

## **Press Release: PA ROUTE 6 EXEC DIRECTOR TESTIFIES IN FRONT OF PA HOUSE COMMITTEE**

PA Route 6 Heritage Corridor is a force in economic, community and business development for the 11 counties it crosses, PA Route 6 Alliance Executive Director Terri Dennison told the Appropriations Committee of the PA House of Representatives at a public hearing on August 21 in Wyalusing.

The Appropriations Committee hearing focused on the impacts of tourism and the Pennsylvania Heritage Area program. Dennison provided examples of how planning projects funded through PA Rt 6 have assisted the PA Route 6 Heritage Communities in developing long range plans that are being implemented. She highlighted the many marketing efforts that are undertaken with the support of the nine convention and visitor bureau (CVB) partners. The combination of marketing, preservation and development efforts have resulted in increased visitation and business opportunities, citing that 17 new businesses have started in McKean County alone because of the appeal of the PA Route 6 driving destination.

“When tourism as a whole across the northern tier of Pennsylvania is considered, the 2012 Tourism Economic report (released in December 2013) reports that the impact of tourism for all 11 Route 6 counties includes \$3.6 billion in visitor spending, supporting 28,000 jobs with a payroll of \$717 million,” Dennison said.

The morning session started with testimony from Jean Ruhf, Executive Director of the Endless Mountains Visitor Bureau, who urged the Appropriations Committee to increase the funding to market the state to travelers. “I must also take this opportunity to bring attention to state tourism funding, or rather, the lack of it. Pennsylvania is missing the boat. We went from an all-time high in funding for fiscal year 2000/2001 of \$44,285,000 down to our all-time low in this fiscal year of \$2,564,000,” Ruhf told the committee.

Jane Sheffield, President of Heritage PA, thanked the representatives for reinstating the Heritage Area line item in the state’s budget, adding that the funding is necessary for the Heritage Areas, such as PA Route 6, to continue their work in improving the local economy and supporting community and businesses.

Dennison’s complete testimony can be viewed at: [http://paroute6.com/press\\_releases](http://paroute6.com/press_releases)

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