



JOIN US FOR TOURISM ADVOCACY DAY

In light of today's challenging economic climate, the need for tourism is now.

The Connecticut Tourism Coalition (CTC), an alliance of advocates from all sectors of the Connecticut tourism industry, is encouraging our elected officials to embrace tourism as solution for their fiscal challenges. The advocacy group is hosting a rally at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford on Monday, April 24 to advocate for greater public support of the industry.

The day begins in Room 1D at 9:30 a.m. with registration and welcoming remarks by Stephen Tagliatela, President of CTC and State Senator Paul Formica, Co-Chair of the Legislature's Tourism Caucus. From there, representatives of CTC will testify before the Tourism Caucus, and meet individually with their local legislators advocating for a more sustainable source of annual funding for tourism in Connecticut.

The time to act is now. Neighboring states like New York, Massachusetts and Rhode Island begin spending considerably more to lure tax revenue away from our state. We anticipate New York stealing revenue from Fairfield County with its \$55 million budget, while Rhode Island comes after our visitors to Mystic Country with its \$5 million in tourism spending.

We can't afford to let this happen.

While this current administration has done a fine job at increasing the tourism funding in the current proposed budget from \$6.5 million to \$8.3 million, more needs to be done in order to better tap the potential economic impact of tourism in Connecticut.



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 our government leaders to boost our state's economy, increase jobs, and expand revenues.

In 2010, when the Occupancy Tax went from 12% to 15%, that 3% increase went directly into a dedicated source of funding for tourism. That worked for the first year, but then that revenue went into the general fund. Now, we're asking for our State Legislature to fulfill its 2010 pledge and give the tourism industry back what it promised.

The Governor and General Assembly recognized it then, and it still has merit today -- the value of tourism is powerful in Connecticut when it comes to generating tax revenue and reducing unemployment. As they may remember that investment yielded positive results.

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 in Hartford on Monday, April 24.



TOURISM ADVOCACY DAY

Monday, April 24, 2017

Legislative Office Building • Room 1D • Hartford, Connecticut



Christine Chesanek.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: FROMAGE FINE FOODS

Located in Old Saybrook, Fromage Fine Foods has been a destination for connoisseurs of fine foods on the Connecticut Shoreline for the past 19 years.

"Tourism is a major economic driver for my business and our community. It keeps small businesses thriving in Connecticut," said Christine. "More tourists equals more revenue for the state and our local citizens."

Founded by owner Christine Chesanek shortly after she graduated from Villanova University, the original store started as a quaint location always packed with people looking for Christine's expertise on which cheese to choose for their gathering. Then after 11 years, it was finally time for a change.

Fromage moved into a new location in May 2004 and instantly tripled its size. The new store allowed for a wider selection of cheeses, meats, coffees and a variety of gourmet items. Thousands of people a year flock to Fromage for their distinct fine cheeses and gourmet items. This includes loyal locals, as well as first time visitors and seasonal travelers.

Fromage Fine Foods is a one-stop shopping destination on the Connecticut shoreline for cheeses, coffees and gourmet items.



CHAMPION OF TOURISM: REPRESENTATIVE CAROLINE B. SIMMONS

Representing the 144th district in Stamford, Connecticut, State Representative Caroline Simmons is a strong proponent of tourism in Connecticut with keen policy efforts that support business growth, job creation, and economic development.



"Tourism has been a fast-growing segment of Connecticut's economy," said Representative Simmons. "It generates over \$14 billion in economic impact and 118,000 jobs in our state. From north to south and east to west, there are so many wonderful attractions to see in our state and supporting tourism also helps protect and preserve our natural resources and historic sites."

As Chair of the Commerce Committee, she leads a bipartisan effort to bring real solutions to businesses in Connecticut. This includes business growth and job creation, working tirelessly with all stakeholders on pro-business, pro-job growth policies to bolster our state's economy.

In the past, Simmons has worked for the Women's Business Development Council in Stamford where she helped provide entrepreneurial, financial, and professional development training programs for women in Connecticut.

Previously, she worked at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). As Director of Special Projects in the Counterterrorism Coordinator's Office, Simmons provided support for DHS's domestic and international counterterrorism programs. She helped support DHS's programs and budget for its homeland security team in Kabul, Afghanistan, and traveled to Kabul multiple times in connection with this work. Simmons also worked to enhance the Department's countering violent extremism and active shooter awareness and response training for state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement officers.

Before this, Simmons interned at the U.S. Department of State for the Middle East Partnership Initiative within the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, where she assisted with economic empowerment programs in the Middle East.

Representative Simmons is also Co-Chair of the Connecticut Young Democrats' Women's Caucus, and a member of the Stamford League of Women Voters and the Southwest CT Chapter of the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence.

The Connecticut Tourism Coalition applauds her efforts to bolster and strengthen the Connecticut economy.

