



JOBS, JOBS, JOBS

It's no secret that tourism is a significant economic driver in Connecticut. But we need to be reminded of its power. According to the state's Office of Tourism, 82,500 jobs are supported by the tourism industry with more than 120,000 total jobs in the tourism sector. The Connecticut Tourism Coalition believes these numbers are actually far greater, especially when you consider all of the outside industries that touch tourism. This includes retail, lodging, restaurant, recreation, real estate, and transportation.

In 2015, according to Tourism Economics – an Oxford economics company, travelers to Connecticut sustained a total of 121,527 jobs, with associated income of \$5.2 billion, as traveler-supported employment represented 5.3% of all employment in the state at the time. In terms of taxes, travel in Connecticut generated \$910 million in state and local taxes, and \$778 million in federal taxes. And if you were to remove state and local taxes generated by travelers, each Connecticut household would have needed to pay \$675 to fill the gap in 2015.

So why would anyone not want to invest in tourism knowing that it will return millions more in spendable dollars?

As one of the state's largest employers, tourism should be seen as an investment – a real solution to the state's economic woes.

While this current administration and legislative body has done a fine job at proposing increases to tourism funding, it's still not enough, especially when you see what our competition is doing.



The Connecticut Tourism Coalition strongly urges the Connecticut General Assembly to act quickly on future funding of tourism in the state. The situation is urgent and immediate.

Neighboring states like New York, Massachusetts and Rhode Island are increasing their tourism marketing dramatically, and they are going to eat our lunch. They're starting to spend considerably more to lure away tax revenue from our state.

The Coalition recently learned that New York has committed \$69.5 million to promote New York as tourism destination. And no doubt, they're coming after us. We can't afford to let this happen.

The State Legislature should pass legislation that commits just 3% of the taxable lodging revenue collected in Connecticut to be used for funding the promotion of Connecticut tourism. This will help bring travelers and traveler-spending to Connecticut.

By harnessing the power of tourism, we're going to change the tide in favor of Connecticut's future, but we need the help of our State Legislature. We implore them to act quickly and commit to tourism in Connecticut.

Let's do this together.



Tourism budgets of neighboring states

\$55 million
(announced for FY17)



\$13 million
(Fiscal Year 16)



\$11 million
(Fiscal Year 16)



\$5 million
(Fiscal Year 16)



\$5 million
(Fiscal Year 16)



\$4 million
(Fiscal Year 16)



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



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: CONNECTICUT RESTAURANT ASSOCIATION

The Connecticut Restaurant Association is full service, nonprofit trade association dedicated to support every type and size of restaurant. They are advocates for the Connecticut restaurant industry, a hub for information and a platform for networking.

As a vital member of Connecticut's tourism industry, restaurants are a driving force in Connecticut's economy. They provide jobs and build careers for hundreds of thousands of people. Restaurants also play a vital role in the development and vitality of local communities throughout the state. Some interesting facts include:

- 7,877 eating and drinking locations in Connecticut in 2017
- 154,100 restaurant and foodservice jobs in Connecticut in 2017, which represents 9% of employment in the state
- By 2027, employment is projected to grow by 7.1%, which equals 11,000 additional jobs, for a total of 165,100
- \$7.5 billion projected sales in Connecticut's restaurants in 2017

The Connecticut Restaurant Association, in partnership with the National Restaurant Association, offers career development programs that are producing the next wave of restaurant industry professionals and food safety programs that protect the health and safety of consumers. Nearly 1 in 10 American workers is employed in the restaurant industry; many on track for success in the industry thanks to widespread training and career growth opportunities.

A career ladder for millions of employees of all ethnicities and backgrounds, Connecticut's restaurant industry offers exceptional opportunities for professional development.



CHAMPION OF TOURISM: STATE SENATOR HEATHER SOMERS

Representing the 18th district, which includes the picturesque towns of Griswold, Groton, North Stonington, Plainfield, Preston, Sterling, Stonington and Voluntown, State Senator Heather Somers Republican Majority Whip, and serves as a member of the Appropriations Committee. She is also Republican Vice Chair of the Environment Committee, Education Committee and Higher Education Committee.

A native and resident of Groton, Senator Somers was elected in November 2016. She was appointed Republican Co-Chair of the Public Health Committee, which has cognizance of all programs and matters relating to the Department of Public Health, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Department of Developmental Services and Office of Health Care Access. The committee also has jurisdiction on matters relating to emergency medical services, all licensing boards within the Department of Public Health, nursing homes, pure food and drugs, and controlled substances, including the treatment of substance abuse.

Previously, Senator Somers served for five terms on the Groton Town Council, and served as Mayor for the Town of Groton from 2011-2013. As Mayor, she established an Energy Efficiency Task Force to evaluate energy saving initiatives throughout the town. She spearheaded a School Planning Task Force to address the issues of racial imbalance and aging school infrastructure, and worked tirelessly with the town council to deliver the citizens of Groton two tax decreases during her tenure.

A true champion of tourism in Connecticut, Senator Somers is working to develop and implement the kind of overdue policies needed to improve the state's business climate. She serves as a member of the State Commission for Economic Competitiveness, and is a founding partner of Hydrofera, a medical device manufacturer that employs nearly 100 people in Windham County.

Senator Somers is the recipient of the Medical Device Excellence Award (2000) and a Silver Award Winner for the Connecticut Women of Innovation Awards (2007). She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Economics from the University of Connecticut and resides in Groton with her husband Mark Somers and three children.

