

GACVB State Legislative Agenda

Priorities

Oppose legislation that allows discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation or practice.

Encourage increased investment in Georgia's tourism marketing funding to more effectively compete with surrounding southeastern states.

Research and monitor the impact of the State Hotel/Motel Fee on the tourism industry and the allocation of those funds for their stated purpose of transportation enhancements.

Encourage increased investment in significant enhancements to the appearance and signage at Georgia's interstate gateways and the modernization of the state's Welcome Centers.

Support laws and regulations that ensure equity in licensing and tax policy for short-term and vacation rentals.

Protect Georgia's hotel/motel tax dollars from policies that would erode funding for tourism/destination marketing.

Policies

Support school-start and school-end policies that maintain a viable summer tourism season.

Support the modernization of laws and regulations for production breweries, brew pubs, distilleries and vineyards to remain competitive with other states.

Support opportunities to create financial resources and mechanisms for sports event and marketing initiatives.

Support laws and regulations that ensure that military lodging facilities are limited to official military use only.

2015 Success Stories

Oppose legislation that allows discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation or religious affiliation or practice. SB 129 was a controversial bill which sparked many emotionally charged debates and it did not pass in the 2015 Legislative Session.

Increase Georgia's investment in tourism marketing funding to more effectively compete with surrounding southeastern states. An additional \$750,000 in funding was committed in the 2015 Legislative session.



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VISITORS BUREAUS

Rename the Senate Economic Development Committee the Senate Economic Development & Tourism Committee. This was achieved through the support of Chairman Frank Ginn.

Invest in significant enhancements to the welcome appearance and signage at Georgia's interstate gateways and the modernization of the state's Welcome Centers. Currently, the Georgia Department of Transportation is working with the Georgia Department of Economic Development to design new "Welcome to Georgia" signs to be installed in November/early December 2015. Renovations at the Tallapoosa and Lavonia Welcome Centers are currently underway.

The Front Door to Georgia's Tourism Economy: Georgia Convention and Visitors Bureaus

Tourism & Georgia's CVBs

In 2014, tourism generated more than \$57.1 billion in total economic impact driving significant business growth and revenues for companies operating in Georgia. This figure, up 6.7 percent over 2013, represents direct tourism business sales, indirect and induced impacts. Georgia's visitor impact now stands 24 percent higher than its pre-recession level in 2007.

Georgia's Convention and Visitors Bureaus play a significant role in the economic contribution that the tourism industry has on Georgia's economy. Through successful destination marketing strategies, the many Convention and Visitors Bureaus in our unique towns, cities, counties and regions help generate visitor spending which supports thousands of businesses and jobs. All sectors of the Georgia economy benefit from tourism activity.

Tourism & Jobs

The tourism industry is the state's 5th largest employer and supports employment across many industry sectors, employing an estimated 427,000 Georgians statewide.

Tourism & Taxes

In 2014, visitor spending generated \$3 billion in state and local tax revenue in Georgia. In addition, every Georgia household benefited from state and local tax savings of \$840 as a result of the tourism industry's tax contribution.



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Definitions

Total Tourism Demand

– Includes visitor spending plus other spending streams in support of the traveler industry. This includes government spending and capital investment in support of tourism.

Tourism Economic

Impact – Measures the full economic impacts of tourism demand, including direct, indirect and induced impacts.

Source: Study prepared for the Georgia Department of Economic Development, Tourism Division by the US Travel Association and Tourism Economics, "The Economic Impact of Tourism in Georgia, Tourism Satellite Account Calendar Year 2014."

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