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FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
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ASSEMBLY SELECT COMMITTEE
on
TOURISM

NOVEMBER 18, 1986

ASSEMBLY SELECT COMMITTEE ON TOURISM

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COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

In January 1986, the Speaker of the General Assembly, Chuck Hardwick, created the Assembly Select Committee on Tourism of which I have had the pleasure and privilege of serving as Chairman. I am proud to report that the Committee has successfully executed a very important function -- assessing the present status of the tourism industry in the State and recommending ways to further buttress the industry.

The Assembly Select Committee on Tourism recently met to consider the recommendations of Committee task forces which met during the summer months. At this time, the full Committee deems it appropriate to recommend certain courses of action to bolster New Jersey's tourism industry.

As part of its overall conclusions and findings, the Assembly Select Committee on Tourism also introduces a nine-bill package dealing with an array of issues such as environmental pollution, the State regulatory processes and their impact on seasonal tourism-related businesses, incentives for private sector involvement to nurture the tourism industry and the revitalization of Atlantic City.

The Committee's findings and legislative initiatives are based on ten months of public meetings held throughout the State and input from all those representatives closest to the tourism industry.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to my fellow legislative colleagues and the Advisory Committee members who contributed time and leadership to the Select Committee's endeavors. The attached report is evidence of this great undertaking and the achievement of this new Assembly Select Committee on Tourism. I am quite honored and pleased to present our conclusions as enumerated in the pages that follow.

To those concerned citizens of the State and representatives of interest groups who appeared before this Committee, it is to your credit that these conclusions and initiatives have been launched.

Let this be the beginning of our new role -- as we move ahead to enact these recommendations and monitor their progress.

My sincerest thanks, again, to all of you who made this possible.

Guy Muziani

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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Assembly Select Committee on Tourism's recommendations to the Legislature about steps to be taken to improve the status of tourism in the State are listed below.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

1. If toxic waste must be incinerated at sea, the procedure should be done at a location far enough from the coast to insure that it will not negatively affect any beaches, shore communities or fishing.
2. The Legislature should consider and pass strong legislation aimed toward protecting the State's beaches.
3. The full Legislature should call on the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to accelerate its schedule for changing the site used for dumping New York City's sewerage sludge from 15 nautical miles off Ambrose Light to 106 nautical miles out at sea.

REGULATORY ISSUES

1. State licensing procedures should be drafted to permit the viable operation of seasonal tourist businesses.
2. Proposed rules and regulations governing the business community should be promulgated only after adequate consideration is given to their effects on businesses of all types and sizes and also on municipalities and on counties.
3. The Legislature should pass legislation which would create a low interest loan program for small businesses to help them retrofit their facilities to meet the requirements established in the newly revised fire code.
4. The Legislature should pass legislation which would make liability insurance coverage more readily available to high risk businesses, would lower premiums to affordable levels and would limit the risks that businesses currently face.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

1. The State's transportation infrastructure should be maintained, supported and improved.
2. The Division of Travel and Tourism and the Department of Transportation should develop closer coordination to further bolster the availability and convenience of transportation systems that will benefit tourist travel.
3. The New Jersey Monorail Commission should study the feasibility of building a monorail system in the shore region.
4. The Division of Travel and Tourism should use the Cape May-Lewes Ferry as a promotional tool in attracting out-of-State vacationers.

ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES

1. The Division of Travel and Tourism's Master Plan for tourism in the State should be updated periodically to assure its relevance to the changing status of tourism.
2. The Division of Travel and Tourism should take an active role on issues which have a significant impact on tourism in the State.
3. The Legislature should create the position of Tourism Ombudsman to address the problems faced by the tourism industry and the tourists.
4. The Division of Travel and Tourism should revise its matching grant program and procedures to make its funding more accessible to tourism groups and the private sector.
5. The regional tourism councils should be provided with funding to assist in the administration of regional activities.
6. The Governor's Tourism Advisory Council should meet on a regular basis, and be given greater authority.
7. The State should investigate the possibility of developing a program to provide seed money for tourism feasibility studies.

PROMOTIONAL ISSUES

1. State tourism promotion efforts should be increased in the market areas beyond major metropolitan areas surrounding New Jersey.
2. Larger numbers of New Jersey State road maps should be printed and made available for distribution by local and regional tourist promotion agencies.

