



BUSINESS OWNERS ORGANIZED TO SAVE TOURISM

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TO: Grand Strand Area Businesses
FROM: Business Owners Organized to Save Tourism
DATE: May 17, 2009
SUBJECT: Please Help BOOST TOURISM & Fight Back Today!

As you attempt to recover the economic disaster that was the Spring Harley Rally, you're probably thinking there is nothing your business can do to generate sales and overcome economic woes. This is NOT one of those times. There IS something you can do to **BOOST TOURISM!**

The economy is in the tank. Tourism is down. State matching funds to attract tourists with advertising have been eliminated. Hotels, motels, restaurants, bars and hundreds of other businesses who benefit from the millions of tourists who visit here are cutting expenses and laying off employees in an effort just to stay in business this year.

In the midst of this crisis, local governments have made matters much worse by increasing taxes and passing new laws and even creating a new layer of courts designed to discourage hundreds of thousands of tourists from visiting this year. Most egregious, the Mayor of City of Myrtle Beach was successful in conveying his harsh message throughout the nation that all Myrtle Beach Bike Rallies were canceled. These outrageous statements and actions – aggravated by Horry County's long, drawn out process of reducing vendors and complicating the special permit process – have been tragically effective. Those of us who depend on these annual rallies to kick-start the season with the tremendous revenue are now painfully aware of the damage: As the Spring Rally comes to a close, business of all kinds suffered severe – if not fatal – blows. Thousands of bikers stayed away and many of those who came to the Grand Strand in spite of the problems have made it clear to business owners and the media that they will not return to bike events this fall or next spring. Worse, many have stated flatly that they will not return later this season for their annual family vacation.

The Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce and the Myrtle Beach Area Hospitality Association have been unwilling to support the thousands of businesses and tens of thousands of employees who depend in whole or in part on revenue generated from Motorcycle Rallies.

We are taking aggressive action and we are doing it now. **Business Owners Organized to Save Tourism (BOOST)** exists for a single purpose: to speak with **One Voice** on behalf of businesses and their employees. Doing otherwise will surely be fatal. The original founders of **BOOST** have already spent almost \$50,000 in marketing efforts, biker information programs and legal fees – and we're just getting started. Thanks to the financial support of businesses just like yours, **BOOST** will continue to work hard to salvage what is left of the 2009 tourist season and ensure that this never happens again. We will hold regular meetings of the business community so that you have an opportunity to speak up and speak out. We will continue our nationwide PR effort, revise and expand our all new websites (example - www.GrandStrandRallies.com). We will continue our fight in court, having retained legal counsel and filed a lawsuit against the City of Myrtle Beach. We will support elected officials and/or candidates who are sympathetic to our cause and have intelligence and common sense. Unfortunately, we cannot do any of this without you.

We desperately need your help. Won't you please complete the attached application and return it immediately. We have created a "dues" formula that we believe is fair and equitable and, unlike our local elected officials, we trust you to calculate your fair share and enclose your check made payable to **BOOST**. Thank you, in advance, for your generous support.