

MTGC Legislative Update – March 13, 2018

The 2018 Legislature is back in session and they have hit the ground running! The main goal of the legislative session will be adoption of a bonding or capital improvements budget bill. The Governor has recommended a \$1.5 billion set of projects which the legislature will examine when putting together their own bill. Additional priorities for this legislative session will include a focus on the sweeping tax changes passed by the federal government. The Minnesota legislature is looking to pass a tax bill this session to adopt conforming changes and avoid tax increases for Minnesotans. The updated February budget forecast predicts a \$329 million budget surplus. The Governor and legislature will debate how to spend these funds. Among the items vying for funding are the motor vehicle registration system (MNLARS) which became a complete mess and requires an additional investment to fix, legislation to tackle the growing opioid addiction epidemic and ways to address the recent reports of elder abuse and neglect.

Because 2018 is not a budget-setting session, we are taking the time to educate legislators about the value of tourism investments. Many of you have already been at the Capitol for various “Day on the Hill” activities or you will be over the next few weeks. When you meet with legislators, please take the time to say **thank you** for their support of tourism funding. In addition, feel free to share this handout with important tourism information and facts. [Remember, tourism is the “front door” to economic development.](#)

On Wednesday, March 14th the House and Senate committees with jurisdiction over tourism will hold legislative hearings regarding tourism in Minnesota. Presenting at these hearings will be:

- John Edman, Explore Minnesota Tourism
- Nick Leonard, Otter Tail Tourism and Economic Development
- Darin Rahm, Marshall Convention & Visitors Bureau
- Joe Henry, Lake of the Woods Tourism and Minnesota Convention and Visitors Bureau Association.

Included in the presentations will be examples of how the first rounds of major events funding grants have been put to use. Over the past few sessions, the Minnesota Tourism Growth Coalition (MTGC) successfully advocated for funding of this grant program. These hearings are a great opportunity to update the legislators on the value of these grant programs.

If you are at the Capitol, please plan to attend one or both of these hearings:

House Environment and Natural Resources Policy and Finance

8:15 a.m., State Office Building Room 5

Senate Environment and Natural Resources Finance

10:30 a.m., Minnesota Senate Building Room 1150

The hearings may also be broadcast on the House and Senate webcast, you can access the schedule at this link: <https://www.leg.state.mn.us/leg/multimedia>

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to [contact us](#).

Thank you for your support of tourism in Minnesota!

Sincerely,

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