



Substitute House Bill No. 5432

Special Act No. 24-2

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM PLAN FOR THE GREATER MYSTIC AREA OF THE TOWNS OF GROTON, NEW LONDON AND STONINGTON.

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

Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a working group to develop an economic development and tourism plan for the greater Mystic area. For the purposes of this section, "the greater Mystic area" means the towns of Groton, New London and Stonington. Such plan shall include, but need not be limited to, the following:

(1) Proposals for projects to develop and expand tourist destinations in the greater Mystic area;

(2) Initiatives to promote tourism in the greater Mystic area through marketing campaigns, events and partnerships with local businesses and tourist attractions;

(3) A proposal for developing a multimodal transportation center in the greater Mystic area;

(4) An examination of transportation options to ease traffic congestion, which may include, but need not be limited to, water taxis,

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parking areas and structures, bike lanes, trolley services, train access and related options;

(5) An analysis of alternatives to alleviate parking and traffic pressure in the greater Mystic area, with a focus on green transportation;

(6) An examination of the feasibility of dredging the Mystic River and the Thames River for transportation purposes;

(7) The identification of permits that may be required of the state, towns, the public or businesses to implement the projects proposed by the working group;

(8) Proposals for strengthening public safety in the greater Mystic area;

(9) Proposals for developing the workforce in the greater Mystic area;

(10) An examination of ways to utilize tax revenue to benefit the greater Mystic area;

(11) The consideration of (A) areas in the greater Mystic area identified as likely to be inundated during a thirty-year flood event by the Marine Sciences Division of The University of Connecticut in the most recent sea level change scenario published by the division pursuant to subsection (b) of section 25-680 of the general statutes, (B) the potential impact of such flood event on tourist attractions in such areas, and (C) ways to address any such potential impact;

(12) The identification of any federal or state funding opportunities for investments in the Greater Mystic tourism sector, transportation sector or climate resilience infrastructure made available by (A) the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, P.L. 117-58, as amended from time to time, (B) the Inflation Reduction Act, P.L. 117-169, as amended from time to time, or (C) state grants; and

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(13) An analysis of the costs of implementing the projects proposed by the working group.

(b) The working group shall consist of the following members:

(1) The chairpersons of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to commerce;

(2) The ranking members of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to commerce, or their designees;

(3) A representative of the eastern regional district, established pursuant to section 10-397 of the general statutes;

(4) A representative of an organization that advocates for business and tourism in the greater Mystic area;

(5) A representative of an organization that advocates for hospitality and restaurant businesses in the greater Mystic area;

(6) A representative of an organization that advocates for climate resilience and sustainability in the greater Mystic area;

(7) A representative of the local traffic authority of the town of Groton;

(8) A representative of the local traffic authority of the town of Stonington;

(9) A representative of an historic district in the greater Mystic area;

(10) A representative of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribe;

(11) A representative of the Mohegan Tribe of Indians of Connecticut;

(12) Five representatives of different tourist attractions in the greater

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Mystic area;

(13) A representative of a regional council of governments serving the greater Mystic area;

(14) A representative of the town of Groton;

(15) A representative of the town of Stonington;

(16) A representative of the town of New London;

(17) A representative of the office of the Governor, who shall be appointed by the Governor;

(18) The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development, or the commissioner's designee;

(19) The Commissioner of Transportation, or the commissioner's designee;

(20) The Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection, or the commissioner's designee;

(21) The Commissioner of Revenue Services, or the commissioner's designee;

(22) The chief elected official of Groton, or the official's designee;

(23) The chief elected official of Stonington, or the official's designee;
and

(24) The chief elected official of New London, or the official's designee.

(c) The chairpersons of the working group shall appoint the members described in subdivisions (3) to (16), inclusive, of subsection (b) of this section.

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(d) Any member of the working group appointed under subdivision (4), (5), (6), (9), (12), (14), (15) or (16) of subsection (b) of this section may be a member of the General Assembly.

(e) The working group may consult with any persons or experts to carry out the provisions of this section.

(f) All initial appointments to the working group shall be made not later than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing authority.

(g) The chairpersons of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to commerce shall be the chairpersons of the working group. Such chairpersons shall schedule the first meeting of the working group, which shall be held not later than sixty days after the effective date of this section.

(h) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to commerce shall serve as administrative staff of the working group.

(i) Not later than January 1, 2025, the working group shall submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to commerce, transportation, the environment and finance, revenue and bonding, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes. The working group shall terminate on the date that it submits such report or January 1, 2025, whichever is later.

Approved May 30, 2024