



IT'S TIME TO SPEAK OUT

Next week's the big day: 2018 Tourism Advocacy Day. This is our chance to meet with lawmakers, leaders, and members of the press to share the benefits of tourism to our economy and find solutions to the challenges we face. I hope you can join us on Wednesday, April 11th at 10 AM at the Legislative Office Building for a panel discussion, Q&A session, and one-on-one breakout meetings with lawmakers.

These meetings are more important than ever. With the 2018 election fast approaching, we need to make sure incumbents and candidates alike understand that tourism is a smart investment with a 3:1 rate of return.

To that end, the Coalition has already begun meeting with lawmakers in Hartford, including Senate President Pro Tempore Martin Looney and Majority Leader Bob Duff. We've also started meeting with gubernatorial candidates and others seeking statewide office. Our members had the chance to hear from some we've met with so far—Sean Connolly, Luke Bronin, Oz Griebel, Tim Herbst, and David Walker—at our board meeting last month. Additionally, we've met with Mark Boughton, and we'll continue to set up interviews with candidates in the coming weeks.

Going forward, we'll be profiling candidates who respond to our questionnaire and let us know where they stand on tourism. The first of these profiles can be found in this month's newsletter.

Thank you for all you've done to take a stand for our industry. I hope to see you on Wednesday so we can continue the fight for the good jobs and great opportunities tourism can bring.

Sincerely,

Stephen Tagliatela
President



SAVE THE DATE: April 11 • Starting at 10am
TOURISM ADVOCACY DAY
Legislative Office Building • Hartford

For more information about the CT Tourism Coalition or to become a member, please visit tourismCT.com



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: THE COPPER BEECH INN

The historic Copper Beech Inn dates back to 1889, when Archibald Welsh Comstock built a grand manor on 53 acres in the portion of Essex known as Ivoryton. The son of the renowned Samuel Comstock—a prominent importer of ivory and manufacturer of piano keys—Archibald inherited the family business and expanded its product line to include billiard balls, domino tiles, and combs.

When Archibald passed away in 1940, his wife Harriet inherited his estate. It was one of the highest valued properties in Essex, and sold in 1958 where it was transformed into the Johnny Cake Inn.

Unfortunately, the inn faced hard times and was eventually forced into foreclosure in 1966. It would be another 6 years before it was purchased again, this time by Wethersfield natives Robert and Jo McKenzie in 1972.

Drawing inspiration from the majestic Copper Beech tree rooted alongside the entrance to the property, the McKenzies renamed it the Copper Beech Inn. The McKenzies set about recapturing the former glory of the historic inn's past.

The Copper Beech Inn flourished under their stewardship. It is now renowned for its superb cuisine, gracious atmosphere, and historic charm. For the past 40 years, the Copper Beech Inn has welcomed guests from near and far. It is the perfect spot for a weekend getaway, first-class meal, honeymoon, or special event.

Now owned by Coalition Board Member Frank Perotti, the Copper Beech Inn continues to shine. With access to nearby Mystic, the beautiful Connecticut River Valley, local shops and attractions, outdoor activities, and more, there is something for everyone at the Copper Beech Inn.



DECISION 2018: SEAN CONNOLLY

A decorated Iraq War veteran and current Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve, Sean Connolly brings military, business, and public service experience to his candidacy for Governor. He worked his way up the ranks of Pratt & Whitney and most recently served as Commissioner of Connecticut's Department of Veterans Affairs.



The son of a working-class Irish immigrant, Sean grew up in East Hartford and learned the value of hard work from an early age. His father owned and operated a small landscaping business, and his grandparents worked in maintenance and at the Pratt & Whitney factory. Sean got his first job at 15, washing dishes at Beefsteak Charlie's to help his family pay the bills and help pay for college.

After serving seven years on active duty in the U.S. Army—during which time he earned the Bronze Star, four Meritorious Service Medals, the Iraqi Campaign Medal, and the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal—Sean worked in Washington as a Homeland Security and Government Contracts attorney for an international law firm. But his heart remained in Connecticut, and in 2010, he returned to his home state after taking a job at Pratt & Whitney.

Sean rose to the rank of Global Ethics and Compliance Officer at the same company where his grandfather was once the groundskeeper. Like his grandparents and parents, Sean and his wife chose Connecticut as the place they would stay and raise their family.

Connecticut took note of Sean's track record for success, and he was appointed to run the Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs. There, Sean modernized transitional housing and veterans services. He created partnerships with sister state agencies and nonprofits to give our veterans more services and higher quality care. He won additional funding from the federal government through competitive grants to update decaying infrastructure—all while operating under a shrinking budget from the state.

Sean values service above politics. He is a member of American Legion Post 95 in Hebron, the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 8776 in Hebron, the 101st Airborne Division Association, the Association of the United States Army, and the Army Aviation Association of America. He also served as an elected member of the National Board of Directors of the Federal Bar Association and is a past President of the Pentagon Chapter of the Federal Bar Association.

A graduate of the U.S. Army War College, Bryant University, and the Catholic University of America's Columbus School of Law, Sean has the experience and drive to lead Connecticut from the front.

As a candidate, Sean has pledged to dedicate 3% of total taxable lodging revenue to tourism funding. He supports the creation of a Tourism Advisory Committee that reports directly to the Governor, and is committed to re-opening our Visitors Centers.

