



TOURISM COALITION of SOUTH DAKOTA

Spring Activities Around the Corner

March 2026



From Session to Statewide Planning

While the 2026 legislative session has officially come to a close, our work is far from over. With a large number of candidates now running for state offices, this is a critical time to stay engaged. I encourage you to attend local legislative forums and ask candidates where they stand on tourism. It's important that we understand who supports our industry and who will be a champion for it moving forward. We can't be everywhere, so we need your help. You are our eyes and ears across the state—

please reach out and share what you're hearing in your local races so we can identify where to focus our efforts and support.

Spring is always a busy season for TCSD. We will be heading to **Washington, D.C. for Destination Capitol Hill**, where we'll engage on key national issues impacting travel. At the same time, we are preparing for our **statewide media blitz** to elevate awareness of tourism's impact—be sure to read more about that in this newsletter.

Finally, help us continue to grow this coalition. Talk to your peers, connect with other businesses, and encourage them to join TCSD. It takes all of us working together to move the visitor industry forward in South Dakota. Thank you for your continued engagement and support.

Carmen Schramm - Executive Director

Sponsorship Opportunity: Tourism Impact Promotion - Friday Deadline!

We are seeking partners to help fund key materials that will be used in media visits and community meetings statewide. Sponsorship opportunities are available through shared or exclusive support of individual components, with branding included. Please review the attached **Tourism Impact Promotion Plan** for details on components, costs, and deadlines.

Your support will help us deliver a clear, unified message about tourism's impact and build the momentum needed as we do outreach leading to the 2027 legislative session.

Thank you to members who have made early commitments!



Governor Signs SB76

On March 24, Governor Larry Rhoden signed Senate Bill 76 into law at Rapid City Regional Airport, marking a significant investment in South Dakota's aviation infrastructure. The legislation authorizes the state's two primary commercial airports—Rapid City and Sioux Falls—to borrow up to \$15 million each from the state's Housing

[Read More](#)

Why We Track Legislator Votes

Each year, TCSD tracks how legislators vote on bills that impact South Dakota's tourism industry. This helps us better

understand where support exists, where additional education is needed, and how we can more effectively advocate for our members moving forward.

The attached scorecard reflects how legislators voted on the specific bills TCSD was actively engaged in during the session—it is not a reflection of their entire voting record.



[Legislator Voting Scorecard](#)

Shout-out to VCDC

Congratulations to the [Vermillion Area Chamber and Development Company](#) and the entire Vermillion community on two outstanding recognitions!



Vermillion has once again been named **“Best Small Town Arts Scene”** in the nation by USA Today, a testament to the creativity, talent, and vision of local artists, the community, and the USD College of Fine Arts.

Adding to this achievement, Vermillion was also honored as the **2026 Community of the Year** by the **South Dakota Governor's Office of Economic Development**. These accolades highlight the powerful role arts, culture, and community collaboration play in driving tourism and economic growth. Well done, Vermillion!

Infrastructure Fund at a 2% interest rate.

The bill signing, held beneath the airport's iconic triplane exhibit, included Rapid City Mayor Jason Salamun along with state and local leaders.

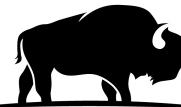
Governor Rhoden summarized the impact simply: *“More gates, more flights and more destinations means more visitors, more business and more opportunity.”* Mayor Salamun reinforced the statewide importance, noting that while the airports are located in Rapid City and Sioux Falls, the benefits extend across all of South Dakota, supporting travel, business, and economic growth in every region.

The loans will be repaid over 20 years, with funds returning to the Housing Infrastructure Fund—ensuring continued investment in infrastructure priorities. The program applies to metropolitan areas with populations over 125,000 and will take effect July 1, 2026.

[Read More](#)



South Dakota



AMERICA'S 250TH

STATEWIDE MEDIA BLITZ April 27 - May 8

National Travel & Tourism Week: "Postmarked Essential"

National Travel & Tourism Week (NTTW) provides a powerful, nationally recognized platform to highlight the value of tourism—but at TCSD, we're taking it a step further in 2026. By launching our **Statewide Media Blitz** the week before and during NTTW, we maximize visibility, build momentum, and ensure South Dakota's story is being told as widely as possible and to reiterate that travel is important.



