



Substitute Senate Bill No. 1024

Public Act No. 19-101

AN ACT CONCERNING A MATCHING GRANT PROGRAM IN REGIONAL TOURISM DISTRICTS.

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

Section 1. Section 10-397 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

(a) There are established three regional tourism districts, each of which shall promote and market districts as regional leisure and business traveler destinations to stimulate economic growth. The districts shall be as follows:

(1) The eastern regional district, which shall consist of Ashford, Bozrah, Brooklyn, Canterbury, Chaplin, Colchester, Columbia, Coventry, East Lyme, Eastford, Franklin, Griswold, Groton, Hampton, Killingly, Lebanon, Ledyard, Lisbon, Lyme, Mansfield, Montville, New London, North Stonington, Norwich, Old Lyme, Plainfield, Pomfret, Preston, Putnam, Salem, Scotland, Sprague, Sterling, Stonington, Thompson, Union, Voluntown, Waterford, Willington, Windham and Woodstock;

(2) The central regional district, which shall consist of Andover, Avon, Berlin, Bethany, Bloomfield, Bolton, Branford, Canton, Cheshire, Chester, Clinton, Cromwell, Deep River, Durham, East Granby, East

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Haddam, East Hampton, East Hartford, East Haven, East Windsor, Ellington, Enfield, Essex, Farmington, Glastonbury, Granby, Guilford, Haddam, Hamden, Hartford, Hebron, Killingworth, Madison, Manchester, Marlborough, Meriden, Middlefield, Middletown, Milford, New Britain, New Haven, Newington, North Branford, North Haven, Old Saybrook, Orange, Plainville, Portland, Rocky Hill, Simsbury, Somers, South Windsor, Southington, Stafford, Suffield, Tolland, Vernon, Wallingford, West Hartford, West Haven, Westbrook, Wethersfield, Windsor, Windsor Locks and Woodbridge; and

(3) The western regional district, which shall consist of Ansonia, Barkhamsted, Beacon Falls, Bethel, Bethlehem, Bridgeport, Bridgewater, Bristol, Brookfield, Burlington, Canaan, Colebrook, Cornwall, Danbury, Darien, Derby, Easton, Fairfield, Goshen, Greenwich, Hartland, Harwinton, Kent, Litchfield, Middlebury, Monroe, Morris, Naugatuck, New Fairfield, New Hartford, New Milford, New Canaan, Newtown, Norfolk, North Canaan, Norwalk, Oxford, Plymouth, Prospect, Redding, Ridgefield, Roxbury, Salisbury, Seymour, Sharon, Shelton, Sherman, Southbury, Stamford, Stratford, Thomaston, Torrington, Trumbull, Warren, Washington, Waterbury, Watertown, Weston, Westport, Wilton, Winchester, Wolcott and Woodbury.

(b) Each regional tourism district shall be overseen by a board of directors consisting of one representative from each municipality within the district, appointed by the legislative body of the municipality and, where the legislative body is a town meeting, by the board of selectmen. Any such member of a board of directors shall serve for a term of three years. In addition, the board of directors may appoint up to twenty-one persons representing tourism interests within the district to serve on the board. No board member shall be deemed a state employee for serving on said board. All appointments

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to the board of directors shall be reported to the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development.

(c) The provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, as defined in section 1-200, shall apply to each regional tourism district.

(d) Each tourism district shall adopt a charter and bylaws governing its operation.

(e) Each regional tourism district shall (1) comply with uniform standards for accounting and reporting expenditures that are established by the Department of Economic and Community Development in accordance with section 10-392 and are based on industry accounting standards developed by the International Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus or other national organizations related to tourism, and (2) on or before January first of each year, submit to the department, the Office of Policy and Management and the Office of Fiscal Analysis an independent audit in accordance with the provisions of sections 4-230 to 4-236, inclusive.

(f) Each regional tourism district shall solicit and may accept private funds for the promotion of tourism within its towns and cities and shall coordinate its activities with any private nonprofit tourist association within the district and within this state, that promotes tourism industry businesses in this state, in order to foster cooperation in the promotion of such businesses. Any funds received by a regional tourism district may be deposited in the account established in section 10-395 or in an account established by such tourism district to receive such funds.

(g) The central regional district office shall be located within the department.

(h) The commissioner shall, within available appropriations, distribute tourism funding evenly among the three tourism districts.

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(i) Each regional tourism district may establish and administer a matching grant program for any tourism industry business, tourism destination, or not-for-profit arts and culture organization that has received private funds for the marketing of such business, destination, organization or regional tourism district. Such grants shall be used for the marketing of such business, destination, organization or regional tourism district.

Approved June 28, 2019