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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

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A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT - TOURISM AND  
DEVELOPMENT

Introduced By: Senators Lawson, and Coyne

Date Introduced: May 07, 2021

Referred To: Senate Housing & Municipal Government

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 42-63.1-5 of the General Laws in Chapter 42-63.1 entitled "Tourism  
2 and Development" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **42-63.1-5. Regional tourism districts.**

4 (a) The state of Rhode Island is divided into ~~eight (8)~~ seven (7) regional tourism districts  
5 to be administered by the tourism council, convention and visitor's bureau or the Rhode Island  
6 commerce corporation established in chapter 42-64 as designated in this section:

7 (1) South County district which shall include Westerly, Charlestown, Narragansett, South  
8 Kingstown, North Kingstown, Hopkinton, Exeter, Richmond, West Greenwich, East Greenwich,  
9 and Coventry to be administered by the South County tourism council, inc.;

10 (2) Providence district consists of the city of Providence to be administered by the  
11 Convention Authority of the City of Providence.

12 (3) Northern Rhode Island district consists of Pawtucket, Woonsocket, Lincoln, Central  
13 Falls, Cumberland, North Smithfield, Smithfield, Glocester, ~~and~~ Burrillville and East Providence  
14 to be administered by the Blackstone Valley tourism council, inc.;

15 (4) Aquidneck Island district consists of Barrington, Bristol, Warren, Newport, Jamestown,  
16 Middletown, Portsmouth, Tiverton and Little Compton to be administered by the Newport and  
17 Bristol County convention and visitors bureau;

18 (5) Warwick district consists of the city of Warwick to be administered by the city of

1 Warwick department of economic development;

2 (6) Block Island district which shall consist of the town of New Shoreham to be  
3 administered by the New Shoreham tourism council, inc.;

4 ~~(7) East Providence to be administered by an entity that shall be acceptable to the economic  
5 development corporation; provided that all funds generated in the city of East Providence shall be  
6 held by the Rhode Island division of taxation until such time as the city of East Providence elects  
7 to become a member of a regional tourism district at which time the monies held by the Rhode  
8 Island division of taxation shall be transferred to the tourism district or convention visitors' bureau  
9 selected by the city of East Providence;~~

10 ~~(8)~~(7) Statewide district consists of all cities and towns not delineated in subdivisions (1)  
11 through ~~(7)~~(6) to be administered by the Rhode Island commerce corporation established in chapter  
12 42-64.

13 (b) Before receiving any funds under this chapter, the organizations designated to receive  
14 the funds on behalf of the South County regional tourism district and the Northern Rhode Island  
15 regional tourism district shall be required to apply to and receive approval from the Rhode Island  
16 commerce corporation pursuant to guidelines promulgated by the Rhode Island commerce  
17 corporation. The corporation shall review the eligibility of the regional tourism district  
18 organizations to receive the funds at least annually.

19 (c) On or before January 1, 2016 and every January 1 thereafter, all regional tourism  
20 districts created under these sections shall be required to seek and obtain the approval of the  
21 executive office of commerce regarding the incorporation of common statewide marketing themes,  
22 logos, and slogans, among other features, prior to the release of lodging tax funds to the districts.

23 (d) Upon proper notice to the Rhode Island division of taxation from the city of East  
24 Providence and the Blackstone Valley tourism council that the city has elected to become a member  
25 of the Northern Rhode Island district, all funds previously generated in the city of East Providence  
26 and held in escrow by the Rhode Island division of taxation shall be allocated fully and in their  
27 entirety to the Blackstone Valley tourism council for the direct benefit and support of tourism  
28 activities within the city of East Providence.

29 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

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1           This act would include the city of East Providence in the Northern Rhode Island regional  
2 tourism district, and upon the city of East Providence notifying the Rhode Island division of  
3 taxation and the Blackstone Valley tourism council that the city has elected to become a member  
4 of the regional tourism district, then all funds previously generated in the city of East Providence  
5 and held in escrow by the Rhode Island division of taxation shall be allocated to the Blackstone  
6 Valley tourism council to support tourism activities in East Providence.

7           This act would take effect upon passage.

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