



WLRA and WTIC Legislative Priorities 2019

The WLRA and WTIC support a 5% (3/2/2) statewide lodging tax as an alternative-funding source for growing the visitor economy through the Wyoming Office of Tourism.

- ✓ Removing the Wyoming Office of Tourism off of the states general fund will revert \$25 million back to the state's general fund per biennium.
- ✓ Wyoming's statewide marketing program is currently funded at \$12.5 million annually. This ranks 31st in the nation and is not competitive with our surrounding states. Colorado, Montana, Utah and even South Dakota all have dedicated funding sources that are significantly higher than Wyoming.
- ✓ A 3% statewide lodging tax will generate approximately \$19 million annually placing Wyoming on a significantly more competitive platform.
- ✓ Industry support is dependent upon funding being dedicated to tourism.
- ✓ The additional 2% will replace 2% of existing local option lodging tax and will revert back to local option lodging tax boards to protect critical local promotion.
- ✓ Local communities will still be able to vote every four years for [up to] an additional 2% local option lodging tax.

The WLRA and WTIC support the Governor's recommended supplemental budget request of \$2.5 million for the Wyoming Office of Tourism.

- ✓ The Wyoming Office of Tourism is the only agency tasked with promoting Wyoming as a vacation destination both domestically and internationally.
- ✓ In 2017 Wyoming welcomed 8.7 million overnight visitors.
- ✓ These visitors spent \$3.5 billion in local Wyoming businesses.
- ✓ Visitor spending directly affected Wyoming's economy by generating \$188 million in local and state tax revenues.
- ✓ The hospitality and tourism industry is responsible for over 32,000 full and part time jobs in Wyoming.
- ✓ Investing in tourism promotion and marketing will facilitate continued growth in visitor spending, local and state tax revenue and job creation for Wyoming.
- ✓ Supplemental funding will allow the Wyoming Office of Tourism to bolster a proven national strategy to drive visitation.



The WLRA and WTIC support enabling legislation that would allow for the creation of Tourism Improvement Districts (TID) in Wyoming.

- ✓ A tourism improvement district, or TID, is a mechanism for funding local tourism promotion activities.
- ✓ An assessment is placed on tourism businesses within a designated geographic area. The funds raised through the assessment are used for specific tourism marketing purposes.
- ✓ A TID is a stable source of funding for marketing efforts designed to increase visitation and grow the local visitor economy.
- ✓ At least 51% of industry related businesses in the identified district must first agree to the TID before petitioning local government for formation.
- ✓ The proposed legislation is enabling and would be an extremely valuable tool for local communities across the state to consider. It does not force any person, group, City or County to create a TID.
- ✓ Local communities in Colorado, Montana, and South Dakota have been using TIDs since 1999, 2006 and 2007 respectively with great success.
- ✓ The proposed legislation authorizes business assessment on any type of tourism related business.
- ✓ Under the proposed legislation, districts shall operate pursuant to a written district plan.
- ✓ Districts shall be governed by a new or existing, private nonprofit corporation or joint powers board
- ✓ The maximum district term is five (5) years for initial formation and ten (10) years on renewal.
- ✓ Assessments may be collected by the State of Wyoming or by the city, town, or county that creates the district.

The WLRA and WTIC support the Joint Travel, Recreation, Wildlife and Cultural Resources Committee bill creating the Wyoming Film Production Incentive

- ✓ When a filmmaker comes to Wyoming they utilize Wyoming residents for employment, stay in our lodging properties, dine in our restaurants and shop in our retail stores.
- ✓ The resulting product not only benefits Wyoming from an economic development perspective but also showcases Wyoming. The Wyoming Film Production Incentive is an important tool in Wyoming's overall marketing toolbox.
- ✓ No new appropriation is tied to the bill. The Wyoming Office of Tourism will utilize existing funds in the event an opportunity arises.
- ✓ Projects are reimbursed based on strict measurements and all receipts are audited before reimbursement.
- ✓ Examples- Longmire, Joe Pickett Series

