

2008

MACVB Annual Report

08

# President's Message

Once again, our industry came together in 2008 on some very important issues. Additional promotional funding for Travel Michigan and Senate Bill 690, were top on the list. We rallied together in Lansing to testify and show our united support to the Legislature to provide \$45,000,000 in funding for Travel Michigan over a two-year period, 2008-2009. Thirty-million-dollars of that funding was slated for the state's 2008-2009 fiscal year, which began October 1, 2008. That funding allowed Travel Michigan the freedom of having a winter advertising campaign for the first time in at least 15 years. It also allows our state to have the first ever-national advertising campaign this year.

Our next endeavor as a united industry was again to rally in Lansing and testify on behalf of Senate Bill 690. This bill would permanently fund Travel Michigan to the tune of about \$30,000,000 per year. Senate Bill 690 did not come to fruition in 2008, but is back in 2009 as Senate Bill 18. This bill is exactly the same as SB 690. Please continue to make your Senator aware of the importance of Senate Bill 18. There are basically two industries that bring money into Michigan: agriculture and tourism. Senate Bill 18 would allow Travel Michigan to remain in the national marketplace, which would increase tourism to Michigan and put more money in the state's coffers in terms of sales and use tax revenue.

We have rallied together and attended the Michigan Travel Commission meetings. Thanks to the organization's coordination, our MACVB meetings this past year have been planned around the Travel Commission's meeting schedule. It is important that we continue this work to show our support to the Travel Commission for taking ownership of the Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan. Over this past year the Michigan Travel Commission has continued to work on the Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan. Their committees continue to move forward with the action items contained in the plan. We must continue to show our support by being visible at these meetings.

We need to continue to rally together with all of the tourism related organizations in the state of Michigan. It is imperative that we are one united front, because it has made all of the difference in the world for our industry. We all came together to support Post Labor Day school openings; tobacco settlement funding of \$15,000,000; and tobacco bond refinancing, which provided \$45,000,000 in additional one-time funding to Travel Michigan. We have much work yet to do and I am confident that we will continue to be successful as a team.

I am honored to have had the opportunity to serve as your president in 2008, and look forward to working with you in our future endeavors.

Millicent Huminsky  
Southwestern Michigan Tourist Council  
2008 MACVB President



## MACVB 2008 Board of Directors

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Millicent Huminsky  
Southwest MI  
Tourist Council

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Marci Cisneros  
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## Travel & Tourism in Michigan

The Michigan Association of Convention & Visitor Bureaus (MACVB) is the official voice of Michigan CVBs and has a vested interest in promoting and protecting travel & tourism in Michigan. Our Board of Directors and Legislative Committee have established a general policy that encourages active participation in the passage of pro-travel & tourism issues and the defeat of initiatives which could negatively impact travel & tourism in Michigan. The MACVB will seek to work within coalitions, such as the Travel Industry Coalition of Michigan (TICOM), to achieve our legislative goals. We encourage the Legislature to utilize our association for information about any travel & tourism issues under consideration.

## CVB Funding

Convention and visitor bureaus are professional marketing organizations and play an integral role in promoting travel and tourism and encouraging convention activities in Michigan. Very specific statutory formulas and procedures have been in place for over 30 years, providing Michigan CVB's with funding mechanisms for promoting their respective communities; the communities are dependent on this funding for promotional programs to grow their economies. The MACVB strongly believes our funding sources should be used solely for travel and tourism related marketing programs.

## Natural Resources

The MACVB believes that Michigan's natural resources are significant to both the economy and quality of life of residents as well as to the enjoyment and recreation of vacationers. The need for preservation, maintenance and improvements for our parks, our forests, our lakes, our recreational trails and all other aspects of our natural surroundings should transcend all political and geographic interests. Not only do we believe that a pristine environment has an obvious benefit to tourism, but that it also has a direct relationship to Michigan's quality of life and ability to attract new businesses to the state.

## Hotel Assessments & Taxes

The Michigan model of community marketing is respected nationally for its simplicity and effectiveness in empowering areas to chart their own destiny in travel, tourism and convention promotion. The current statutory caps on room assessments and taxes are reflective of an amount necessary to fund marketing programs without imposing an undue burden on the traveling public. The MACVB currently opposes any attempts to either increase or decrease these caps.

