

Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Council
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To the Connecticut Appropriations Committee:

Financial sustainability in Mashantucket and surrounding communities has long relied on the strength of tourism and related industries, a notable aspect of the recent economic recovery statewide.

Collectively, all tourism destinations have been able to make a significant impact on Connecticut's tourism brand and ultimately on businesses in the tourism industry and beyond. Reducing tourism marketing funding will prove to have irreparable damages on Connecticut's tourism brand that will cause destinations to lose traction in the marketplace. Tourism is the backbone of our state's economic position, which is why we have partnered with Mohegan Sun to keep tourism revenue in the state of Connecticut.

Recently implemented marketing strategies have already proven effective by driving additional visits, and revenue, to the state. For example, 73% of people who saw the *Still Revolutionary* tourism advertising campaign took action as a result of the ad. 25% of those people actually visited Connecticut as a direct result of the ad, which is a 78% increase over 2014. The 78% increase led to an additional twenty-two million dollars in revenue in the state of Connecticut. This number will only continue to grow as the Connecticut tourism campaign matures and becomes an integral part of our state's tourism brand.

Tourism in Mashantucket generated the revenue necessary to build and maintain the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center (MPMRC). The MPMRC serves as the primary resource on the histories and cultures of Native Americans in the northeast and on the region's rich natural history. Additionally, MPMRC serves as an educational tourism destination for industry professionals throughout the world, local schools and general visitors.

Growing the tourism marketing budget is the principal influence that determines the size and behavior of this major global market. I emphatically request that the Appropriations Committee consider the significance of tourism in Connecticut and subsequently appropriate the proper funding to tourism marketing.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best,

Rodney Butler
Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Council Chairman