

2016 Legislative

Roundtable Breakfast

SYRACUSE

Thursday, February 11, 2016

8:30 - 10:00 a.m.

Genesee Grande Hotel

co-sponsored by:



New York State
HOSPITALITY
& TOURISM
Association



New York City Legislative Roundtable Breakfast

Thursday, February 11, 2016

Genesee Grande Hotel

1060 E Genesee Street, Syracuse, NY 13210

8:30 - 10:00 a.m.

Program

8:30 a.m.

Registration & Breakfast Buffet

9:15 - 10:00 a.m.

Welcome:

Introduction of State & Local Leaders

Presentation of State Issues

Mark Dorr, Vice President, NYS Hospitality & Tourism Association

Presentation of Local Issues

David Heymann, President, Greater Syracuse Hospitality & Tourism Association

David C. Holder, President, Syracuse Convention & Visitors Bureau

Roundtable Discussion with State and Local Elected Officials

Sponsors



New York State Hospitality & Tourism Association

The New York State Hospitality & Tourism Association (NYSH&TA) is a not-for-profit trade organization representing nearly 1,000 lodging properties, totaling over 122,000 guest rooms, or 70% of total guest room inventory in the state. NYSH&TA's membership is also comprised of approximately 50 parks and attractions, over 100 industry suppliers, and more than 100 cooperating organizations, tourism educators, students and individuals combined. Founded in Saratoga Springs in 1887, NYSH&TA's mission is to lead and protect the New York State hospitality and tourism industry by providing advocacy, education, and resources. The Association provides: **representation and advocacy** on behalf of the industry before state lawmakers and regulatory agencies; **resources** in the form of money-saving programs, networking opportunities and marketing exposure via the website; **educational offerings** that help members best serve their customers.

Illegal Hotels – Leveling the Playing Field

The short-term online rental market—in which individuals rent out rooms, apartments, or entire homes to overnight guests,—poses a threat to consumers, neighborhoods and businesses. In response to the growing trend of companies, like Airbnb, promoting illegal owner-occupied hotels within the state, the state's lodging industry is looking to provide a statutory solution in New York to limit and potentially prohibit their impact on the legal hospitality industry.

NYSH&TA suggests reasonable changes or modifications should be made to existing laws or implemented independently, because travelers and communities deserve the proper safeguards that protect them from the potential dangers and risks posed by the short-term online industry. NYSH&TA continues to work with government to develop legislation that would combat these unregulated short-term rentals within New York by requiring compliance with state and local hotel laws. Last fall, in conjunction with the Senate, NYSH&TA held a series of informal roundtables to gather information from the industry on ideas, thoughts and solutions as to best address and advance state legislation during the 2016 Legislative Session.

In 2010, the State Legislature enacted stricter fire safety standards for Class B or transient use dwellings for hotels only in New York City. NYSH&TA continues to support not only the New York City hotels, but the City of New York in both its efforts to enforce the law and its efforts to eliminate illegal hotels while doing so practically, allowing well-established legal hotels to convert their certificates of occupancy and remain in compliance.

Minimum Wage

In his 2016-2017 State Budget, Governor Cuomo has proposed a statewide minimum wage increase of \$15 per hour by 2018 in NYC and by 2021 for the rest of the state. In New York State, if the minimum wage is raised, the law requires that a wage board be called regarding the minimum wage of food service workers. Therefore, if an increase in the statewide minimum wage happens this year, a wage board will be called for food service workers. NYSH&TA supports the New York State Restaurant Association's (NYSRA) efforts to obtain a "5-year freeze" on any new wage board being called if the statewide minimum wage is raised. While as an industry we support a fair minimum wage, it is important to note that such increases negatively impact job creation and expansion of business across the state.

The federal minimum wage is currently \$7.25 per hour, and the minimum wage in New York is currently \$9.00 per hour. In 2015, two separate wage boards convened by the Governor and approved by then Acting Labor

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Commissioner Mario Musolino approved minimum wage increases for tipped wage workers (\$7.50 per hour), and to \$15 per hour the minimum wage for fast food workers by 2018 (NYC), and 2021 (NYS).

