



General Assembly

January Session, 2019

**Committee Bill No. 192**

LCO No. 6161



Referred to Committee on COMMERCE

Introduced by:  
(CE)

**AN ACT CONCERNING THE REOPENING OF CONNECTICUT'S  
VISITOR WELCOME CENTERS USING VOLUNTEER STAFFING.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 10-399 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

3 (a) As used in this section: "Visitor welcome center" means the  
4 welcome centers, visitor centers and tourist information centers  
5 located in West Willington, Greenwich, Danbury, Darien, North  
6 Stonington and Westbrook, which have been established to distribute  
7 information to persons traveling in the state for the purpose of  
8 influencing such persons' level of satisfaction with the state and  
9 expenditures in the state and their planning for present and future  
10 trips to the state.

11 (b) Within available appropriations, the following measures shall be  
12 implemented to enhance the operation of visitor welcome centers:

13 (1) Each center shall make available space for listing events and  
14 promoting attractions, by invitation to the Connecticut tourism

15 industry, including tourism districts, chambers of commerce and any  
16 other tourism entities involved in Connecticut tourism promotion;

17 (2) The Department of Economic and Community Development, in  
18 consultation with the Department of Transportation, shall develop  
19 plans for (A) consistent signage for the visitor welcome centers, and (B)  
20 highway signage regulations for privately operated centers;

21 (3) The Department of Transportation and the Department of  
22 Economic and Community Development shall establish an "Adopt A  
23 Visitor Welcome Center" program, under which local civic  
24 organizations may provide maintenance, gardening, including  
25 wildflowers, and complimentary refreshments or any other type of  
26 service at a visitor welcome center to enhance the operation of the  
27 center;

28 (4) The Department of Economic and Community Development  
29 shall place a full-time year-round supervisor and a part-time assistant  
30 supervisor at the Danbury, Darien, North Stonington and West  
31 Willington centers. The responsibilities of each supervisor shall  
32 include, but not be limited to: (A) Maintaining a sufficient inventory of  
33 up-to-date brochures for dissemination to visitors, (B) scheduling staff  
34 so as to assure coverage at all times, (C) training staff, (D) compiling  
35 and maintaining statistics on center usage, (E) serving as liaison  
36 between the department, the Department of Transportation, the  
37 tourism district in which the center is located and businesses in such  
38 district, (F) maintaining quality tourism services, (G) rotating displays,  
39 (H) evaluating staff, (I) problem-solving, and (J) computing travel  
40 reimbursements for volunteer staff;

41 (5) Subject to available funds, the Department of Economic and  
42 Community Development shall place a seasonal full-time supervisor  
43 and a seasonal part-time assistant supervisor at the Greenwich and  
44 Westbrook centers. The department shall discontinue staffing at the  
45 Middletown, Plainfield and Wallingford centers, and shall, in  
46 conjunction with the tourism industry, seek contract workers to

47 provide tourism services at the Westbrook center when not staffed by  
48 the state;

49 (6) Subject to available funds, the Department of Economic and  
50 Community Development, in conjunction with the tourism industry,  
51 shall develop and implement initial staff training and conduct periodic  
52 training of full-time and part-time supervisors.

53 (c) The Commissioner of Economic and Community Development  
54 shall, in consultation with local chambers of commerce, develop a plan  
55 to recruit local volunteers to staff the state's visitor welcome centers  
56 and to reopen any closed visitor welcome centers. Not later than  
57 February 1, 2020, the commissioner shall submit such plan to the joint  
58 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of  
59 matters relating to commerce, in accordance with the provisions of  
60 section 11-4a.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	10-399

**Statement of Purpose:**

To require the Commissioner of Economic and Community Development to submit a plan regarding the reopening of the state's visitor welcome centers using volunteer staffing.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*

Co-Sponsors: SEN. SOMERS, 18th Dist.; REP. BOLINSKY, 106th Dist.  
REP. ROSE, 118th Dist.

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