

Eleanor Berman

505 East 79th Street, New York, NY 10075

(212) 734-4686

February 12, 2009

To members of the Appropriations Committee:

This letter is to express my strong support for regional tourist offices in Connecticut. Having experienced press trips in Connecticut and in many states as a free lance writer for many years, I can say without question that for travel writers, no centralized state office can effectively replace the work of regional offices. The intimate knowledge of each region means that press trips are far more productive, visiting not only the obvious sites but also interesting lesser known places that only local residents can know about. It is much easier to place stories thanks to these visits. And the press information, event calendars and web sites they provide are always more complete and informative than statewide materials can be.

Local offices also are invaluable to writers because they provide story ideas. Since they are in constant contact with their sources, they quickly spot new trends. They know immediately when new attractions, lodgings and restaurants are coming, and can alert writers when the openings are fresh news. Also, because regional offices have personal contact with inns and hotels, it is always much easier to get help if a writer wants to plan an individual trip.

I believe you will find that travel press coverage of Connecticut will dwindle noticeably if the regional offices disappear, negating any savings for the state if these offices are eliminated.

Sincerely,
Eleanor Berman