

Meetings Mean Business for Wisconsin by Secretary of Tourism Kelli Trumble November 15, 2010

In her November 15th presentation, Wisconsin Department of Tourism Secretary **Kelli A. Trumble** outlined the state's "Meetings Mean Business for Wisconsin" initiative and its role in hastening the state's economic recovery.

Before the recession, meetings and convention market was the fastest growing segment of the Wisconsin tourism economy. However, companies have tightened belts, slashed budgets and foregone business travel and it has hurt the tourism industry.



Secretary Kelli Trumble (right), Wisconsin Department of Tourism, and **Linda John**, Executive Director of Visit Eau Claire.

The Wisconsin Department of Tourism, with the full support of the Governor, took matters into its own hands, creating the Meetings Mean Business for Wisconsin initiative to get the meetings and conventions business back on track.

The campaign encourages CEOs, presidents and decision-makers of companies headquartered in Wisconsin and those with substantial operations here to choose locations in Wisconsin for their company's conventions, trade shows, training sessions and board meetings.

Wisconsin companies have good reason to choose Wisconsin for meetings, like top-notch facilities that offer good value, the chance to highlight a corporation's facilities and headquarters' city, and the opportunity to involve more employees in productive face-to-face meetings.

It's also the right thing to do for our economy. If every business in Wisconsin would hold just one more meeting – 25 people staying just two nights – the state would realize close to \$16,000 for each meeting. So imagine how quickly the dollars would add up.

Last year travelers spent more than \$12 billion in Wisconsin, supporting 286,000 full-time equivalent jobs. And there is good news ahead for Wisconsin's third largest industry: the U.S. Travel Association is predicting continued recovery in the travel sector in 2011.

Wisconsin Tourism is hoping part of that increase will land squarely in the meetings and conventions corner. With a rebound in this market, destinations can start looking for lodging properties, both large and small, to be bustling again, along with restaurants, retailers and attractions.

"Our state has long been admired for its innovation, originality and pride and now is the time to build on that legacy by selecting meeting venues in Wisconsin," said Tourism Secretary Trumble.



Kelli A. Trumble is four years into her tenure as Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Tourism. Trumbull and her staff of 28 spend their days marketing Wisconsin to visitors and residents. She also serves on the National Council of State Travel Directors and on the boards of the Wisconsin Start Fair Park, the Wisconsin Sports Development Corporation and the Wisconsin Alumni Association.

Trumbull's credentials include nine years on the Governor's Council on Tourism, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Dells Visitor & Convention Bureau, and Founder of Sundara Inn & Spa in Wisconsin Dells.

Trumbull is a proud alum of the University of Wisconsin-Madison's School of Journalism. She and her husband, former Wisconsin Dells mayor and tourism business owner Ben Borchert, split their time between Madison and Wisconsin Dells.