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YORK COUNTY CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU [YCCVB] PRESIDENT  
WRITTEN TESTIMONY  
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY, ECONOMIC AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
[CERD]  
JUNE 3, 2015

Senator Ward, Senator Wiley and members of the Senate Committee on Community, Economic and Recreational Development (CERD) thank you for holding today's hearing on Pennsylvania's tourism industry. We appreciate your committee's work to ensure **Equitable Tourism Funding for Pennsylvania** by providing the opportunity for 54 Pennsylvania counties to receive the same benefits that other Pennsylvania counties currently have to invest in their tourism industry.

As you know, Pennsylvania's Tourism Industry generates Significant Visitor Spending, Jobs and Tax revenues for the Commonwealth.

Unfortunately, 54 Pennsylvania Counties are:

~ Limited by the current 3% room tax cap and

~ Competing at an unfair disadvantage since other counties raise and invest greater revenues

We appreciate your leadership to correct this unfair and unequitable legislative burden.

Did you know that the 54 counties impacted by HB794, generate \$15.5 Billion of tourism spending annually?

Providing equitable tourism funding for 54 counties will be a corner stone in an economic success strategy for the Commonwealth.

York County is credited with generating over \$907 million in visitor spending annually.

It has been 14 years since York County's room tax has been increased while four of our neighboring counties are enjoying the proceeds of a tax that is greater than ours and investing those funds to grow their tourism industry. We have collaborated with our County Commissioners, legislative delegation and tourism industry stakeholders on a plan to invest the revenues from a 5% local room tax.

Upon the legislative relief that you provide, York County will act immediately to increase our room tax to 5% and invest the revenues to benefit our community, tourism industry and our economy.

York County's delegation members have been amazing advocates for Pennsylvania's tourism industry.

Representative Ron Miller introduced room tax legislation in 2012

Senator Scott Wagner added a room tax amendment in 2014

Representative Keith Gillespie introduced HB794 in 2015

Pennsylvania's legislature surely understands that York County needs the ability for our County Commissioners to increase our room tax. And so do 53 other PA counties that are competing at a tremendous disadvantage.

Since the first introduction of legislation in 2012 to enable a room tax increase in 9 PA counties, York County has lost the opportunity to invest \$3 million in our tourism industry while our competitors are utilizing the proceeds from their higher room tax.

Thank you for providing **Equitable Tourism Funding Pennsylvania.**