



Dear Legislators,

We are writing you as a unified Washington Craft Beverage (spirits, beer, and wine) set of industries to ask for your strong support of HB 1123/SB 5251, which would reestablish Washington State's tourism promotion and marketing efforts. Our combined membership accounts for over 85 percent of the total craft beer, wine and spirits produced in Washington State. Together, our combined industries generate over \$6.4 billion in direct economic impact in Washington and provide jobs in every region of our great state.

As three industries that rely on tourism dollars to keep our businesses open, we know first-hand the importance and value of the tourist dollar.

HB 1123/SB 5251 sets forward a fair, responsible plan that is a true public-private partnership for the future of marketing Washington State to the country and world. The bill does so by:

Creating a funding mechanism for a Tourism Marketing Account:

- Beginning July 1, 2017, 0.1 percent of general sales taxes collected on retail sales of lodging, restaurants and rental cars will be deposited into the Statewide Tourism Marketing Account.
- Deposits are limited to \$5 million per biennium (every two-year state budget cycle) and are subject to private matching funds prior to expenditure.
- **The plan offers the potential for a maximum of \$15 million per biennium to be spent on the tourism marketing program**

Taking a smart, holistic approach to marketing Washington State

- A marketing plan and campaign that focuses on bringing more tourists to Washington and out to rural and tourism dependent counties
- Emphasizing outdoor recreation opportunities and designed to attract international tourists
- Crafted by a non-profit entity representing the geographic and cultural diversity of the state.

Keeping accountability and inclusiveness a centerpiece of all decision making

- Independent oversight of the industry-run program by a Board of Directors consisting of tourism industry representatives and a legislator from each of the four political caucuses.
- non-voting representatives from relevant state agencies including the Department of Commerce, Parks and Recreation Commission and the Department of Revenue

In closing, please support your Washington spirits, beer and wine industries and the over 1,000 businesses we represent by not only lending your strong support to HB 1123/SB 5251. The local distillers, breweries and wineries in your district thank you for your leadership and willingness to help market Washington State to the world and thereby strengthen our ability to be successful.

Cheers

Jason Parker, Washington Distillers Guild
Anne McGrath, Washington Brewers Guild
Josh McDonald, Washington Wine Institute