

STATE SENATOR • HANSEN CLARKE • 1ST DISTRICT

Clarke Press Release

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Senate Passes Clarke Bill to Fund Michigan Tourism Promotion

Legislation will fund advertisements to attract tourists, businesses, and create jobs

LANSING-Yesterday the Michigan Senate voted to pass a bill introduced by Senator Hansen Clarke (D-Detroit) that would refinance the state's tobacco settlement funds to pay for tourism promotion through 2010. This is part of a three-bill bipartisan package to ensure that the state has adequate resources to promote tourism for the coming travel season, which will help attract out-of-state visitors and businesses, support local businesses and create tourism industry jobs.

"As Michiganders, we already know our state is one of the best travel destinations in the world," said Sen. Clarke. "But with summer right around the corner, we need to do everything we can right now to showcase our tourism industry for consumers in neighboring states as they start making plans for family vacations."

The appropriations for this plan would be funded from the 21st Century Jobs Trust Fund, which would receive an estimated \$60 million in additional revenue from refinancing bonds previously issued by the Tobacco Settlement Finance Authority. These funds would be distributed over the 2008, 2009 and 2010 budget years.

A private study commissioned by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation estimated that every dollar spent by the state on tourism advertising over the past three years brought in an average of \$2.76 of additional state tax revenue. The online measurement company Hitwise deemed michigan.org the most popular state tourism website in the country for 2007, averaging an 8.68 percent market share of online visitors.

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