



TOURISM WORKS

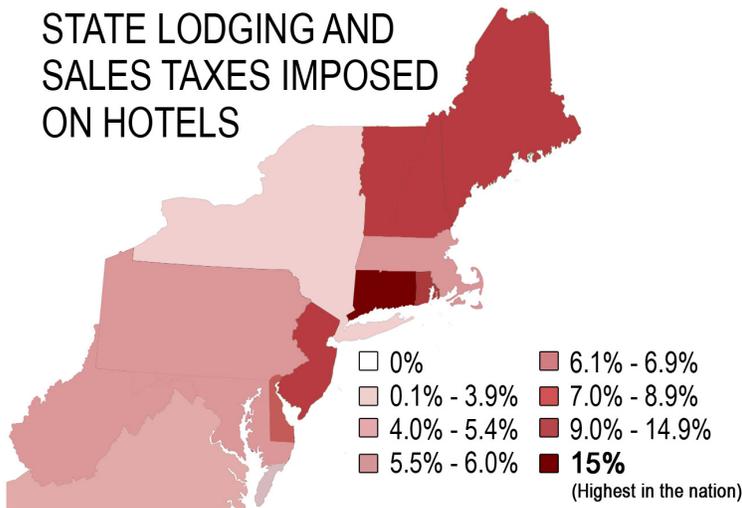
By John Bourget, *President, Witan Intelligence*

Many experts have measured the rate of return for Connecticut's investment in tourism as a 3:1 ratio. This means that for every \$1 of tourism spending, the state receives \$3 back in the form of tax revenue. With nothing in the state's portfolio that has the potential to return more cash, or be as reliable an investment as tourism, any financial investor would maximize this opportunity today.

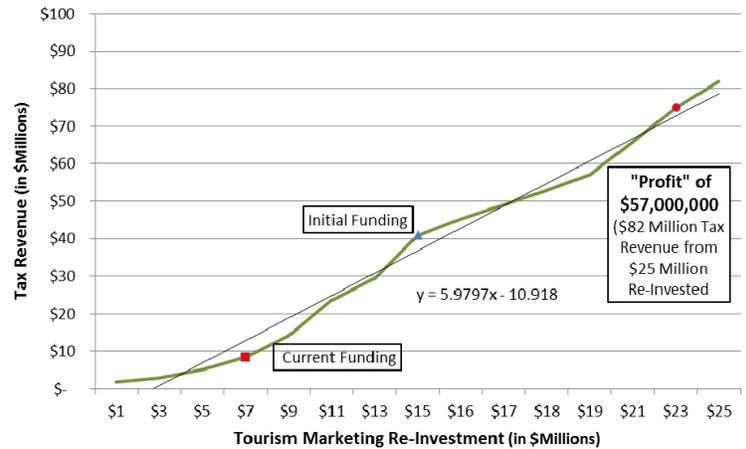
In fact, the tourism industry in Connecticut pours \$1.6 billion into the state's treasury, and a conservative projection shows that proper re-investment would pump another \$82 million, netting an extra \$57 million in cash for urgent needs like healthcare, transportation, safety and social services.

Of course, tax revenue is a fraction of the full economic impact. Tourism is an open hydrant in Connecticut directly flooding hundreds of thousands of jobs and spewing billions of value at double-digit rates of return. In contrast with other industries, tourism's revenue comes from nearly every sector of the Connecticut economy, supporting the quality of life that we all share, while attracting employees and employers from every industry to our state.

STATE LODGING AND SALES TAXES IMPOSED ON HOTELS



Increase of Tax Revenue From Tourism Re-investment



It's ironic that there's any debate about funding tourism because it pays for itself. Even novice investors understand the power of dividend reinvestment. Recognizing that Connecticut's 15% lodging tax (highest in USA) is counter-competitive, re-investing a small share for marketing will keep the cash revenue flowing smoothly.

Governor Malloy's predecessors cut tourism funding, not understanding its life-saving potential. But once aware that tourism is among only a few ways to fund urgent needs, the Governor wisely reinstated its potential. Unfortunately, today's budget cuts are taking their toll. Research shows falling indicators like awareness and intent-to-visit, and we're already seeing fewer visitors and revenue as competitor states like New York, Massachusetts and Rhode Island work hard to seduce our millions in traveler spending.

In short, by establishing a tourism investment account with 3% of the taxable lodging revenue to be used by the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development for tourism investment and marketing, the tourism industry would be able to help boost Connecticut's economy by increasing jobs and expanding revenues.

The smart move now is to revitalize the state's overall budget by recharging the tourism line item. Harnessing this power is the only way we will be able to change tide in favor of our state's future.



JOIN US

We invite our members and elected officials to join us on Monday, April 24 in Room 1D at the Legislative Office Building as we rally support for a more reliable source of annual funding for tourism and greater pro-business policies in Connecticut.

