

## Chapter 2 – Getting the Lodging Tax Passed

### **Section 1 - What's in this Chapter**

**Updated 2011**

This chapter contains brief comments regarding getting the lodging tax passed and forming a Political Action Committee.

### **Section 2 - Providing Information to the Public**

**Updated 2011**

A good understanding of your community is necessary before deciding how best to promote a local option lodging tax. Here are a few things you might want to consider.

- Since lodging tax boards can't lobby, support for the lodging tax needs to come from a Political Action Committee or through some other community group.
- A good rule of thumb is that your lodging tax board can provide all the information you want, you just can't ask for a specific action. In other words, you can tell people how great the tax is, how much it has done for the community, how much money tourism brings in, etc., BUT you can't ask them to vote in favor of the tax. Focus on educating the public about the need for a lodging tax and leave the persuasion to the Political Action Committee.
- Some communities stress that the tax is paid by the traveling public – not the community. Elsewhere, this approach causes a “taxation without representation” backlash.
- It always helps to show how the lodging tax dollars will be used and how tourist spending benefits all sectors of your community.
- When talking to the governing body of your county or city you may want to point out how much sales tax is generated by tourism spending. These figures are available from the Wyoming Travel Industry Coalition.

### **Section 3 - Forming a Political Action Committee**

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If you think that a strong sales campaign will be necessary to sell the tax to the public, you might want to form a political action committee or PAC. This is done by filling out the Statement of Formation by Political Action Committee form (see the Secretary of State website at <http://soswy.state.wy.us/forms/formfiling> and filing a copy with the county clerk. The Statement must include the name and address of the PAC, the name and address of the chairman and treasurer (these should not be current lodging tax board members), and the date and purpose the PAC was formed. The Statement must be filed within ten days of formation. The PAC must keep track of all contributions of \$25 or more including cash, goods or services. Statements must include the date of each receipt of \$25 or more, and any expenditure or obligation, the name of the person from whom received or to whom paid and the purpose of each expenditure or obligation. See W.S. S22-25-106 for more detail. Any officer of a political action committee who is responsible for filing a report and who knowingly and willfully fails to file or files a false report is guilty of a felony. See W.S. s22-25-108(d) and file a Statement of Receipts and Expenditures within ten days after the election.

For additional guidelines concerning political action committees, see Appendix 201 for a summary of Wyoming Statute 22-25-101-115.

See Appendix 201 for revisions to summary of W.S. s22-25-101 to 115.