

MISSOURI TAVEL COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE REPORT

From: Dale Amick 2/27/09

The Missouri House Appropriations Committee for Economic Development has recommended 23.7 million dollars for the Division of Tourism budget for the new fiscal year beginning July 1. That proposal now goes to the House Budget Committee for further review before going to the full House.

That figure is the same spending level as the current year's budget and the same figure recommended by Gov. Jay Nixon. The Division was one of the few state agencies not to lose state funding when the governor recommended his proposed new state budget last month.

However, it is expected House Budget Committee Chairman Allen Icet may seek to cut the overall state budget recommendations from the six House appropriations committees. And the Division's budget may take a hit if that occurs.

That possible further cut in funding for state programs and services may be due to the fact that Icet has expressed doubts about using federal stimulus money to finance ongoing state programs. The governor used federal stimulus dollars in his proposed state budget to help balance his proposed budget and help pay for ongoing programs.

Tourism Capital Days this past week was a huge success once again. Thousands of pancakes were served to lawmakers and their staff. And many legislators took part in "flipping" pancakes in the Capitol Rotunda. But more importantly, it was an opportunity for tourism industry representatives to tell their story to legislators about how important the industry is to the overall economy of the state.