

SUBMITTED ONLY

**Testimony Submitted by Scott Brandi, President
Ski Areas of New York, Inc.
Joint Legislative Hearing: Economic Development
February 9, 2015**

I would like to thank Chairman Farrell and DeFrancisco and all members of the Committee and Legislature for allowing and accepting my written testimony relating to the review of the tourism programs within the 2015-2016 Executive Budget Proposal.

Ski Areas of New York, Inc. (SANY) d/b/a I SKI NY represents the New York State ski industry. With 52 ski areas New York has more ski resorts than any other State in the Nation. We stand fourth in skier visits with close to 4,000,000 visits each season. We employ 3,000 fulltime and 15,000 part time New York residents. Our annual economic impact is gauged at \$1.1 billion during the four months of winter when upstate New York needs jobs and tourism dollars the most.

SANY has developed close relationships with other tourism associations such as NYSH&TA, NYSTIA, CONY and we are an active member of the Tourism Industry Coalition. SANY also participated in the Governors Adirondack and Winter Challenge events.

The NYS Tourism industry has an annual combined economic impact of over \$54 billion. We are the 4th leading employer in New York with over 700,000 jobs. Investment in tourism provides a substantial return to the State. It is a fact that for every dollar spent on tourism promotion a return of eight dollars can be expected!

The New York Ski Industry has been supported by Empire State Development/I LOVE NY with commercials, advertising, promotions and distribution of information. We have no doubt that your investment in the New York State ski industry has helped us compete and grow.

Ski Areas of New York, Inc. supports at a minimum the Executive Budget Proposal as it relates to tourism funding. We advocate your consideration to increase the amount pledged, where else can you realize an 8 to 1 return on investment.

SANY also supports tourism programs such as the Regional Economic Development Council, the Matching Grant program and the continued efforts of ESD/I LOVE NY.

We appreciate your support and we stand ready to act as a resource to further develop tourism and continue together our efforts to grow our industry.

Thank You