3. The Division of Travel and Tourism should be required to hold input hearings before making up its advertising schedule for the coming year.
4. Tourist attractions should be permitted to display literature on State Information Racks for little or no cost.
5. The Division of Travel and Tourism should take advantage of New York-New Jersey Port Authority facilities to display and distribute information about New Jersey's tourist attractions.
6. An "800" number telephone line should be installed and operated on a 24-hour basis to increase the State's exposure to prospective tourists.
7. The State should participate in "consumer" shows in an effort to lure tourists to the area.
8. The Division of Travel and Tourism should attempt to entice additional amusements and attractions to the State.
9. The State and all tourist vendors should place major emphasis on promoting and providing hospitality to all visitors within the State.

DEMOGRAPHICS

1. New Jersey colleges should be encouraged to provide tourism curricula and college credit for specific tourist-related jobs.

CASINO GAMBLING

1. New Jersey's casinos and other tourist attractions should make efforts to communicate with one another and to coordinate activities in an effort to expand trade for everyone.

REDEVELOPMENT

1. The Casino Reinvestment Development Authority should develop a formal master plan of operations and place particular emphasis on rebuilding the entrance to Atlantic City.

COMMITTEE REPORT

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

1. ***The Committee recommends that if toxic wastes must be incinerated at sea, the procedure should be done at a location far enough from the coast to ensure that it would not negatively affect beaches, shore communities, or fishing.***

The Committee recognizes that there is an urgent need for an effective method for the permanent disposal of toxic wastes. However, the ocean incineration method only disposes liquid waste. Of the toxic waste generated by New Jersey, only 8 percent is liquid. The remaining 92 percent is sludge and solid waste, and cannot be cleaned up through ocean incineration. As a result, New Jersey faces the possibility of a catastrophic incident off its coast which could destroy its tourist and fishing industry, and faces these risks without deriving any large benefit from the process.

2. ***The Committee recommends that the Legislature consider and pass strong legislation aimed toward protecting the State's beaches.***
3. ***The Committee recommends that the full Legislature call on the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to accelerate its schedule for changing the site used for dumping New York City's sewerage sludge from 15 nautical miles off Ambrose Light to 106 nautical miles out at sea.***

The Committee believes strongly that the State's beaches are among the most indispensable and vital components of New Jersey's tourist industry, and as such, must be protected from erosion, pollution and other natural and man-made forces by a stable source of annual funding. The Committee supports all State, county and municipal efforts to increase the protection and conservation of New Jersey's coastal resources. The Committee believes that the regionalization of sewerage treatment in southern New Jersey and the upgrading of such facilities in coastal counties will help control sewer overflow during storm events and insure that water quality is maintained at acceptable levels. The acceleration of the EPA schedule to shift the dumping site of New York City's sewerage further out at sea would greatly help northern New Jersey clean up its beaches.

REGULATORY ISSUES

- 1. The Committee recommends that State licensing procedures be drafted to permit the viable operation of seasonal tourist businesses.***
- 2. The Committee recommends that proposed rules and regulations governing the business community be promulgated only after adequate consideration is given to their effects on businesses of all types and sizes and also on municipalities and on counties.***

3. ***The Committee recommends that the Legislature pass legislation which would create a low interest loan program for small businesses to help them retrofit their facilities to meet the requirements established in the newly revised fire code.***

The Committee recognizes the need for regulations that ensure the safety of facilities used by tourists and residents. However, seasonal businesses have only a short period of time within which to operate every year and to earn a profit. Time-consuming licensing and regulatory procedures can seriously hinder a seasonal vendor's operating, and possibly preclude him from operating a business at all. Because of this, the Committee encourages the development of codes and standards which are sensitive to limitations of tourist businesses, and urges the Department of Commerce and Economic Development to coordinate with and provide input to the Department of Community Affairs in an effort to streamline and expedite the licensing process for small and seasonal businesses when practical.

The Committee notes that Assembly Bill Number 10 ACS would require the preparation of a flexible regulatory analysis of all new rules and regulations which impact on small and seasonal businesses. This analysis would be prepared by the promulgating agency and specify the effect the rule would have on these businesses. The bill has passed the

Assembly and Senate, and as of October 21, 1986, was awaiting the Governor's signature. Passage of additional legislation to create a low interest loan program for small businesses to retrofit their facilities to meet new fire code requirements would greatly assist these organizations and permit them to continue operations.