While the current administration has done a fine job at increasing the tourism funding, more needs to be done. We are requesting that 3% of the taxable lodging revenue in Connecticut be used to establish a dedicated source of reliable funding for tourism. This will enable the industry to better assist government leaders in boosting the state's economy by increasing jobs and expanding revenues.

The time to act is now. Neighboring states like New York, Massachusetts and Rhode Island are beginning to spend considerably more to lure tax revenue away from our state.

We can't afford to let this happen.

Come see how tourism can be a real solution for our state, and return millions in spendable dollars to help alleviate needs in transportation, infrastructure, education and healthcare.

Mark your calendar for **Tourism Advocacy Day** at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford on Monday, April 24.



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: FOX HOPYARD GOLF COURSE

With 530 acres of rolling hills, dense forest, open pastures, running brooks, ponds, wetlands, rock outcroppings and stone walls, the Fox Hopyard golf course winds through the various areas seamlessly and effortlessly affording a myriad of different looks and feels. Roger Rulewich has masterfully crafted a collection of holes that gives guests the feel of playing through the mountains of Vermont, the lowlands of Kiawah and the links of Scotland all in one round.

The Hopyard is a complete golf operation. At the heart of it is a private membership and lifestyle. Visitors are also welcome to enjoy the course and its facilities. The culmination of a quality golf course, practice areas, facilities and staff make it a perfect venue to host outings. All of our programs, including merchandising, instruction, junior golf, tournaments and food & beverage – are among the finest you can find anywhere.

Fox Hopyard is located in East Haddam, Connecticut adjacent to the Devil’s Hopyard State Park at the junction of Routes 82 & 156. The setting is rural but the location is a just a short drive to area attractions such as the Connecticut shore, Gillette’s Castle and Goodspeed Opera House.

The Clubhouse, which sits upon a 30-foot rock ledge, features a large outdoor pavilion, members-only locker rooms and popular On The Rocks restaurant. From the clubhouse, there is a commanding southwest view of the 9th, 15th to 18th holes, as well as the practice area and five-acre pond.

Fox Hopyard is a wonderful place to gather and contemplate a round of golf, have a drink, lunch or dinner or celebrate a special occasion. The spacious and private setting make for an ideal place for weddings, receptions, reunions, birthday parties, baby showers and the like. It is also a terrific venue for small business meetings.



CHAMPION OF TOURISM: STATE SENATOR ART LINARES



Representing the 33rd Senate District, which encompasses the towns of Chester, Clinton, Colchester, Deep River, East Haddam, East Hampton, Essex, Haddam, Lyme, Old Saybrook, Portland, and Westbrook, State Senator Art Linares works hard to build a strong and vibrant Connecticut economy. This includes making higher education affordable for all state residents.

Sen. Linares is Co-Chairman of the Higher Education and Employment Committee, which oversees all legislation related to the Board of Regents for Higher Education and the Office of Higher Education. The committee also presides over bill impacting any post-secondary education institutions, job-training institutions and programs, apprenticeship-training programs, and adult job training programs offered to the public by any state agency or funded in any way by the state.

An Assistant Senate Republican Majority Leader, Sen. Linares also serves as Vice-Chairman of the Commerce Committee, and is a member of the Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee and the Transportation Committee. He intends to work through these committees to pass legislation that will create a more business-friendly climate in the state, stabilize the state budget, and reduce state spending.

In 2016, Sen. Linares was honored to be named a Children’s Champion by the Connecticut Early Childhood Alliance for his leadership on issues related to the state’s young children. He also was named Latino Citizen of the Year in 2015. Sen. Linares is proud of legislation he helped pass to increase the Manufacturing Apprenticeship Tax Credit and his work to pass legislation that would reduce regulations on small businesses. He helped pass an amendment that will allow Haddam residents with polluted wells to gain access to municipal water and legislation he authored to build a new high school in Clinton. In addition, he is glad he was able to partner with constituents in the Bashan Lake area to create legislation that gives residents more input regarding the maintenance of the lake to keep it a healthy, vibrant greenspace.

Sen. Linares’ values stem from his family’s history. The grandson of Cuban exiles, he grew up in a household headed by parents who were both small business owners. Sen. Linares was inspired by his parents’ successful businesses to start his own business out of the basement when he was 19 years old.

Sen. Linares co-founded Greenskies, a successful, Middletown-based, commercial solar energy company. The company was named one of the best places to work in Connecticut in the Hartford Courant’s 2016 Top Workplaces list and was the 2015 Solar Power World and SEIA Top Solar Contractor of the Year. It also received the Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce Technology Business of the Year award and in 2016, Sen. Linares was named by Hartford Business Journal as one of the 40 Under 40 outstanding young professionals in the state.

Sen. Linares first became involved in politics as a volunteer for U.S. Senator Marco Rubio in Washington D.C. After gaining hands-on experience in public service by helping the Senator Rubio’s constituents, he was inspired to find a way to serve the people of Connecticut.

Sen. Linares attended Westbrook public schools and graduated from the Sykes College of Business at the University of Tampa in Florida, where he majored in entrepreneurship, developing his own company as he earned a college degree.

