

VISIT NEW HAVEN

**Testimony of Barbara Malmberg, Director of Marketing for Visit New Haven in
support of the Regional Tourism District Funding and CT Tourism Marketing
Funding to the Appropriations Committee
February 8, 2016**

Dear Senator Bye and Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee:

I am writing in strong support of fully funding of state tourism marketing and the regional tourism districts.

The mission of the Visit New Haven (VNH) is to promote the Greater New Haven region as an ideal leisure and business destination to the regional, national, and international markets in order to favorably impact the regional economy. Specifically, the goal of VNH is to generate overnight business at hotels, motels or bed & breakfasts in the region, which in turn will increase business at restaurants, attractions, shops and other retail establishments, thereby enhancing the economic fabric of the region. VNH focuses on attracting leisure travelers, motorcoach groups, meetings and conferences and major sporting events and tournaments.

As I am sure you know, the hotel occupancy tax is 15%, the highest state hotel tax in the nation. In 2012, the tax increased from 12% to 15%. That same year state \$15 million dollars was allocated at the state level with approximately \$1.5 million to the three tourism districts. In 2015, the tourism industry generated \$812 million in tax revenue and is the only sector where employment has returned to its pre-recession levels.

Our state is competing with 49 other states for domestic travel dollars. We must continue to market Connecticut as both a great destination and a desirable place to do business. As many restaurants and shops are small businesses, their contribution is core to differentiating our state from the competition.

On behalf of the Visit New Haven and our constituents, I thank you for your time and urge your approval of full funding of the tourism marketing at both the state and district level.

Sincerely,



Barbara Malmberg
Director of Marketing



CONNECTICUT

LODGING ECONOMIC OVERVIEW 2015*



AMERICA'S HOTELS: STRENGTHENING THE ECONOMY IN EVERY STATE.

Connecticut's hotels are an important segment of the state's economy. **4.8%** of all jobs in the state are directly or indirectly related to the lodging industry, as part of the greater travel sector, with hotels, motels, resorts, or lodges helping to generate **\$812 million** in tax revenue for state and local governments.

Many of our properties are small businesses, a segment of the economy responsible for **49.2%** of jobs in the state.

Our industry reaches far beyond just providing our guests with comfortable rooms or convenient meeting spaces—we are interlinked with many other industries, such as transportation, restaurants, agriculture, manufacturing, and recreation supporting **\$1.7 billion** in total sales throughout the state.

STATE ECONOMIC FACTS



11,586
LODGING JOBS IN 2014

\$361 MILLION
IN EMPLOYEE WAGES



368
LODGING PROPERTIES

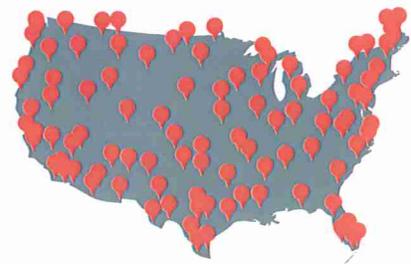
37,811
HOTEL ROOMS

*Figures are derived from industry statistical research, Small Business Administration, STR, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau data, U.S. Travel Association, World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), and DKSA. Figures are based on properties with 15 rooms or more, as of July 2014.

AMERICA'S LODGING INDUSTRY

2015 BY THE NUMBERS*

53,432 LODGING PROPERTIES IN THE U.S.



4,978,705

GUESTROOMS IN U.S. LODGING PROPERTIES



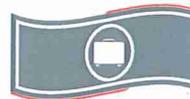
1.9 MILLION

EMPLOYED BY HOTEL PROPERTIES WITHIN THE TRAVEL & TOURISM INDUSTRY



4.8 MILLION

AVERAGE NUMBER OF GUESTS EACH NIGHT IN ALL COMBINED U.S. HOTELS



\$1.4 TRILLION

TRAVEL REVENUE GENERATED THROUGHOUT THE ECONOMIC CHAIN OR 8.0% OF GDP



\$280.2 BILLION

SPENDING BY BUSINESS TRAVELERS IN 2014



\$176 BILLION

TOTAL LODGING SALES REVENUE IN 2014



\$141.5 BILLION

COMBINED TAX REVENUE GENERATED EACH YEAR BY BUSINESS TRAVEL