

In Support of House Bill 6119 – An Act Concerning Arts, Culture and Tourism Funding

To strengthen the arts, culture, and tourism sector in Connecticut, additional resources need to be directed to the Tourism Fund. The tourism and hospitality industries are net revenue generators for the State. This funding does not compete with other priority programs but instead helps pay for them.

The Connecticut Convention & Sports Bureau (CTCSB) is Connecticut's only statewide meetings and sports event sales and marketing organization. Our mission is to sell and market the state of Connecticut as a premier destination for national, regional, and statewide group business, conventions, and sporting events.

Our focus is on:

- Collaborating with our Connecticut communities driving economic growth with new tax revenue and jobs.
- Investing in strong public/private partnerships. These partnerships are the result of leveraging public dollars with private sector support in the form of membership dues, advertising and public relations, in-kind services, and corporate partnerships.
- Working harmoniously with other organizations involved in marketing and promoting the State of Connecticut, enabling the State and its immediate environment to become a regional, family-oriented, arts, cultural, educational, sports and entertainment meeting destination that will create new jobs and broaden the tourism effort.

The Connecticut Convention & Sports Bureau (CTCSB) is partially funded through the Department of Economic and Community Development's (DECD) / Connecticut Office of Tourism, and by private sector partnership support.

- 2020 Fiscal Year Public funding through the DECD: \$450,000
- 2020 Fiscal Year Private sector support: \$200,000

Return on Investment (ROI) for Fiscal Year 2020:

- For every \$1 that Connecticut invested in the CTCSB, \$7.97 in tax revenue was generated for the State.
- *17,333 Connecticut Jobs in the Hospitality Industry supported.
- More than *\$56.7 million in future spending by Connecticut meeting and event attendees (hotel, dining, shopping, attractions, etc.)

* Source: Destinations International's economic calculator FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020

Funding History:

The CTCSB was established in 2012 and held a contract with the DECD/Office of Tourism for \$1 Million per year. That State funding was reduced to \$800,000 in Fiscal Year 2014. In Fiscal Year 2015, it was

again cut to \$655,000. Funding for Fiscal Year 2020 was \$450,000 – almost 55 percent less than its budget just eight years ago.

With the cuts to the CTC SB budget, staff reductions have been dramatic. We have reduced 50 percent of our personnel since our inception (from ten to five full-time staff), which roughly matches the percentage of lost public revenue. The remaining staff members share the roles and responsibilities previously held by the initial ten-person team while also trying to increase private sector support to maintain a high level of sales and service.

Funding Request:

The CTC SB has a proven record of a return on investment. We are asking for an increase in funding for Fiscal Year 2022 so we can secure more meetings and events for Connecticut. Additional funding will help us to further strategically focus on our target markets, increase our sales and marketing efforts, allow us to participate in additional industry trade events, intensify our marketplace outreach through advertising, and expand our support services to retain events.

Notable Events Coming to Connecticut:

Notable definite bookings of events scheduled for Connecticut include a variety of market segments such as the 2021 and 2022 National Association for Campus Activities – Northeast Regional Conference, 2021 NCAA DIII Women's Field Hockey National Championships, 2021 - 2024 Irish Dance Teachers Association of New England Regional Oireachtas, 2021 and 2022 NCAA DI, DII, and DIII Men's Lacrosse National Championships, 2021 and 2022 National Association of Student Personnel Administrators – Region I Annual Meeting, 2022 NCAA DI Women's Basketball Regional Championships, 2022 and 2023 New England Regional Volleyball Winterfest, 2023 Alpha Sigma Phi Grand Chapter and the 2024 and 2027 Northeast Greek Leadership Association Annual Conference.

In Fiscal Year 2021, the Bureau played an important role in the booking of five future NCAA Championships for Connecticut. The Bureau's role for these events has now switched to convention services. These NCAA Championships include the 2022 NCAA DI Women's Field Hockey Championship (Storrs), 2023 NCAA DI Men's Ice Hockey Regional Championship (Bridgeport), 2023 NCAA Division III Women's Basketball Semifinals (Hartford), 2024 NCAA Division III Men's Ice Hockey Championship (Hartford) and the 2025 NCAA Division III Women's Field Hockey Championship (Hartford).

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