4. ***The Committee recommends that the Legislature pass legislation which would make liability insurance coverage more readily available to high risk businesses, would lower premiums to affordable levels and would limit the risks that businesses currently face.***

The Committee recognizes that the current liability insurance crisis seriously impairs the ability of many businesses such as bars, taverns, amusement operations and commercial bus operators to find affordable insurance. As the costs of insurance premiums increase, businesses which cannot afford them will be forced to close, while other businesses may have to reduce or neglect expenditures on vital areas such as employment, quality control and capital improvements. Customer price increases may also be necessary. Insurance relief would provide more businesses with the opportunity to conduct business without the fear of being edged out of the market by high premiums.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

- 1. The Committee recommends that the State's transportation infrastructure be maintained, supported and improved.**

The Committee acknowledges that without an effective, modern, safe and convenient transportation system, the State's tourism industry will suffer. Unless potential tourists are provided with convenient access to tourist attractions, these tourists may choose not travel to them. In addition, the existence of clogged highways, traffic jams and long commutes to tourist destinations not only discourages the tourist population, but also penalizes private citizens and businessmen who may have other personal or business commitments in the area.

The Committee encourages the promotion of air travel to entice out-of-State travellers to come to New Jersey. The use of "package plans" with direct flights into areas such as Atlantic City, would greatly enhance the tourist trade.

- 2. The Committee recommends that the Division of Travel and Tourism and the Department of Transportation develop closer coordination to further bolster the availability and convenience of transportation systems that will benefit tourist travel.**

By pooling information and coordinating activities with the Department of Transportation, the Division of Travel and Tourism could optimize its access to the travelling public. Joint advertising and logo-signage would facilitate universal recognition of tourist attractions throughout the State.

- 3. The Committee recommends that the New Jersey Monorail Commission study the feasibility of building a monorail system in the shore region.**

A monorail system would help to relieve the traffic congestion on all the roads in the shore region, while providing tourists with easy access to New Jersey beaches and shore attractions.

- 4. The Committee recommends that the Division of Travel and Tourism use the Cape May-Lewes Ferry as a promotional tool in attracting out-of-State vacationers.**

The Cape May-Lewes Ferry transports travellers between Cape May, New Jersey and Lewes, Delaware daily. By providing tourist information on the ferry and at the docking sites, the Division of Travel and Tourism could expand its population of potential tourists.

ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES

- 1. The Committee recommends that the Division of Travel and Tourism's Master Plan for tourism in the State be updated periodically to assure its relevance to the changing status of tourism.**

In 1980, the Division of Travel and Tourism drafted a Statewide Master Plan for tourism. However, the plan has not been updated since its initial publication despite the State mandate for periodic updating. As a result, it is presently woefully out of date. A new updated Master Plan would permit the Division of Travel and Tourism to better meet the ever-changing needs of the tourism industry. New Jersey is rapidly changing from a manufacturing state to a service state, with tourism becoming a major industry. A new Master Plan reflecting the changing demographics of the State and its tourists would greatly enhance New Jersey's efforts to promote its tourist attractions. Future periodic updates would also ensure that the State's efforts will be targeted toward the areas which would benefit most by them.

The Committee encourages the Division of Travel and Tourism to make use of the knowledge and efforts of volunteers from the tourism industry who are quite familiar with the status of tourism in the State to update this plan. An advisory board consisting of the six regional council chairman as well as the advisory members of the Assembly Select Committee on Tourism could be formed to aid the Division in its efforts.

2. *The Committee recommends that the Division of Travel and Tourism take an active role on issues which have a significant impact on tourism in the State.*

The Division of Travel and Tourism is encouraged to participate in discussions on the impact of, and the State stance on, issues that have a significant effect on tourism. The Committee recognizes that as the Division is now structured, it is dedicated only to the promotion of tourism and to lauding the benefits of travelling to and vacationing in New Jersey. Although the Committee recognizes the importance of this activity, it also sees the need for expansion into other areas. The Committee understands that the Division of Travel and Tourism cannot lobby before the Legislature and other State agencies. It can, however, provide position statements to these agencies and should take a more active role in critiquing current practices of the State, the federal government, and private organizations. The Division should make an effort toward pointing out practices which may have a detrimental impact on the State's tourism industry. Issues such as the off-shore incineration of toxic wastes, sewage dumping and overflow onto the State's beaches, poor transportation systems and onerous licensing and regulatory requirements are all areas which should be considered and commented upon by the Division. In embarking upon these activities, the Division of Travel and Tourism should be able to make use of the

resources of the Department of Commerce and Economic Development to address the problems and to formulate legislation for introduction which would alleviate them.

