

NEWS



Data shows impact of post-Labor Day school start



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By: Jon Szerlag

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Tourism is Michigan's third largest industry, and for many residents July and August are the biggest vacation months.

Tourism leaders from across the state came together at the Capitol Building to release data from an Anderson Economic Group study showing the impact of schools waiting to start school until after Labor Day.

The study examined the school year calendar and tourism in the state, and specifically looked at the effects of post-Labor Day School start and year-round schools on Michigan's tourism industry.

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“The Anderson Economic Group Study presents undeniable evidence of post-Labor Day school start’s beneficial impact on tourism, families and our great state,” said Deanna Richeson, MLTA President and CEO.

The study found room sales for Michigan hotels increased by roughly 40,000 room nights in 2007 due to the post-Labor Day school start law. The revenue from this was between \$4.5 million and \$5.2 million.

The study also shows that the mandate increased tourism spending by at least \$20 million in 2007.

Senator Wayne Schmidt, R-Traverse City, said he grew up in the hospitality industry and understands the importance of a strong tourism industry on the economy.

“I recognize my duty is to make sure we have a strong economy and tourism is huge in that,” said Schmidt. “If we don’t have a strong economy...we do not have good schools, services or public safety. They all work hand-in-hand.”

The tourism coalition is asking lawmakers to address a loophole in the post-Labor Day school start mandate. The coalition says that the loophole allows public schools to begin their school year before Labor Day, which is during the top tourism season.

“The facts are clear,” said Richeson. “It’s time to close the Labor Day loophole and give parents what they want and our industry what it needs to grow and flourish.”

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