This approach allows us to engage communities, media, and local leaders across the state with a consistent message: **tourism is a key economic driver that supports jobs, businesses, and quality of life**. Starting early gives us the opportunity to create stronger connections, expand coverage, and carry that energy throughout the week and beyond—turning awareness into understanding and long-term support for the industry. **This year we will be visiting Hill City, Deadwood, Spearfish, Rapid City, Mitchell, Yankton, Vermillion, Aberdeen, Watertown, Pierre, Winner, Platte and Sioux Falls** during our 2 week schedule. We will be sharing our blitz on social media daily so be sure to like and follow our page at <https://www.facebook.com/tourismcoalitionsd/>.

SOUTH DAKOTA SPRING CUSTOMER SERVICE SEMINARS

Rapid City - May 5 @ 9-10:30 a.m. MT - **The Monument**
Hill City - May 5 @ 1:30-3 p.m. MT - **Hill City Center**
Chamberlain - May 6 @ 8:30-10 a.m. CT - **AmericInn**
Aberdeen - May 6 @ 2:30-4 p.m. CT - **Aberdeen Community Theatre**
Sioux Falls - Thursday, May 7 @ 9-10:30 a.m. CT - **Monick Yards**
For more information go to sdvisit.com or click the button below.

SDVisit

We encourage members to take advantage of this great opportunity by sending your staff to attend. **Travel South Dakota, in partnership with the South Dakota Retailers Association**, is bringing in **James T. Robilotta** for the 2026 Spring Customer Service Seminars (formerly known as Spring Hospitality Training). James will be traveling across South Dakota **May 5–7**, delivering engaging sessions for frontline staff in five communities. Best of all, there is no cost to attend.

Reminder - April 21 TCSD Board Meeting

The TCSD Board of Directors will meet on **April 21 at 12:00 PM (CT)** at **Bradley's Bar & Grill, 514 N Main St., Mitchell**. Meetings are open to the membership.



U.S. TRAVEL
ASSOCIATION®

Thank You For Signing On!

Thank you to all TCSD members who signed onto the **U.S. Travel Association** letter urging Congress to ensure TSA officers are paid. By adding your voice, you helped reinforce the importance of protecting the frontline workforce that keeps our nation's aviation system safe and running smoothly for millions of travelers each day.

Your support comes at a critical time. As we look ahead to major national events and increased travel demand, ensuring a stable, supported TSA workforce is essential to avoiding disruptions, long wait times, and added strain on our industry. We appreciate your leadership and advocacy in standing up for travel and tourism. [Read letter here.](#)

UPCOMING EDUCATIONAL WEBINARS

H-2B Visas for Next Season: Learn About This Staffing Solution for Your Organization!

June 10, 2026 11:00AM (CT)
via Google Meet

Attend this webinar to help you understand how to successfully employ seasonal, international workers.



PABIAN LAW
Sustaining an International Law Firm for the Hospitality Industry



H-2B Visas for Next Season: Learn About This Staffing Solution

South Dakota employers — now is the time to plan for next season's H-2B visa petitions. Join TSCD for a webinar featuring Attorney Keith Pabian of Pabian Law. He'll provide practical guidance, timely insights, and strategic tips to help you navigate the H-2B process with confidence. Whether you're new to H-2B or already participating, this session will help you prepare early and stay ahead of key deadlines.

June 10, 2026 11:00AM (CT) [Register Here!](#)



Does Your Business Know The Signs of Human Trafficking?

Human trafficking can occur anywhere people gather — including in tourism and hospitality settings. It is not always obvious and often does not involve visible signs like physical restraints.

Traffickers frequently use force, fraud, or coercion, and victims may appear to be traveling with a family member, employer, or companion. Join us to learn how to recognize the signs and understand the role our industry can play in prevention and response.

July 9, 2026 11:00AM (CT) [Register Here!](#)



Tourism Coalition of SD | [Contact Us](#)

Tourism Coalition of South Dakota | P.O. Box 237 | Yankton, SD 57078 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email & social marketing for free!