3. *The Committee recommends that the Legislature create the position of Tourism Ombudsman to address the problems faced by the tourism industry and the tourists.*

Because it is a State agency within the Department of Commerce and Economic Development, the Division of Travel and Tourism is precluded from lobbying on behalf of itself and of its constituents. Therefore, the Committee encourages the establishment of the position of Ombudsman for Tourism to bear the standard of tourism and to address the problems facing the tourism industry. Acting as an independent entity, the Tourism Ombudsman can address and act upon a variety of issues Statewide, and act as an advocate for the State's tourists and tourism vendors.

4. *The Committee recommends that the Division of Travel and Tourism revise its matching grant program and procedures to make its funding more accessible to tourism groups and the private sector.*

The Division of Travel and Tourism's matching grant program, by necessity, is operated on a State fiscal year cycle. Therefore, it cannot offer its grant awards until after July 1 of every year, when the State budget becomes effective. However, since many potential grant recipients operate on differing fiscal years, planning and coordination can become quite difficult. Another problem stems from the State practice of making payment only after the proposed tourism project is completed. Such a practice requires the recipient to make full payment for the goods and services received prior to State reimbursement. An organization which cannot afford the full cost of a project may therefore be precluded from submitting a grant application at all. A recommended solution to this problem might be for the State to issue vouchers directly to the billing agencies which would split their billing between the State and the grant recipient. In this way, the grant recipient would be required to provide only that portion of the bill (50 percent) which is not paid for by the State.

The Committee also recommends that the committee set up to approve matching grants include professional marketing people outside State government who are intimately familiar with the State tourism industry.

5. *The Committee recommends that the regional tourism councils be provided with funding to assist in the administration of regional activities.*

At the present time, the State's regional tourism councils operate through volunteer efforts. However, because of the volume of work, volunteers have been unable to devote the amount of time necessary to effectively administer the Division's programs. Because of this, the Committee recommends that funding be provided to each of the regional tourism councils to provide administrative support for the operation of their daily activities.

6. *The Committee recommends that the Governor's Tourism Advisory Council meet on a regular basis, and that the council be given greater authority.*

Prior to the time that the Assembly Select Committee on Tourism began to meet in January, 1986, the Governor's Tourism Advisory Council had met very rarely. Since the Committee's inception the council has begun to meet on a regular basis. At the present time, the council's authority extends only so far as making recommendations. The Committee would like to see this authority extended to implementing these recommendations, and encourages the council to meet at least on a quarterly basis or more frequently if necessary.

7. *The Committee recommends that the State investigate the possibility of developing a program to provide seed money for tourism feasibility studies.*

The Committee notes that a very serious impediment to municipally generated capital construction and economic development in the tourism industry is the lack of seed loan money to conduct feasibility studies and pre-development analyses of proposed projects. As a result, many very worthwhile capital projects never advance beyond the conceptual stage, and tourism development remains at a virtual standstill. In an effort to alleviate this situation, the Committee recommends the establishment of a revolving loan fund to provide seed money to communities contemplating the construction of tourism capital projects. Examples of such projects include convention halls, aquariums, museums and other tourist attractions.

PROMOTIONAL ISSUES

1. *The Committee recommends that State tourism promotion efforts be increased in the market areas beyond major metropolitan areas surrounding New Jersey.*

Presently, the State's major promotion efforts seem to be targeted toward New York and eastern Pennsylvania. The Committee believes that expansion into areas such as Canada, with specific marketing activity in Toronto and Montreal, as well as New England, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, West Virginia and Ohio would expand the State's

tourist trade. Such promotional efforts would facilitate increased market penetration and lure additional visitors to the State.

In addition, a public relations campaign conducted by State officials should be activated. Such a campaign would benefit the State at very little cost. State officials on national T.V. and talk shows are a wonderful advertisement for the State. Delegates sent to other states as ambassadors would make for better public relations and increased exposure. The State could even investigate the possibility of participating in activities which would succeed in placing its name in complimentary print around the country and the world.

