



2014 Legislative Tourism Committee Members

Assembly Tourism Committee

Committee Chair: **Margaret Markey (D- Queens)**

Committee Members:

Ken Blakenbush (R-Carthage)
 John Ceretto (R-Niagara Falls)
 Patricia Fahy (D-Albany/Guilderland)
 Didi Barrett (D-Hudson Valley)
 Mark Gjonaj (D-Bronx)
 Aileen Gunther (D-Monticello)
 Chad Lupinacci (R-Huntington Station)
 John McDonald(D- Albany)
 Steve McLaughlin (R-Castleton-on-Hudson)
 Bill Nojay (R-Henrietta)
 Daniel O'Donnell (D-Manhattan)
 Steve Otis (D-Rye)
 Dan Quart (D-Manhattan)
 Sam Roberts (D-Syracuse)
 Linda Rosenthal (D-Manhattan)
 Frank Skartados (D-Newburgh)
 Dan Stec (R-Glens Falls)
 Al Stirpe (D-Syracuse)
 Matthew Titone (D-Staten Island)

Senate Tourism Committee:

Chair: **Elizabeth Little (R-Glens Falls)**

Committee Members:

John Bonacic (R-Mt. Hope)
 Joseph Griffo (R-Rome)
 Mark Grisanti (R-Buffalo)
 Brad Hoylman (D-Manhattan)
 Tim Kennedy (D-Buffalo)
 Carl Marcellino (R-Nassau/Suffolk)
 Kathleen Marchione (R-Saratoga)
 Ted O'Brien (D-Rochester)
 Patty Ritchie (R-Watertown)
 Jose Serrano (D-Manhattan)
 Terry Gipson (D-Dutchess/Putnam Counties)

TIC MEMBERS

Albany County CVB
 Michele Vennard

Campground Owners of NY
 Donald Bennett, Jr.

Canal NY
 Vicky Daley/Rick Rivers

Dutchess County Tourism
 Mary Kay Vrba

Finger Lakes Tourism Alliance
 Cynthia Kimble

Finger Lakes Wine Country Tourism Marketing Association
 Laury Ellen Poland

Hotel Association of New York City
 Joseph Spinnato, Esq., CAE

Ithaca/Tompkins County CVB
 Bruce Stoff

Long Island CVB & Sports Commission
 R. Moke McGowan

Museumwise: The Museum Association of NY
 Catherine Gilbert

New York Power Authority
 Steve Ramsey

NYC & Company
 Fred Dixon

NYS Destination Marketing Organizations
 John Percy

NYS Hospitality & Tourism Association
 Jan Marie Chesterton

NYS Restaurant Association
 Melissa Fleischut

NYS Tourism Promotion Agencies Council
 Herb Clark

Oneida County Tourism
 Kelly Blazosky

Otsego County Tourism
 Deborah J. Taylor

Saratoga Convention and Tourism Bureau
 Todd Garofano

Ski Areas of New York, Inc.
 Scott Brandi

Sullivan County Visitors Association, Inc.
 Roberta Byron-Lockwood

Syracuse CVB
 David Holder

The Business Council of New York State, Inc.
 Heather Jung

Tourism is Big Business

- Estimated **818,700 Jobs** were sustained by tourism in 2013*.
- New York State tourism generates **\$7.2 Billion** in state and local taxes.
- The tourism economy reached a new high in 2012 with **\$57.3 Billion** in traveler spending.
- Tourism is the fifth-largest employer in New York State.
- 8% of all New York State employment is sustained by tourism.

*NYS Department of Labor



Tourism Action Day
 March 4, 2014



TOURISM INDUSTRY COALITION
 Tourism is the *heart* of the Economy

Representing the state's **tourism industry** on key legislative and regulatory issues.



Hospitality & Tourism

ISSUES

Funding Support

Given the Matching Grant Program's track record as a revenue source for State and Local governments, as well as a job generator, tourism is not only a wise investment, but a critical one that yields unmatched and well-sustained returns for New York's economy. The industry supports the 2014-2015 Executive Budget proposal that allocates **\$3.815M for the Matching Grant Program** plus an additional **\$2.5M for the I ♥ NY Program**. In addition to these key programs, the tourism industry supports the \$5M allocation for Market NY and the \$1.1M for Taste NY which are also included in the Governor's Budget Proposal.

Industry Participation

The tourism industry, New York's 5th largest employer, intends to meet with state legislators and key administration officials to help find the best ways to allocate tourism funding to maximize its return on investment.