## Tourism Jobs

Employment in the tourism industry offers careers with endless possibilities to anyone willing to work, learn, and be service-oriented. The life skills learned by youth working in the service sector builds strong character and allows income for higher education or a better life. For the career-minded, tourism offers the 'American Dream', where hard work and ingenuity mean endless possibilities and earning potential. For the elderly, tourism jobs offer an opportunity to 'stay young' and 'stay connected' while earning additional income and imparting guidance and wisdom to their fellow workers. We believe that all jobs in tourism are meaningful and honorable and we are very proud to be a part of the industry.

## Tourism Promotion

As professional tourism marketers the members of MACVB are committed in their support of Travel Michigan's effort to take the award winning Pure Michigan message to a national audience while continuing to market to our most loyal supporters – Michigan residents. Research has repeatedly demonstrated as much as a three to one return in taxes for every dollar spent on promotion, mostly, within the same fiscal year. We believe this is a wise investment of General Fund revenues and should not require any additional taxes, fees, or assessments.

## Directional Signage and Outdoor Advertising

We believe tourist-oriented directional signage plays an important role in providing information to travelers. Current and future proposals restricting directional signage and outdoor advertising should in no way restrict a tourist's ability to obtain travel related information. We are not opposed to the expanded use of logo signage as long as it is fairly administered for all travel-related products.

## MACVB Legislative Committee:

The Legislative Committee of MACVB is co-chaired by Lee Hladki, CEO of the Greater Lansing CVB and Peter Fitzsimons, Executive Director of the Petoskey Area CVB. In addition are 15 Directors of CVBs from across Michigan who:

1. Completed the 2008 update of the Michigan Destination Marketing Organization Manual, which details all of the operational criteria for the management of a CVB in Michigan. A CD of the book was mailed to each CVB in the state regardless of membership.
2. Convened a meeting of all MACVB members, an attorney who specializes in CVB law, and two lobbyist firms to review all CVB legislation, discuss any needed amendments, and compare the results to the existing MACVB positions. Only minor revisions were required.
3. As a committee, and an organization, supported passage of SB 690 to put into law a consistent funding mechanism for Michigan tourism promotion. Also drafted a resolution template for distribution to all members to have adopted by their individual boards of directors and maintained membership in both the TICOM and TIME coalitions.
4. Began the RFP process to identify possible lobby firms to engage to specifically represent the Association's needs in Lansing. Continue to partner with the Michigan Lodging & Tourism Association to share in the cost of retaining the services of Muchmore, Harrington, Smalley & Associates.
5. Updated and distributed the MACVB Candidate Survey for all members seeking election to the Michigan House of Representatives. The report is to assist individual bureaus to determine the best pro-tourism candidates and for the PAC committee's analysis of fund distribution.
6. Continue to partner with Travel Michigan and the Attorney Generals' office to ensure all Michigan CVB's comply with the annual reporting requirements detailed in their enabling legislation.
7. Co-chairs continuously monitor developing legislative activity (new bills or revisions introduced in the House or Senate) and alert the MACVB executive leadership to any emerging and relevant issues impacting the industry and/or the MACVB membership

## Education Committee

The Education Committee is responsible for planning and coordinating MACVB's Annual Educational Conference. Their duties begin with sending out requests for proposals to member CVB's to host the conference, and end with the evaluation of the annual educational conference.

One of the primary benefits of MACVB membership is industry-related education. For the past several years, the Education Committee was granted allied education credits by the Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) for qualified seminars/workshops at the MACVB Annual Educational Conference.

This allows DMAI members to accumulate allied education credits for attendance at MACVB's annual conference. Additionally, the Board of Directors has continued to increase the budget for the Educational Conference to assure the associations' ability to attract a quality keynote or featured speaker.

MACVB members play an active role in the selection of topics and speakers at the annual conference. Members are encouraged to submit suggestions for speakers, topics and industry-related issues that would be of interest to their CVB partners.

The 2008 MACVB Annual Educational Conference was held at the Doubletree Hotel in Bay City, MI. The 2009 conference has been awarded to the Comfort Inn in Mount Pleasant, MI.

## Membership Committee

The Membership Committee is responsible for assisting in the retention of existing members and solicitation of new members. The 2008 membership included 45 Bureau CEO's, four professional staff members and six honorary members.

## Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee meets twice annually to research candidates for officers of the organization and to determine committee chairs.

## Bylaws Committee

The Bylaws Committee meets on an annual basis to review the bylaws on behalf of the organization. The bylaws were last amended in 2004.



Michigan Association of  
Convention and Visitor Bureaus

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