2. *The Committee recommends that larger numbers of New Jersey State road maps be printed and made available for distribution by local and regional tourist promotion agencies.*

During the past year, the Committee has heard pleas from various public and private tourist promotion agencies for State road maps. Even though the map is one of the most popular pieces of literature sought by travellers throughout the State, it seems to be one of the most difficult to obtain. The 1986 State road map was not available until June, 1986, thus leaving travel agencies and chambers of commerce with no travel information to hand out until the tourist season was well under way and the year was half over.

The Committee notes that the State road map is the most widely used piece of literature distributed by the State and one item not likely to be discarded after the first reading. It is, therefore, a constant promotional tool for the many tourist attractions and sites the State has to offer. It also provides graphic instructions for travelling to these sites.

3. *The Committee recommends that the Division of Travel and Tourism be required to hold input hearings before making up its advertising schedule for the coming year.*

The Committee understands that at the present time, it is extremely difficult for local agencies to coordinate their advertising schedules with the schedule of the State because State schedules are not readily available. The State is encouraged to hold input hearings for local promotional agencies so that it can take advantage of their expertise and target market areas which are compatible with the actual market areas being reached by the local agencies. Such coordination would maximize the promotional dollars spent by both the State and the local marketing agency.

4. *The Committee recommends that tourist attractions be permitted to display their literature on State Information Racks for little or no cost.*

At the present time, the Division of Travel and Tourism has a contract with Statewide Advertising Distributors to provide information racks for literature about tourist attractions throughout the State. The State displays its own information at no cost. Other profit and non-profit tourist attractions may use these racks to display literature for a fee. Since many of the non-profit attractions cannot afford the fee, they are precluded from using this advertising tool. Thus they lose the opportunity to increase their exposure to New Jersey travellers. The Committee therefore recommends that the State underwrite the display cost and permit other tourist entities to display their literature on State Information Racks at little or no cost to the attractions.

5. *The Committee recommends that the Division of Travel and Tourism take advantage of New York-New Jersey Port Authority facilities to display and distribute information about New Jersey's tourist attractions.*

The New York-New Jersey Port Authority presently operates traveller information centers at Kennedy International and La Guardia airports where tourists may obtain airport maps, information about disabled access areas, parking rate fliers and other airport information. As a secondary activity, it also disburses "I Love New York" literature to travellers who request it. The Committee encourages the Division of Travel and Tourism to take advantage of this potential source of

information distribution and submit information about New Jersey for display at these locations. In addition, the Committee urges the Port Authority and the Division of Travel and Tourism to locate tourist information racks in Port Authority bus terminal locations where tourists travelling by bus would be most likely to pass.

6. *The Committee recommends that an "800" number telephone line be installed and operated on a 24-hour basis to increase the State's exposure to prospective tourists.*

The use of an "800" tourist information telephone number would greatly enhance the State's appeal and accessibility to potential tourists. Such a number, operable on a 24-hour, 7-day-per week basis, would provide information to curious visitors about the State's attractions at all times. This number should be included in all of the State's advertising media. The Committee recognizes that the cost of operating a toll-free number may be prohibitive, and that the Division of Travel and Tourism presently operates a toll line with a 24-hour, 7-day per week recording. If the cost of a toll-free line cannot be warranted, the Committee then notes that, at a minimum, the Division of Travel and Tourism should publish its toll number with all its advertising to optimize its use.

7. *The Committee recommends that the State participate in "consumer" shows in an effort to lure more tourists to the area.*

The Committee notes that trade shows which cater to travel agents and tour groups are essential to those areas which make extensive use of such marketing tools. However, many of New Jersey's tourist attractions do not use travel agents, and thus trade shows would be of limited value. However, consumer shows which are directed to the actual traveller could be a valuable marketing opportunity for the State's attractions. By providing booths at consumer shows within New Jersey's market area, the State could expand its exposure to potential tourists.

8. *The Committee recommends that the Division of Travel and Tourism attempt to entice additional amusements and attractions to the State.*

The Committee notes that State marketing efforts can achieve only so much. However, when supported by a group of strong, viable and popular tourist attractions, the State can benefit from the association of these entities with New Jersey. In addition, these attractions will possess their own advertising budgets to be used for attracting visitors to themselves and into the State.

