

“Good Evening my name is Lauren Sposato; I am the Executive Director of the Clinton Chamber of Commerce. I am here to testify against the proposed budget cuts on tourism.

When pulling up the homepage of the Town of Clinton the first thing you read is a brief description of the town that reads as follows:

“A picturesque New England town, Clinton is a wonderful place to live and work. Clinton has an estimated population of 13,500 which almost doubles in size during the summer months as visitors flock here to enjoy our sunny beaches, antiques, historic buildings and New England charm.”

To repeat: The town actually doubles in size during the summer months solely due to tourism.

From Clinton Crossing Premium Outlets to small mom and pop shops everyone benefits from Tourism in the town of Clinton, in fact everyone relies on it for survival.

The winter time is tough for business owners. The money they make in the summer alone gets them through those times. Steve Sinni owner of Chips Pub 3 says he makes up to 20% more in the summer months than he does the remainder of the year.

Cathy Wagner of Abell Buell Home Bed and Breakfast states she gets 75% more business in the summer and the majority is from tourists. She states that “people want to come to Connecticut for the small charming businesses that give Connecticut the character it’s known for”

To affect tourism in a negative way would be devastating to an already fragile economy along the Connecticut Shoreline. To take away the money our businesses rely on from the tourists would essentially put them out of business.

The ripple affect created by this budget cut will create waves; waves that will crash down on small businesses.

I would like to finish with a quote I read recently that says “Small Businesses are the heartbeat of your neighborhood, the spine of your local economy, and the spirit of your town”

With that being said, let’s not forget about our heartbeat, our spine, and our spirit.

Thank you for your time.”