



# Senate

General Assembly

**File No. 302**

February Session, 2000

Substitute Senate Bill No. 599

*Senate, March 29, 2000*

The Committee on Commerce reported through SEN. LEBEAU of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

## ***An Act Concerning Weighted Tourism Voting.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. The Connecticut Tourism Council, in consultation with  
2 the Department of Economic and Community Development, the Office  
3 of Tourism, shall conduct a study examining the redistricting of  
4 tourism districts for the purpose of distributing funds to the districts  
5 based on their tourism assets. Said council shall report its findings and  
6 recommendations to the joint standing committee of the General  
7 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to commerce on or  
8 before January 1, 2001.

9 Sec. 2. Subsection (b) of section 32-302 of the general statutes is  
10 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof:

11 (b) Each tourism district shall have a board of directors consisting of  
12 one representative from each municipality within the district, [with a  
13 population less than sixty-five thousand and two representatives from

14 each municipality within the district with a population greater than  
15 sixty-five thousand,] The board shall also consist of additional  
16 municipal representatives, the total of which shall equal the total  
17 number of municipalities within the district. Each municipality shall  
18 have an additional representative in proportion to its share of the  
19 revenue generated within the district by sales within the meaning of  
20 subdivision (h) of subsection (2) of section 12-407, as amended, by any  
21 hotel or lodging house. The municipal representative shall be  
22 appointed by the board of selectmen of towns, the council or board of  
23 aldermen of cities or the board of burgesses of boroughs. Any such  
24 director shall serve for a term of three years. In addition, the board of  
25 directors [may] shall appoint up to twenty-one persons representing  
26 tourism interests in each municipality within the district to serve on  
27 the board and the number of such members from each municipality  
28 shall be in proportion to the share of revenue generated within each  
29 municipality of the district by sales within the meaning of subdivision  
30 (h) of subsection (2) of section 12-407, as amended, by any hotel or  
31 lodging house. All appointments to the board of directors shall be  
32 reported to the director of the Office of Tourism. A tourism district  
33 shall indemnify any director or employee of such district for liability  
34 imposed by law for negligent acts or omissions.

**CE Committee Vote:** Yea 13 Nay 9 JFS

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

---

**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:** Minimal

**Affected Agencies:** Department of Economic and Community Development

**Municipal Impact:** Minimal

**Explanation**

**State Impact:**

Requiring the Tourism Council, with consultation by the Department of Economic and Community Development, to study the redistricting of tourism districts is anticipated to minimally increase the workload within existing resources.

**Municipal Impact:**

Changing the criteria for allocating seats to the tourism boards would minimally increase the workloads in some towns due to additional membership on a board and minimally decrease others.

---

**OLR Bill Analysis**

sSB 599

**AN ACT CONCERNING WEIGHTED TOURISM VOTING.****SUMMARY:**

This bill changes the criteria for allocating seats on the boards of directors that govern the state's 11 regional tourism districts. The districts receive a share of the state's revenue from the sales tax on lodgings. The state identifies the tax revenue from each town and allocates a portion of it to the district based on each town's population.

The bill eliminates the assignment of municipal representatives' seats based on population. Instead, it allocates seats to the municipal and tourism industry representatives in proportion to the share of the tax revenue the district receives from each of its member towns.

The bill requires, instead of allows, the municipal members to appoint up to 21 tourism industry representatives. And it requires the municipal representatives to appoint the tourism industry representatives from each town in proportion to the share of the revenue generated by each town.

The bill also requires the 14-member Connecticut Tourism Council to determine if district boundaries can be redrawn so that each district receives revenue based on its respective tourism assets. The council must consult with the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) and report its findings and recommendations to the Commerce Committee by January 1, 2001.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2000

**TOURISM DISTRICT BOARDS OF DIRECTORS**

The bill changes the criteria for allocating seats on the districts' boards of directors. Current law gives towns with populations under 65,000

one seat and those over this number two. Local legislative bodies or boards of selectmen appoint the municipal members, who serve three-year terms. The municipal members can appoint to the board up to 21 people representing the district's tourism industry. Current law does not apportion these members by town or specific tourism industry sector, such as hotels, restaurants, or museums.

The bill allocates seats to the municipal and tourism industry representatives based on the share of the district's revenue that was generated in each town. It fixes the number of municipal representatives at twice the number of towns in the district. It gives each town one representative and apportions the remainder based on the share of the revenue the town generates. The districts range in size from the five-member Central Connecticut District to the 26-member Litchfield Hills District.

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***Tourism Districts***

The state's 11 tourism districts are:

1. Greater Fairfield, consisting of Bridgeport, Darien, Easton, Fairfield, Greenwich, Monroe, New Canaan, Norwalk, Stamford, Stratford, Weston, Westport, and Wilton;
2. Greater Waterbury, consisting of Beacon Falls, Middlebury, Naugatuck, Oxford, Seymour, Thomaston, Waterbury, Watertown, and Wolcott;
3. Greater New Haven, consisting of Ansonia, Bethany, Derby, East Haven, Hamden, Milford, New Haven, North Branford, North Haven, Orange, Prospect, Shelton, Trumbull, West Haven, and Woodbridge;
4. Connecticut Valley, consisting of Branford, Chester, Clinton, Cromwell, Deep River, Durham, East Hampton, Essex, Guilford, Haddam, Killingworth, Madison, Meriden, Middlefield, Middletown, Old Saybrook, Portland, Wallingford, and Westbrook;
5. Southeastern Connecticut, consisting of Bozrah, Colchester, East Lyme, Franklin, Griswold, Groton, Ledyard, Lisbon, Lyme, Montville, New London, North Stonington, Norwich, Old Lyme, Preston, Salem, Sprague, Stonington, Voluntown, and Waterford;

6. Litchfield Hills, consisting of Barkhamsted, Bethlehem, Bristol, Canaan, Colebrook, Cornwall, Goshen, Hartland, Harwinton, Kent, Litchfield, Morris, New Hartford, New Milford, Norfolk, North Canaan, Plymouth, Roxbury, Salisbury, Sharon, Southbury, Torrington, Warren, Washington, Winchester, and Woodbury;
7. Central Connecticut, consisting of Berlin, Cheshire, New Britain, Plainville, and Southington;
8. Greater Hartford, consisting of Andover, Avon, Bolton, Burlington, Canton, East Hartford, Ellington, Farmington, Glastonbury, Hartford, Hebron, Manchester, Marlborough, Newington, Rocky Hill, Simsbury, South Windsor, Vernon, Tolland, West Hartford, and Wethersfield;
9. Northeast Connecticut, consisting of Ashford, Brooklyn, Canterbury, Chaplin, Columbia, Coventry, Eastford, Hampton, Killingly, Lebanon, Mansfield, Plainfield, Pomfret, Putnam, Scotland, Sterling, Thompson, Union, Willington, Windham, and Woodstock;
10. Housatonic Valley, consisting of Bethel, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Danbury, New Fairfield, Newtown, Redding, Ridgefield, and Sherman; and
11. Tobacco Valley, consisting of Bloomfield, East Granby, East Windsor, Enfield, Granby, Somers, Stafford, Suffield, Windsor, and Windsor Locks.

### ***Tourism Council***

The council consists of state officials and tourism industry representatives and, together with DECD's Tourism Office, prepares the state's strategic tourism plan, oversees the districts, and funds regional tourism activities. To perform these tasks, they receive the revenue generated by the \$1 per day surcharge on passenger motor vehicles rented or leased for fewer than 30 days.

### **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Commerce Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute Report

Yea 13 Nay 9