9. *The Committee recommends that the State and all tourist vendors place major emphasis on promoting and providing hospitality to all visitors within the State.*

New Jersey is rapidly changing from a manufacturing state to a service state with tourism becoming a major industry. In order to support this industry and ensure its expansion, all New Jerseyans must become active participants in welcoming their visitors. Hospitality must become a major part of New Jersey culture at every level. Promotion may bring tourists to New Jersey, but it is the State's hospitality which will encourage them to stay longer and return often. If the State's citizens, businesses and governments do not respond to this need for hospitality, they run the risk of chasing away the tourism trade and endangering the economy upon which they have learned to depend. In contrast, if the State and its residents truly practice hospitality, they will see their tourism industry grow and thrive.

DEMOGRAPHICS

1. *The Committee recommends that New Jersey colleges be encouraged to provide tourism curricula and to offer college credit for specific tourist-related jobs.*

During the past few years, tourist vendors have had difficulty attracting summer and seasonal employees. The reasons for this are

varied. The number of youngsters between the age of 15 and 19, once the major labor source for seasonal jobs, has fallen sharply. Between 1980 and 1995, the real population of 15 to 19-year olds in New Jersey will decrease by 27 percent. During the same period, the overall population will increase by 10 percent. The State will have more customers, and fewer people to serve them.

Of those individuals who are left to serve, competing interests and opportunities have lured them away from tourism related jobs, which traditionally pay minimum wage. More and more people in this age group are travelling, attending special camps, or accepting more lucrative jobs in their hometowns during summer months. In addition, the cost of housing in a tourist community has risen so much during the past few years that young people cannot afford to live there.

According to a survey conducted by Atlantic County Community College, during the next three years, tourism-related jobs in New Jersey will increase by 30 percent. In anticipating this growth, the college has implemented degree programs in hospitality management, travel and tourism and casino management. The Committee acknowledges this trend and encourages other New Jersey colleges to introduce similar curricula, and urges colleges to offer course credit for jobs in areas such as hotel-motel and restaurant management or business administration. A program such as this may be able to provide students with valuable on-the-job training, while helping to fill the need for labor in tourist communities through the incentives of college credit.

CASINO GAMBLING

1. *The Committee recommends that New Jersey's casinos and other tourist attractions make efforts to communicate with one another and to coordinate activities with a goal toward expanding trade for everyone.*

Many individuals claim that much of Atlantic City's and the casino industry's growth occurred at the expense of other tourist towns and attractions. Until now the casinos and other New Jersey tourist attractions have operated fairly independently of each other. The Committee believes that the casinos and other tourist attractions can coordinate activities to jointly lure tourists to the State. If these entities market themselves correctly, they could benefit from each other's successes, and bolster each other during slower times. By joining forces, all of the State's tourist attractions could expand their market and become viable competitors in the worldwide tourist market. For example, the use of a package tour allowing the tourist to visit Atlantic City for a short period and other locations for a time, might encourage more tourists to visit all locations. Such cooperation would benefit both the casinos and other locations. In the advent of the imminent legalization of casino gambling in other states, such cooperative efforts and package deals might prove to be the deciding factor which spurs casino-goers to select New Jersey over another state as a possible

vacation location. In order to investigate this and other possible methods of fostering coordination among the casino and tourist groups, the Assembly Select Committee on Tourism will form a Subcommittee on Casinos to conduct public hearings on how casino executives and non-casino officials can cooperate on programs, promotions and activities, and benefit from each other's efforts.

REDEVELOPMENT

1. *The Committee recommends that the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority develop a formal master plan of operations and place particular emphasis on rebuilding the entrance to Atlantic City.*

The Casino Reinvestment Development Authority is responsible for providing low interest loans to developers interested in redeveloping Atlantic City and other southern New Jersey areas. The Authority is mandated to place its initial emphasis on revitalizing Atlantic City. The Committee notes that before it can conduct any major activity, the Authority should possess a formal master plan of its operations. This master plan should be the blueprint upon which the Authority bases all its activity. The Committee therefore encourages the development of such a plan.

The Committee also notes that the only roadway entering Atlantic City is severely blighted and is an eyesore to all who travel into the city. This appearance surely disappoints any visitor to the city who would expect to be greeted by a welcoming environment rather than boarded up buildings. In order to correct this, the Committee urges the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority to place particular emphasis on redeveloping Atlantic City's gateway during its initial stage of operation.

