

2017 Legislative

Roundtable Breakfast

SYRACUSE

Thursday, March 9, 2017

8:30 - 10:00 a.m.

Crowne Plaza Syracuse

co-sponsored by:



New York State
HOSPITALITY
& TOURISM
Association



Syracuse Legislative Roundtable Breakfast

Thursday, March 6, 2017
Crowne Plaza Syracuse
8:30 - 10:00 a.m.

Program

8:30 a.m.

Registration & Breakfast Buffet

9:15 - 10:00 a.m.

Welcome:

Introduction of State Leaders

Presentation of State Issues

Mark Dorr, *President, NYS Hospitality & Tourism Association*

Introduction of Local Leaders

Presentation of Local Issues

David C. Holder, *President, Visit Syracuse*

Tiffany Gallagher, *President, Greater Syracuse Hospitality & Tourism Association*

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LEGISLATIVE

Roundtable Breakfast

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. 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 and networking opportunities; **educational offerings** that help members best serve their customers.

Short-term Rentals

NYSH&TA is working toward the introduction of legislation that would prohibit short-term rentals in New York. Airbnb operates short-term rental units that are largely unregulated in terms of both taxes and safety measures throughout New York. Airbnb has recently entered into tax agreements with several counties to collect and remit occupancy taxes on behalf of its hosts.

The short-sighted tax agreements accepted at the county level are merely an effort by Airbnb to legitimize their model within New York, and do not address the problems at the heart of the short-term rental issue. They do not address safety concerns, as they place no requirements on short-term rentals for compliance with the fire and safety regulations that other lodging options must comply with under State law. As an industry, we continue to emphasize the need to level the playing field not only on taxes but code enforcement and public protections as well. To this end, we will continue to educate legislators on the need for statewide regulation and oversight on such an important issue facing the industry.

Tourism Funding

Governor Cuomo advanced the following tourism funding initiatives in his Executive Budget proposal:

- Matching Grants - \$3,815,000
- I Love NY - \$2,500,000
- Market New York - \$7,000,000
- Taste NY - \$1,100,000
- Beekmantown Information Center - \$196,000
- Binghamton Information Center - \$196,000
- Cultural arts and public spaces fund, including projects that increase tourism - \$10,000,000
- Round 7 of the REDCs are advanced

Small Business Package

NYSH&TA is working to introduce legislation that will benefit the tourism industry as a whole, and small businesses particularly. Topics for this package may include:

- Training Wage/Seasonal Workforce;
- Ski Equipment Tax Credit;
- Tax Credits for Hiring Youth or Seasonal Workers

A special thank you to NYSH&TA's
2017 Legislative Sponsors
Heartland Payment Systems &
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Visit Syracuse

Visit Syracuse plays a vital role in Onondaga County's economic development strategy through its focus on growing the area's \$855 million tourism industry. As the county's official and accredited destination marketing organization, Visit Syracuse works to generate short-term and future income for businesses, employment for residents and tax revenue for local government.

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.

Central New York Tourism Industry's Legislative Priorities

Onondaga County makes up \$855 million of the overall \$1.4 billion in visitor spending across the five counties of Central New York. Over 25,000 of our regional residents are employed in the tourism industry, but the impacts touch all households through the nearly \$600 in tax savings generated annually. The goal is in place to reach \$1 billion in visitor spending within Onondaga County by 2020 and to accomplish this feat, the following issues need to be addressed:

- Constructing an effective wayfinding and gateway signage program to better facilitate visitor flow and community appeal.
- Developing a comprehensive plan for continued tourism development throughout the region to build off recent successes and the Governor's proposals.
- 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.
- Facilitating national promotions and immigration policies to drive greater levels of international tourism to the USA.
- Supporting the need for ride sharing as a transportation option across New York State.
- 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 while continuing the concentrated effort to rethink Winter as a regional asset.
- 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 around the complexities of the I-81 project for the best community decision and to help offset dramatic business impacts during the construction phases.
- Examining and addressing the comparative competitiveness of Visit Syracuse against other destination marketing organizations.
- 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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