

Tourism Budget Estimates are positive for Industry

(Fredericton) Last week the Minister of Tourism and Parks (TAP), The Honourable Trevor Holder stood in the legislature to deliver the budget estimates for his department. For those who follow how government operates, the budget estimates are where the rubber meets the road. The Finance Minister delivers an overall financial picture and objectives but the individual ministers must create the mechanisms to make his mission possible.

The Tourism Industry Association of NB reviews many departments' estimates but pays especially close attention to the figures that come out of TAP. TIANB's overall view of the speech and the estimates is that there have been some positive developments in the Government's attempts to rationalize our financial picture while at the same time not creating a negative impact on our economic wellbeing. TIANB is encouraged to have a strong voice at the cabinet table to make sure that the tourism sector is given the proper weight it deserves. The tourism sector represents over 35,000 jobs, over 3000 businesses and generates almost 1 billion dollars in economic activity in the province. In fact, sector by sector, the tourism sector has a high demand for skilled labour and is hiring people on a daily basis; this when other conventional sectors are shedding jobs. "We are very encouraged that Minister Holder not only understands the importance of the tourism sector but also is able to communicate that to his colleagues." Says Réal Robichaud, Executive Director for TIANB. "For years we have been telling this incredible success story yet at times we are put on a lower level of priority for government investments. Minister Holder's speech indicates to us that we have the kind of advocate we need in cabinet. Maintaining the marketing budget and investing in the provincial park system while finding efficiencies and generating new revenue is the kind of practical approach we were hoping to see." Continued Robichaud.

The current state of the tourism industry in the province according to TAP is strong and showing solid growth. To continue to grow this sector, the government must make strategic investments stated Minister Holder. TIANB is in agreement with this message.

The Tourism Industry Association of New Brunswick acts as the provincial tourism and hospitality organization of the province, existing to fulfill the needs of its membership, in cooperation with both private and public sector partners. As a representative and industry driven organization, the Association provides leadership and direction, aiming towards making tourism and hospitality the leading and most viably sustainable industry in New Brunswick.

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