of developing a global riverine flood prediction product.

On 17 February, the [Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva](#) (UNOG), Tatiana Valovaya, hosts the annual meeting with civil society representatives to discuss important global issues, exchange perspectives, and gather input on potential solutions.

From 17-21 February, representatives from governments, employers, and workers' organizations gather for the International Labour Organization's (ILO) [Tripartite Technical Meeting on Access to Labour Justice for All: Prevention and Resolution of Labour Disputes](#). This meeting aims to develop comprehensive policy recommendations to ensure inclusive access to labour justice through effective dispute prevention and resolution mechanisms, considering diverse legal frameworks and best practices.

Science and Technology

From 29 January to 2 February, the European Organization for Nuclear Research ([CERN](#)) invites artists, researchers and the public to explore the intersection of science and art through its "[Arts at CERN](#)" programme. This event showcases collaborative works inspired by CERN's cutting-edge research in particle physics, highlighting how art can foster new insights into scientific discovery. Participants engage in discussions and presentations that highlight the creative processes behind artworks born from the world of quantum physics.

From 5-6 February, [CERN](#) ISOLDE and Neutron Time-of-Flight Committee ([INTC](#)) hosts a [meeting](#) featuring technical and physics reports from the ISOLDE and n_TOF facilities, two of the most advanced physics research technologies in the world. Committee members also provide presentations on groundbreaking developments in some of the most pressing subjects facing physics research today.

The World Intellectual Property Organization ([WIPO](#)) launches its Technology Trends ([WITT](#)) [Report on the Future of Transportation](#) on 6 February, providing both reflection on modern trends and a glimpse into the future of transportation innovation. While attendees discuss the hopes of technological progress in transportation, they also confront and anticipate the challenges of an evolving field that is critical to human success.

From 11-12 February, [CERN](#)'s Super Proton Synchrotron and Proton Synchrotron Committee ([SPSC](#)) [comes together](#) to discuss the latest groundbreaking achievements of CERN's antiproton decelerator, a hallmark of antimatter research. Discussing the status of current technologies and the progress of ongoing experiments, they make waves in one of the most tantalizing fields of particle physics.

From February 18-20, [WIPO](#) hosts the [18th session](#) of the Patent Cooperation Treaty ([PCT](#)) [Working Group](#) to discuss the international methodology for protecting invention and innovation. The group analyses the modern trends of international patents, plans for protecting the technologies of tomorrow, and elects the next leaders of international intellectual property policy.

Youth and Sports



From 10-14 February, youth delegates gather in Geneva for the Geneva International Model United Nations Annual Conference ([GIMUN](#)). The five-day conference brings together university-level students from across the world to deliberate global conflicts and simulate multilateral cooperation. These simulations prepare the students for their professional future in diplomacy and beyond. As the next generation of peacemakers and negotiators, they come to Geneva to have their views and arguments tested.

On 17 February, the Informal Coordination Group of the Telecommunication Development Advisory Group ([TDAG-ICG-GYS](#)) convene virtually to finalize plans for the upcoming [Global Youth Summit](#) scheduled for 11-13 March 2025. This meeting aims to refine the summit's scope and program, ensuring meaningful engagement of young leaders in global telecommunications development.

Humanitarian & Human Rights



The 40th Session of the [Working Group on Business and Human Rights](#) takes place from 3-7

February in Geneva, and builds on key discussions from its [previous session](#). The agenda addresses ongoing thematic priorities, including business accountability in human rights, the impact of artificial intelligence and the rights of vulnerable groups such as migrants and LGBTI individuals. Stakeholders continue deliberations on thematic reports, country visits and regional forums, fostering collaboration to advance the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

The Geneva Environment Network hosts a [conference](#) titled, “Human Rights and the Environment: Meeting on Activities Related to 58th Session of the Human Rights Council,” on 6 February. The conference explores environmental themes within the 58th session of the Human Rights Council (HRC58). With a focus on climate change, environmental protection and their intersection with human rights, this session includes insights from experts like Ben Schachter, Richard Ncube, Viktoria Aberg and Jan Harvey Parafina. The conference facilitates collaboration and information-sharing among stakeholders addressing critical environmental challenges. The event takes place in person at the International Environment House in Geneva and streams online using Webex.

The [Geneva Summit for Human Rights and Democracy](#), on 18 February in Geneva, gathers activists, political prisoners and human rights champions to highlight urgent global crises. With a focus on themes like dissent in authoritarian regimes, resilience in conflict zones and the rights of marginalized groups, the event amplifies voices from across the globe. The event takes place alongside the UN Human Rights Council session to highlight critical issues for world leaders.

The 58th Session of the Human Rights Council takes place from 24 February to 4 April in Geneva and addresses a broad spectrum of critical global human rights issues. It examines country-specific situations, such as ongoing crises in Myanmar, Afghanistan, Sudan and Ukraine, alongside thematic discussions on genocide prevention, cultural heritage, and economic and social rights in the informal economy. Panels highlight rights of marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities and children, with debates on digital inclusion, countering cyberbullying and early childhood development. The session aims to foster accountability, enhance international cooperation and promote robust human rights frameworks. Please find the session agenda [here](#), the draft programme of work [here](#) and the list of reports [here](#).

Key Contacts

If you have any questions, please contact:



Jan Walter
[Email](#)
Geneva
+41 22.888.2042



Alan Yanovich
[Email](#)
Geneva
+41 22.888.2034

Contributors

Brandon Brodwater

Lobbying & Public Policy Fellow

Stuart Grow

Lobbying & Public Policy Specialist

Lucas Chapman

Lobbying & Public Policy Resident

Sharan Kumar

Lobbying & Public Policy Specialist

Siva Cidambaram

Lobbying & Public Policy Specialist

Maria Velasco Posada

Lobbying & Public Policy Fellow

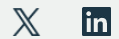
Patrick Gaul

Lobbying & Public Policy Specialist

Evan Sarnor

Lobbying & Public Policy Specialist

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