As of 1/1/2016, the minimum wage for all tipped workers is now \$7.50 per hour, and the minimum wage for fast food workers is \$9.75 per hour statewide and \$10.50 per hour in New York City.

Tourism Funding

Given its proven track record as a revenue source for state and local governments, and as a job generator, Tourism is not only a wise investment, but a critical one that yields unmatched and well sustained returns for New York's economy. To that end, The Governor has called for an unprecedented \$50M be spent on tourism promotion in the coming year. Additionally, the 2016-2017 Executive Budget, appropriates the following direct spending for tourism:

Tourism Matching Grants:	\$3.815M (-\$500K from Enacted Budget Last Year)
I Love NY:	\$2.5M
Market NY:	\$5M
Taste NY:	\$1.1M
Welcome Centers (Binghamton and Beekmantown):	\$196K (each)

These funding mechanisms from the Governor and Legislature are critical, so that the industry, along with its State and local partners, continues to flourish.

The tourism industry will be asking Legislature to fund the Tourism Matching Grants Program at \$5 million, a funding level not realized since 2008-2009.

Paid Family Leave

The Governor's Executive Budget contains a proposal for 12 weeks of job-protected, employee-funded leave to be used for bonding with a new child or caring for a sick relative. NYSH&TA remains concerned that a proposal mandating paid family leave would encourage absence from the workplace, and will more than likely cause mandatory overtime for other employees. Additionally, many New York State employers already provide paid family leave and incur substantial expenses in doing so, but are not bound by the terms of any mandates or statutes.

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Greater Syracuse Hospitality & Tourism Association

The Greater Syracuse Hospitality & Tourism Association was established over 50 years ago to promote and protect the mutual interest and welfare of all Hotel and Motel operators of the Central New York area. By definition, a trade association is formed to provide a vehicle for interaction between individuals and/or companies. It provides for the legal interchange of ideas and information relating to the hotel/motel business. These include legislation, employment, labor relations, taxation, and other matters of public interest. In general, the Association shall engage in any lawful activity, which will enhance the economic progress of the hotel/motel business.

Syracuse Convention & Visitors Bureau

The Syracuse Convention & Visitors Bureau (SCVB) plays a vital role in Onondaga County's economic development strategy through its focus on growing the area's \$791 million tourism industry. As the county's official and accredited destination marketing organization, the SCVB works to generate short-term and future income for businesses, employment for residents and tax revenue for local government.

Central New York Tourism Industry's Legislative Priorities

The tourism industry of Central New York generates over \$1.2 billion in visitor spending while employing over 25,000 of our residents. In order to provide even greater support and growth trajectory for 2016 and beyond, legislative emphasis needs to address the following priorities:

- Constructing an effective wayfinding and gateway signage program to better facilitate visitor flow and community appeal.
- Developing an I Love NY shopping program to deliver more guests to Central New York's number one tourism activity.
- Establishing a documented policy and procedure for establishing and maintaining clean roads, interstates, sidewalks and gateway entrances to the region.
- Connecting the continued lakefront development (New York State Fairgrounds improvements, Lakeview Amphitheatre, Destiny USA, Onondaga Lake Park, and Inner Harbor) to Downtown Syracuse to University Hill for a comprehensive destination package.
- Supporting the direction of Visit Syracuse's organizational development and new strategic plan.
- Transforming the Syracuse Convention District to recognize the product improvements needed to facilitate convention bookings through the new Marriott Downtown Syracuse.
- Adopting the Syracuse "Do Your Thing" brand promise more systematically throughout the region.
- Funding the construction of an I Love New York International Tourism Center in Destiny USA that would be operated by Visit Syracuse and provide comprehensive visitor information to travelers visiting Upstate New York's most visited attraction.
- Formulating strategies to help offset dramatic business impacts during the construction phases of the future I-81 project in Downtown Syracuse.
- Coordinating the success of the Upstate Revitalization Initiative to deliver the greatest tourism impacts possible through the recognized economic development strategies.



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