

GREATER MADISON CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU  
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## MEMO

**DATE:** Thursday, November 07, 2013

**TO:** Mayor Soglin  
Greater Madison Convention & Visitors Bureau Board of Directors and

**FROM:** Community Relations Committee

**SUBJECT:** 2013 Assembly Bill 385 – Room Tax

**CC:** Deb Archer, President & CEO

The Greater Madison Convention & Visitors Bureau has carefully discussed and considered the proposed 2013 Assembly Bill 385 and we cannot support the bill in its current format and content.

Although we have numerous concerns about this proposed legislation, we do agree in principal to the following:

- As an organization dedicated to creating economic impact for our community though tourism, we agree that a minimum of 70% of room tax dollars (TOT) should be dedicated to tourism promotion and tourism development. Investing in bringing visitors into our communities provides a proven return on investment crucial to the economic vitality of our state.
- We fully support the need to clarify the definitions of tourism promotion and tourism development. We believe that the definitions need to address the various market segments critical to Wisconsin's tourism industry including, but not limited to, leisure, group, convention, corporate travel and sports travel.
- In addition, there should be a clear and verifiable reporting method to track dollars to ensure that they are being utilized as legislation intends. The reporting mechanism needs to provide transparency with reasonable standards established for its compliance.
- We also support the establishment of a remedy for disputes.

In its current form, 2013 Assembly Bill 385 does not address the unique situations inherent in the variety of communities in our state. We are also concerned about the unintended, and yet potentially detrimental, consequences of this legislation on otherwise strong relationships between municipalities, destination marketing organizations and other funding stakeholders.

We recommend a more complete analysis of the net consequences on effected communities and stakeholders be performed before this bill advances. We look forward to continuing the dialogue to create appropriate legislation that meets the needs of all of Wisconsin destinations.