



General Assembly

February Session, 2020

Raised Bill No. 133

LCO No. 1343



Referred to Committee on COMMERCE

Introduced by:
(CE)

AN ACT CONCERNING REGIONAL TOURISM DISTRICTS.

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

1 Section 1. Section 10-397 of the 2020 supplement to the general
2 statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
3 (*Effective from passage*):

4 (a) There are established three regional tourism districts, each of
5 which shall promote and market districts as regional leisure and
6 business traveler destinations to stimulate economic growth. The
7 districts shall be as follows:

8 (1) The eastern regional district, which shall consist of Ashford,
9 Bozrah, Brooklyn, Canterbury, Chaplin, Colchester, Columbia,
10 Coventry, East Lyme, Eastford, Franklin, Griswold, Groton, Hampton,
11 Killingly, Lebanon, Ledyard, Lisbon, Lyme, Mansfield, Montville, New
12 London, North Stonington, Norwich, Old Lyme, Plainfield, Pomfret,
13 Preston, Putnam, Salem, Scotland, Sprague, Sterling, Stonington,
14 Thompson, Union, Voluntown, Waterford, Willington, Windham and
15 Woodstock;

16 (2) The central regional district, which shall consist of Andover,
17 Avon, Berlin, Bethany, Bloomfield, Bolton, Branford, Canton, Cheshire,
18 Chester, Clinton, Cromwell, Deep River, Durham, East Granby, East
19 Haddam, East Hampton, East Hartford, East Haven, East Windsor,
20 Ellington, Enfield, Essex, Farmington, Glastonbury, Granby, Guilford,
21 Haddam, Hamden, Hartford, Hebron, Killingworth, Madison,
22 Manchester, Marlborough, Meriden, Middlefield, Middletown, Milford,
23 New Britain, New Haven, Newington, North Branford, North Haven,
24 Old Saybrook, Orange, Plainville, Portland, Rocky Hill, Simsbury,
25 Somers, South Windsor, Southington, Stafford, Suffield, Tolland,
26 Vernon, Wallingford, West Hartford, West Haven, Westbrook,
27 Wethersfield, Windsor, Windsor Locks and Woodbridge; and

28 (3) The western regional district, which shall consist of Ansonia,
29 Barkhamsted, Beacon Falls, Bethel, Bethlehem, Bridgeport, Bridgewater,
30 Bristol, Brookfield, Burlington, Canaan, Colebrook, Cornwall, Danbury,
31 Darien, Derby, Easton, Fairfield, Goshen, Greenwich, Hartland,
32 Harwinton, Kent, Litchfield, Middlebury, Monroe, Morris, Naugatuck,
33 New Fairfield, New Hartford, New Milford, New Canaan, Newtown,
34 Norfolk, North Canaan, Norwalk, Oxford, Plymouth, Prospect,
35 Redding, Ridgefield, Roxbury, Salisbury, Seymour, Sharon, Shelton,
36 Sherman, Southbury, Stamford, Stratford, Thomaston, Torrington,
37 Trumbull, Warren, Washington, Waterbury, Watertown, Weston,
38 Westport, Wilton, Winchester, Wolcott and Woodbury.

39 (b) Each regional tourism district shall be overseen by a board of
40 directors consisting of one representative from each municipality within
41 the district, appointed by the legislative body of the municipality and,
42 where the legislative body is a town meeting, by the board of selectmen.
43 Any such member of a board of directors shall serve for a term of three
44 years. In addition, the board of directors may appoint up to twenty-one
45 persons representing tourism interests within the district to serve on the
46 board. No board member shall be deemed a state employee for serving
47 on said board. All appointments to the board of directors shall be
48 reported to the Commissioner of Economic and Community
49 Development.

50 (c) The provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, as defined in
51 section 1-200, shall apply to each regional tourism district.

52 (d) Each tourism district shall adopt a charter and bylaws governing
53 its operation.

54 (e) Each regional tourism district shall (1) comply with uniform
55 standards for accounting and reporting expenditures that are
56 established by the Department of Economic and Community
57 Development in accordance with section 10-392 and are based on
58 industry accounting standards developed by the International
59 Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus or other national
60 organizations related to tourism, and (2) on or before January first of
61 each year, submit to the department, the Office of Policy and
62 Management and the Office of Fiscal Analysis an independent audit in
63 accordance with the provisions of sections 4-230 to 4-236, inclusive.

64 (f) Each regional tourism district shall solicit and may accept private
65 funds for the promotion of tourism within its towns and cities and shall
66 coordinate its activities with any private nonprofit tourist association
67 within the district and within this state, that promotes tourism industry
68 businesses in this state, in order to foster cooperation in the promotion
69 of such businesses. Any funds received by a regional tourism district
70 may be deposited in the account established in section 10-395 or in an
71 account established by such tourism district to receive such funds.

72 [(g) The central regional district office shall be located within the
73 department.]

74 [(h)] (g) The commissioner shall, within available appropriations,
75 distribute tourism funding evenly among the three tourism districts. At
76 the end of each fiscal year, commencing with the fiscal year ending June
77 30, 2020, each regional tourism district shall return any unexpended
78 funds to the Department of Economic and Community Development.
79 The commissioner shall use such funds to support state-wide
80 marketing.

81 [(i)] (h) Each regional tourism district may establish and administer a
82 matching grant program for any tourism industry business, tourism
83 destination, or not-for-profit arts and culture organization that has
84 received private funds for the marketing of such business, destination,
85 organization or regional tourism district. Such grants shall be used for
86 the marketing of such business, destination, organization or regional
87 tourism district.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	10-397

Statement of Purpose:

To require each regional tourism district to return unexpended tourism funding to the Department of Economic and Community Development for the purpose of supporting state-wide marketing and to eliminate the requirement that the central regional district office be located within the department.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]