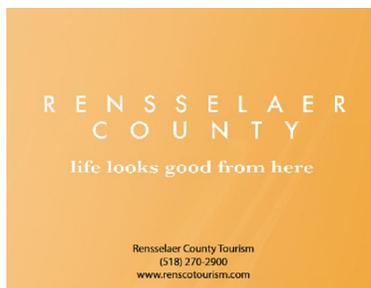


2018 Legislative

Roundtable Breakfast

Capital Region
February 8, 2018

co-sponsored by:



Capital Region Legislative Roundtable Breakfast

February 8, 2018



189 Wolf Rd. - Salons A, B, & C

8:30 - 10:00 a.m.

Program

Introduction of State & Local Leaders

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

Presentation of State and Regional Issues

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

- Short-Term Rentals
- Alcohol Beverage Control Law

Michele Vennard, *President and CEO, Albany County Convention & Visitors Bureau*

- Matching Grants

Tom O'Connor, *Vice President, Government Relations, Capital Region Chamber*

- Call-In Pay Regulations

Melissa Fleischut, *President and CEO, NYS Restaurant Association*

- Tip Credits

Lauren Bailey, *Mobility Manager, CDTA*

- Update on Taxi Oversight

Roundtable Discussion

Thank you to our co-sponsors:

Capital Region Chamber of Commerce (*Mark Eagan, Chief Executive Officer*)

Discover Albany (*Michele Vennard, President*)

Discover Saratoga (*Todd Garofano, President*)

Discover Schenectady (*Rebecca Daniels, Executive Director*)

Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce (*Gina DaBiere-Gibbs, Director of Tourism*)

New York State Hospitality & Tourism Association (*Mark Dorr, President*)

Rensselaer County Tourism (*Christine Golden, Tourism Director*)

Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce (*Todd Shimkus, President*)

Washington County Tourism (*Laura Oswald, Director, Economic Development*)

A special thank you to NYSH&TA's

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Issues

Short-Term Rentals

Short-term rental units are unregulated in terms of both taxes and safety measures throughout New York. Airbnb has recently entered into tax agreements with 18 counties to collect and remit occupancy taxes on behalf of its hosts. The tax agreements 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 - \$8,000,000
- Taste NY - \$1,100,000
- Round 8 of the REDCs are advanced at \$150,000,000

Maintain the ILNY Matching Funds Program

We support the request to keep the funding level of \$4.515 million in 2018.

We are asking the legislature to support additional funding to increase from the Governor's proposed \$3.815 million. This program is critical, as it is matched on a dollar for dollar basis by the tourism industry.

The initiative is a public/private partnership used to market regional tourism attractions in New York.

Proposed Call-In Pay Regulations

Governor Cuomo requested the Department of Labor to draft regulations regarding an employer's ability to use "just in time", "call-in" or "on-call" scheduling. Due to its high taxes, burdensome regulations and a high labor costs (e.g. high minimum wage and paid family leave), New York State continually ranks at the bottom or near bottom when it comes to a state's business climate. If we are going to improve our state's business-friendliness, the last thing we need are more regulations. Growing private sector jobs is key to the Capital Region's economic future.

Imposing regulations and mandates, such as this proposed predictive scheduling regulation, have a significant negative impact on attracting and retaining businesses. The Capital Region Chamber believes that employers, not the state, are best suited for determining the terms and conditions of employment, including work schedules, based on their business sector, financial condition, competitive position and practical realities. The Chamber strongly encourages the state to pursue policies that make the Capital Region more competitive and lead to job creation. This proposed regulation would move the state's economy in exactly the wrong direction. If New York State's business climate is ever going to improve, the Governor's policies must encourage not hinder business.

Hotel Definition Change in the Alcohol Beverage Control Law – Executive Budget Proposal

The Governor's Executive Budget Proposal included a provision that would remove the requirement for hotels to have a full service on-premises restaurant in order to obtain a liquor license. Under the proposal, a hotel would still be required to keep food available for service or sale to customers for consumption on the premises. The availability of sandwiches, soups or other foods, including fresh, processed, pre-cooked or frozen foods would be in compliance with the Governor's proposal.

Tip Credit

While we share the Administration's commitment to protecting our industry's workers, eliminating the tip credit for the hospitality industry will have the inverse effect. By current New York State law, all hospitality workers who receive tips are guaranteed to make the full minimum wage. It is patently false should anyone claim otherwise. In place in NY for decades, the tipping system empowers consumers to make their own choice to pay for the level of service they are given. Restaurants will be forced to make up the difference, syphoning resources away from non-tipped workers (cooks, dishwashers), replacing service personnel with tablets and other technology, or be forced to make other cuts. In an industry widely recognized as having razor thin margins any effort to revoke the tipping system New Yorkers know and demand equates to a direct threat to the jobs and future of local neighborhood restaurants.

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WOTC savings, electronic onboarding and text to apply are great ways to hire smarter and grow your business.