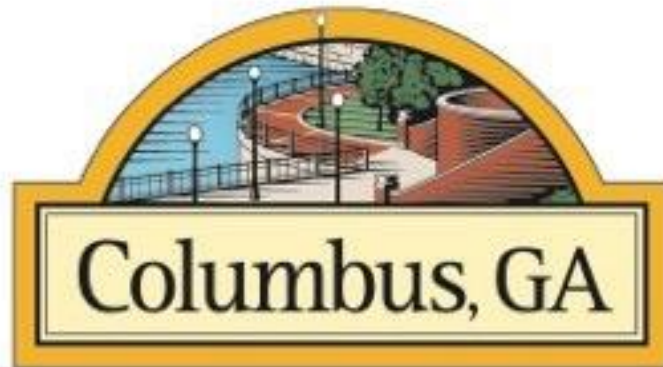


LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU
What progress has preserved.



Columbus, GA

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What progress has preserved.



THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF VISITOR SPENDING



2016 Legislative Agenda

Hotel Tax – *Background from the Lodging Tax Primer developed by The International Society of Hotel Association Executives (ISHAE) Lodging Tax Task Force, in collaboration with the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AH&LA):* Hotel/motel tax was originally created so that local governments would not have to bear the full burden of the cost of marketing to attract travelers. Through their contract with a Convention & Visitors Bureau, Chamber or other non-profit 501c6, a municipality invests in marketing their entire geographic area and all of its assets as a destination for leisure and business travelers. Hotel/motel tax revenue should not be diverted to non-tourism related purposes.

The Columbus Convention & Visitors Bureau supports monitoring and oversight of hotel/motel tax law, including changes or modifications to the existing tax code and the creation of new convention & visitors bureaus/destination marketing organizations; continued clarification in the code that defines the acceptable uses of the Georgia Hotel/Motel Tax and protects funding for destination marketing.

Policies:

1. Support efforts to increase Georgia's investment in tourism marketing funding to more effectively compete with surrounding southeastern states.
2. Support opportunities to create financial resources and mechanisms for sports event and marketing initiatives.
3. Support laws and regulations that ensure that military housing facilities are limited to official military use only.
4. Support modernization of laws regulating production brewers, brew pubs, distilleries, and vineyards to remain competitive with other states.
5. Support school-end and school-start policies that maintain a viable summer tourism season.

Priorities:

1. Oppose legislation that allows discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation or religious affiliation or practice.
2. Protect Georgia's hotel/motel tax dollars from policies that would erode funding for tourism/destination marketing.
3. Collaborate with other organizations and businesses to modify the \$5 hotel fee provision of HB 170 while supporting the transportation enhancement efforts.
4. Support laws and regulations that ensure equity in accommodations licensing and tax policy for short term and vacation rentals.
5. Invest in significant enhancements to the welcome appearance and signage at Georgia's interstate gateways and the modernization of the state's Welcome Centers.