



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 7306

January Session, 2019



**AN ACT CONCERNING RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SPEAKER
OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES' BLUE RIBBON
COMMISSION ON TOURISM.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 10-399 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

3 (a) As used in this section: "Visitor welcome center" means the
4 welcome centers, visitor centers and tourist information centers
5 located in West Willington, Greenwich, Danbury, Darien, North
6 Stonington and Westbrook, which have been established to distribute
7 information to persons traveling in the state for the purpose of
8 influencing such persons' level of satisfaction with the state and
9 expenditures in the state and their planning for present and future
10 trips to the state.

11 (b) [Within available appropriations, the] The following measures
12 shall be implemented to enhance the operation of visitor welcome
13 centers:

14 (1) Each center shall make available space for listing events and
15 promoting attractions, by invitation to the Connecticut tourism
16 industry, including tourism districts, chambers of commerce and any
17 other tourism entities involved in Connecticut tourism promotion;

18 (2) The Department of Economic and Community Development, in
19 consultation with the Department of Transportation, shall develop
20 plans for (A) consistent signage for the visitor welcome centers, and (B)
21 highway signage regulations for privately operated centers. Signage
22 for the visitor welcome centers shall indicate the hours during which
23 the visitor welcome centers are open;

24 (3) The Department of Transportation and the Department of
25 Economic and Community Development shall establish an "Adopt A
26 Visitor Welcome Center" program, under which local civic
27 organizations may provide maintenance, gardening, including
28 wildflowers, and complimentary refreshments or any other type of
29 service at a visitor welcome center to enhance the operation of the
30 center;

31 (4) The Department of Economic and Community Development
32 shall place a full-time year-round supervisor and a part-time assistant
33 supervisor at the Danbury, Darien, North Stonington and West
34 Willington centers. The responsibilities of each supervisor shall
35 include, but not be limited to: (A) Maintaining a sufficient inventory of
36 up-to-date brochures for dissemination to visitors, (B) scheduling staff
37 so as to assure coverage at all times, (C) training staff, (D) compiling
38 and maintaining statistics on center usage, (E) serving as liaison
39 between the department, the Department of Transportation, the
40 tourism district in which the center is located and businesses in such
41 district, (F) maintaining quality tourism services, (G) rotating displays,
42 (H) evaluating staff, (I) problem-solving, and (J) computing travel
43 reimbursements for volunteer staff;

44 (5) [Subject to available funds, the] The Department of Economic
45 and Community Development shall place a seasonal full-time
46 supervisor and a seasonal part-time assistant supervisor at the
47 Greenwich and Westbrook centers. The department shall discontinue
48 staffing at the Middletown, Plainfield and Wallingford centers, and
49 shall, in conjunction with the tourism industry, seek contract workers
50 to provide tourism services at the Westbrook center when not staffed

51 by the state;

52 (6) [Subject to available funds, the] The Department of Economic
53 and Community Development, in conjunction with the tourism
54 industry, shall develop and implement initial staff training and
55 conduct periodic training of full-time and part-time supervisors; [.]

56 (7) The restroom facilities located at each visitor welcome center
57 shall be open twenty-four hours a day.

58 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established within
59 the Department of Economic and Community Development, for
60 administrative purposes only, a Connecticut Tourism Council. The
61 council shall consist of (1) the Commissioner of Economic and
62 Community Development, or the commissioner's designee, (2) the
63 Commissioner of Transportation, or the commissioner's designee, (3)
64 the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection, or the
65 commissioner's designee, (4) twelve members appointed by the
66 Governor, (A) one of whom shall represent the lodging industry, (B)
67 one of whom shall represent a chamber of commerce, (C) one of whom
68 shall represent a tourist attraction, (D) one of whom shall represent the
69 arts, (E) one of whom shall represent a culturally diverse event or
70 attraction, (F) one of whom shall represent the heritage tourism
71 industry, (G) one of whom shall represent the airline industry, (H) one
72 of whom shall represent the Connecticut Airport Authority, (I) one of
73 whom shall represent a convention center and sports arena trade
74 organization, (J) one of whom shall represent a charter bus trade
75 organization, and (K) two of whom shall represent casino gaming
76 facilities, (5) twelve members appointed as follows: (A) Two by the
77 president pro tempore of the Senate, (B) two by the majority leader of
78 the Senate, (C) two by the minority leader of the Senate, (D) two by the
79 speaker of the House of Representatives, (E) two by the majority leader
80 of the House of Representatives, and (F) two by the minority leader of
81 the House of Representatives. The twelve members appointed
82 pursuant to subdivision (5) of this subsection shall represent one of the
83 following industries: (i) Agritourism, (ii) convention center and

84 coliseum, (iii) destination shopping, (iv) restaurant, (v) events, (vi)
85 attractions, (vii) lodging, (viii) marine trades, (ix) outdoor recreation,
86 (x) museum, or (xi) tour and travel. All members appointed by the
87 Governor shall serve a term of four years. The terms of all members
88 appointed by members of the General Assembly shall be coterminous
89 with the terms of such members of the General Assembly. The
90 Commissioner of Economic and Community Development shall serve
91 as chairperson of the council.

92 (b) The council shall: (1) Adopt procedures for the operation of the
93 council; (2) review and approve or recommend changes to the strategic
94 marketing plan developed by the Department of Economic and
95 Community Development pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (b)
96 of section 10-392 of the general statutes; and (3) not later than January
97 1, 2021, and annually thereafter, submit a report describing tourism
98 promotion efforts by the state and evaluating the marketing plan,
99 developed by the Department of Economic and Community
100 Development pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of section
101 10-392 of the general statutes, to the joint standing committee of the
102 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to commerce,
103 in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general
104 statutes.

105 Sec. 3. (*Effective from passage*) (a) For purposes of this section,
106 "wayfinding signage" includes, but is not limited to, signs on limited
107 access highways indicating attractions and services of lodging, food,
108 information and fuel.

109 (b) The Commissioner of Transportation shall conduct a study
110 relating to wayfinding signage in the state. Such study shall include,
111 but need not be limited to, an examination of the standards for or
112 regulation of advertising of local businesses on such signage. Not later
113 than February 1, 2020, the commissioner shall submit a report of the
114 results of such study, including recommended changes to the
115 standards for or regulation of advertising of local businesses on
116 wayfinding signage, to the joint standing committees of the General

117 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to commerce and
118 transportation, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of
119 the general statutes.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	10-399
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	New section

CE *Joint Favorable Subst.*