

## House Republican Press Release

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### Mike Alberts Urges Stronger Tourism Promotion



*Notes that tourism generates job growth, especially in eastern Connecticut*

State Rep. Mike Alberts, R-50<sup>th</sup>, said eastern Connecticut would benefit from stronger, consistent tourism promotion by the state of Connecticut. He is pushing for more state tourism marketing, which has been cut in recent years, with a steady, reliable source of annual funding.

Rep. Alberts noted that a new study by the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism (CCT) shows that arts, film, history and tourism account for more than \$14 billion in economic activity and more than 170,000 jobs – 10 percent of the state’s labor force.

Rep. Alberts said, “Tourism is a major growth industry for the state of Connecticut, with an economic impact larger and more pervasive than many people realize. Assuring continued growth of tourism in Connecticut is a major challenge for the state legislature. The state’s 40 percent reduction in tourism promotion in recent years has to be reversed.”

Rep. Alberts said, “Tourism marketing no longer has a dedicated source of funding, either at the state or regional level. This has to be reversed. We need to identify a better way to fund this important aspect of Connecticut’s economy.”

Alberts reported that the CCT study suggests every dollar the state appropriates for tourism promotion generates \$9.30 in net state and local tax revenue, \$507 in economic spending and \$328 in personal income.

More than 22 million people per year experience Connecticut’s many cultural attractions and more than 550 nonprofit organizations receive state and cultural grants from the state cultural grants, Alberts stated.

In addition to a steady, reliable tourism funding source, Rep. Alberts noted that future passenger rail service from New London to Worcester, MA, also would give a significant boost to eastern Connecticut tourism.

Alberts added, "The real opportunity for Connecticut is to couple tourism promotion to ongoing improvements to the state's transportation infrastructure, particularly passenger

rail service. In the near future, we'll be re-opening passenger service and tourism opportunities in central Connecticut with New Haven to Springfield service. I'm excited about the rail study that will examine providing the same service from New London to Worcester, Massachusetts. The tourism opportunities such a rail expansion could provide for eastern Connecticut are significant."