

Tourism Funding: 2015-2016 Executive State Budget Proposal

- **I Love NY / Matching Grant Program:** The 2015-2016 Executive Budget Proposal sustains the funding levels from last years enacted State Budget. The Governor proposes funding I Love NY at \$2.5M for the coming year \$3.815M for the Matching Grants program. Further, the welcome centers in Binghamton and Beekmantown were funded at their historical levels of \$196,000 each.
 - **The Senate concurs with the Governor’s proposal and provides an additional \$500,000 for the Matching Grants program. The Senate also restores funding (\$10,000) for the Finger Lakes Alliance.**
 - **The Assembly concurs with the Governor’s proposal**

- **Regional Economic Development Councils:** The industry supports the Governor’s proposal that will launch a fifth round of the Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) grants, and very much wants to keep tourism as be part of the process and focus of every region of the state. Through the first 4 rounds of the REDC process, a common theme amongst all the plans from western New York to the tip of Long Island was the importance of tourism as part of any plan for economic recovery and job creation.
 - **The Senate concurs with the Governor’ proposal**
 - **The Assembly rejects the Governor’s proposal**

- **Market NY / Taste NY:** In addition to the I Love NY and Matching Grant programs, the 2015-2016 Executive Budget proposal provides additional funding for tourism initiatives:
 - **Market NY:** The State will make available \$5 million in new competitive funding to be provided through the Department of Economic Development (DED) to support winning tourism marketing plans that best demonstrate regional collaboration among counties to promote regional attractions.
 - **The Senate concurs with the Governor’ proposal**
 - **The Assembly rejects the Governor’s proposal**
 - **Taste-NY:** The State will make available \$1.1 million to implement the Taste-NY initiative, which is designed to promote locally grown or produced food products, beer, wine and spirits or other New York-made goods through a two-part strategy that combines development of retail venues with aggressive marketing and branding. In high traffic rest areas, train stations and airports across New York, the State will establish “Taste-NY”-branded retail stores, carts, and next-generation luxury vending machines to sell predominantly New York State products free of all sales tax to the consumer.
 - **The Senate concurs with the Governor’ proposal**
 - **The Assembly concurs the Governor’s proposal**