



Lt. Governor Becky Skillman
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Lt. Governor Unveils Indiana Tourism Strategic Plan at Indianapolis Zoo

INDIANAPOLIS-Today Lt. Governor Becky Skillman unveiled *Destination Indiana: the Strategic Plan for the Indiana Office of Tourism Development (IOTD)*. Lt. Governor Skillman made the announcement at the Indianapolis Zoo. This is one of several stops planned in a week-long roll out of IOTD's strategic plan across the state.

"As we work to create jobs for Hoosiers, we must broaden the base of Indiana's economy. The tourism industry will play an important role in achieving our goals," remarked Lt. Governor Skillman, who oversees IOTD. "With growth in tourism, we will create economic opportunities for individuals and their communities."

Nearly 100,000 Hoosiers are employed by tourism-related businesses. Tourists spend around \$7 billion a year in Indiana, generating \$322 million in state government tax receipts and \$130 million in local tax receipts.

Lt. Governor Skillman highlighted four strategic goals for IOTD:

- IOTD will act as an alliance manager throughout the state. It will serve as a liaison bringing together different industry partners from across the state. Stronger partnerships allow for better leverage in developing programs and packages to strengthen Indiana tourism.
- IOTD will create development incentives to enhance existing attractions or create new attractions across the state. This will increase the number of opportunities to promote Indiana's tourism products and grow new tourism-related businesses.
- IOTD will develop a new strategic brand for Indiana. Research shows the "Enjoy Indiana" tagline and brand has been neutral. IOTD will develop a new brand highlighting the state's assets as a whole and produce image advertisements, based on research. The goal is to positively influence consumers' opinions and market Indiana's attractions.

- IOTD will expand its operating budget through creative partnerships. This office has one of the smallest operating budgets in the country. IOTD's advertising co-op programs and this year's popular Leaf Cam illustrate the ability to accomplish a lot with little money. Tourism officials will continue to raise the budget through strategic partnerships. Future collaborations that allow for in-kind and trade partnering will help IOTD grow its awareness and monetary resources.

"As we market Indiana as a destination, it's important that we build our brand from a neutral to a positive," said Amy Vaughan, Director of IOTD. "That will help us grow our leisure visitation at a rate exceeding our neighboring states. With Indiana's strong tourism product, we have a great opportunity to become a leading Midwest destination."

IOTD also uncovered the 2006 editions of its publications—Indiana Travel Guide, Play Pack, Indiana Festival Guide, Indiana Golf Guide and Indiana Travel Map. The office reaches millions of visitors through the delivery of these publications to more than five million travelers in over 1,000 distribution points.

Lt. Governor Skillman was joined by representatives of IOTD, Indianapolis Zoo and other Indiana tourism industry professionals to execute the public release of the plan.

The Indiana Office of Tourism Development was created earlier this year with the passage of Senate Bill 335. Prior to this development, state tourism efforts were housed in the old Department of Commerce. IOTD is now a stand-alone agency with renewed focus under the leadership of Lt. Governor Skillman.

Tourism Fast Facts:

- *Tourism attracts 58 million leisure visitors to Indiana each year.*
 - *Nearly 100,000 jobs in Indiana are tourism-related.*
- *The tourism industry generates a \$1.7 billion payroll in Indiana.*