

Missouri Travel Council Legislative Update

From: Dale Amick 4/1/10

The chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee is recommending the committee cut about 5.9 million dollars from House-approved budget for the Division of Tourism.

Sen. Rob Mayer, the committee chairman, with no previous warning recommended the committee approve about a 13.5-million-dollar budget for the Division. The House last week approved a 19.4-million-dollar budget for the agency. Gov. Jay Nixon had recommended a 20.4-million-dollar budget for the Division for the fiscal year that begins July 1.

Sen. Frank Barnitz, an Appropriations Committee member, held up a final decision on the Division budget until this coming week. Barnitz, a strong advocate for tourism, encouraged the industry to contact committee members in support of a higher Division budget level.

Other members of the Senate Appropriations Committee are Sens. Tim Green, Joan Bray, Tom Dempsey, David Pearce, Chuck Purgason, Scott Rupp, Kurt Schaefer, Yvonne Wilson and Jim Lembke.

If one of the committee members is your senator, it is encouraged that you contact that senator in support of the House-approved budget level for the Division and against the budget figure recommended by Sen. Mayer.

The lower budget recommended by Sen. Mayer may threaten the future of the local "co-op" program as well as much out of state advertising done so well through the Division.

The Senate Appropriations Committee is expected to make a final decision on the Division budget early next week. That decision then will go to the full Senate for further action. The legislature must finalize the budget by may 7.