In Governor Cuomo's State of the State he addressed the tourism industry's 2013 successes as a result of the \$60 million invested in various tourism programs and allocations. The **sustainability of this funding** is tied to continued industry participation in high-profile tourism events and summits, as they provide a chance for continued partnerships to market and promote all of New York.

Support Round 4 of REDC

Governor Cuomo has called for a 4th round of Regional Economic Development Councils. It is critical that the tourism projects continue to be emphasized during this 4th round. There is widespread support of the 2014-2015 Executive Budget proposal that allocates \$150M in new

economic development capital funding and \$70M in State tax credits that are available for the 4th round of Regional Economic Development Councils.

Support Round 2 of Tourism Related Summits

In 2013, the State held the Adirondack Challenge and summits relating to Tourism, Beer/Wine, Parks/Trails. It is encouraging to see the Governor's plan to hold round 2 of these summits as well as the Governor's Bass Master Challenge to be held on Owasco Lake in 2014. The events and summits provide a chance for continued partnerships to market and promote all of New York.

Promote Private Sector Investment and Job Creation

The state's business community calls on New York's legislative leaders to continue to promote private sector investment and job creation by improving the state's business climate and removing barriers to economic growth. It is important for New York to maintain its focus on state spending restraint and broad-based reforms.

State Investment and Strategic Direction

Increased tourism marketing for both domestic and international visitors will have a strong return on investment. The Governor's plan to attract more New York City based travel into Upstate will yield an economic benefit to the entire Upstate region.

There is a need to establish an inclusive, statewide, strategic tourism vision to address the need for coordinating local, regional and state tourism marketing, product development and organizational efforts. This action will enhance the tourism programming of all organizations and provide valuable guidance for constructing tactical solutions that address tourism industry needs across the state. We support the proposed \$5 million advertising competition for the best regional marketing plans to further the strategic vision and economic benefits.

Mandated Helmet Use

The impact of winter tourism is sometimes overlooked. Winter is viewed by some as a time to head south or to hunker down in front of a fire. But to skiers and riders, winter is a time to enjoy the 52 ski areas, most of any state in the nation, in New York State. NYS is 4th in the nation in skier visits with over 4,000,000 visits per season. The economic impact during the four months of winter to upstate NY is over \$1 billion.

Mandated helmet use has been a legislative issue for years. Well intentioned, mandatory, helmet bills with major negative operational implications are regularly introduced. Most of these bills require the operator to enforce helmet use but include no provision, funding or understanding as to how this can be effectively accomplished.

Wine Trails

Expand and update wine trails across the state to account for the growing number of vineyards; allow for future updates to be done on a regular basis, to be determined by department of transportation.

Signage

Consistent regional directional signs are needed throughout the state to highlight wineries, distilleries, breweries, farms, accommodations, attractions and restaurants, similar to signage in Vermont.

Modify Lien Law for Campground Owners

Support (Assembly A07308 – Sponsor A Russell / S A07308 – Sponsor – S Little) bill which would modify the lien law to incorporate and give guidance to Campground Owners when the customer of the campground is in arrears of camp fees and leaves their RV behind (Abandonment) the unit due to financial reasons. This enables the campground owner to reclaim the campsite and remove the guests property from the campsite.

New York State Convention Center / The Albany Capital Center

Approval to proceed with a Convention Center in Albany was provided by the Executive Branch in 2013. Construction is expected to commence in 2014 and completion is scheduled for mid 2016. It will be important for this new facility to work closely with both the county owned Times Union Center, The Empire State Plaza and Egg as well as the adjacent Renaissance Hotel to achieve maximum economic impact. It is also imperative that the Legislature, both county and state, work together to assure the successful reauthorization of the 6% hotel occupancy tax before its expiration at the end of 2014. These funds are used for marketing and research, debt service on the Times Union Center and for the planning and operations of the new center. Any time gap in this funding would be detrimental to all facilities. The NYS Assn of Counties is asking that counties be allowed to renew their existing local sales tax rates without state legislative approval and extend this to other home rule (such as hotel occupancy tax) revenue options.

Illegal Hotels

The Hotel Association of New York City, Inc. continues to support the City of New York and its efforts to eliminate illegal hotels while doing so practically, allowing well-established legal hotels to convert their certificates of occupancy and remain in compliance. Further, the association supports the city's ongoing efforts to enforce **City and State regulations** and impending fines that hold these illegal hotels accountable.

Hotel Occupancy Taxes and the Hospitality Industry

It is imperative that counties and the state legislature work together to assure that imposed hotel occupancy taxes are used for purposes that sustain and grow New York's travel and tourism industry. Many hotel occupancy taxes now sunset every two years so that open lines of communication about the importance of hospitality and a transparent process of reauthorization is vital.