SUMMARY OF TOURISM LEGISLATION

AR-112

This resolution memorializes the U.S. Congress to accelerate its schedule for phasing out the dumping of sewage sludge by New York City and other New York communities at an ocean site 12 miles off Sandy Hook, N.J. and utilizing an ocean disposal site located 106 miles from New York City harbor.

The phase-out is not scheduled to be completed until at least December 1987, well after the 1987 summer tourist season for New Jersey.

This resolution calls for all dumping by New York to cease prior to the summer of 1987 at the latest. This action would greatly help New Jersey clean up its beaches.

The resolution is sponsored by Assemblyman Moran.

AR-119

This resolution supports the efforts of "Clean Ocean Action and Clean Water Action Project" to protect and clean up the coastal waters of New Jersey.

The resolution is sponsored by Assemblyman Doyle.

A-3252

This bill establishes the Office of Business Permits in the Department of Commerce and Economic Development. This office would ensure that the permit application processes in the State would be coordinated to provide for timely processing.

The bill stipulates that the office would serve as a one-stop service for information for businesses and other entities to inform them of whether a permit would be necessary to undertake a project or activity.

The bill requires the office to assist the applicant in completing, filing and tracking the permit.

Besides benefiting commercial and industrial activity, the legislation should prove valuable in improving the permit process for those businesses that operate on a seasonal basis for which time is of the essence.

The bill is sponsored by Assemblyman Singer.

A-3421

This bill requires the Division of Travel and Tourism in consultation with the six regional tourism councils and the advisory members of the Assembly Select Committee on Tourism to prepare a major revision of the State master plan for the growth of tourism no later than February 1, 1988.

The bill appropriates \$50,000 to facilitate the master plan update.

The bill is sponsored by Assemblyman Muziani.

A-3458

This measure creates the position of Ombudsman for Travel and Tourism who shall be a non voting member of the State Tourism Advisory Council. The Ombudsman will serve as a liaison between the tourism industry and State departments and agencies and provide a mechanism for responding to the interests and problems of the State's tourism industry. The Ombudsman will also be responsible for promoting legislative initiatives or suggestions for regulatory changes that would be more responsive to the needs of the tourist industry.

Under the present structure, the Division of Travel and Tourism cannot actively pursue such courses of action.

The bill is sponsored by Assemblyman Singer.

A-3418

This bill specifically stipulates that the Division of Travel and Tourism encourage municipalities, counties, regional tourism councils and other private or public promotional tourism organizations to develop and maintain innovative programs to enhance New Jersey tourist attractions by establishing and administering an annual matching grant program. The legislation explicitly requires that the Commissioner of Commerce and Economic Development promulgate rules and regulations that insure that the program is administered in such a way that the recipient of such a grant, at the time of its approval, receives half of the State's portion of the matching funds.

The legislation will reform the present system whereby the grant recipient has to make full payment for the goods and services received prior to State reimbursement.

The bill is sponsored by Assemblyman Moran.

A-3344

This bill requires the Division of Travel and Tourism to award grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$30,000 to regional tourism councils.

Currently, the six regional tourism councils rely solely on volunteerism. While the councils have designed fundraising programs, the funds raised are insufficient for the scope of activity taken by these councils.

The bill appropriates \$120,000 and specifically stipulates that the division weigh certain criteria in determining the grant amount to be awarded. The criteria includes such factors as the quality of the proposal and its likely effectiveness as well as a council's past efforts in stimulating tourism growth.

The bill is sponsored by Assemblyman Singer.

A-3417

This bill establishes the "Local Tourism Initiatives Pilot Program Act," creating the Local Tourism Initiatives Revolving Loan Fund. The bill appropriates \$2 million.

The measure permits any county or municipality to apply to the Division of Travel and Tourism for matching loan funds.

For each dollar appropriated by the county or municipality, \$3.00 would be matched from the revolving loan fund, up to a total value of \$175,000 in matching funds.

Such funds will be used by a county or municipality to undertake a feasibility study for a project designed to enhance the local tourist industry. The loan shall be at a low interest rate repayable on a schedule determined by the Division of Travel and Tourism.

The bill is sponsored by Assemblyman Muziani.

AR-116

This resolution urges the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority to emphasize projects designed to rehabilitate and beautify the entrance gateway to Atlantic City. While the relatively new authority is undertaking several housing rehabilitation projects in various parts of the city, the blighted entrance to the city presents a poor image to millions of tourists and convention visitors.

The resolution is sponsored by Assemblymen Palaia and Kosco.