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2013-2014 Regular Sessions

I N   A S S E M B L Y

June 20, 2013

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Introduced by M. of A. PEOPLES-STOKES -- read once and referred to the  
Committee on Tourism, Parks, Arts and Sports Development

AN ACT to amend the economic development law, in relation to creating  
the Empire State baseball trails program

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1     Section 1. The economic development law is amended by adding a new  
2     article 5-F to read as follows:

3     ARTICLE 5-F

4     EMPIRE STATE BASEBALL TRAILS PROGRAM

5     SECTION 181-F. LEGISLATIVE INTENT.

6                     181-G. DEFINITIONS.

7                     181-H. GENERAL FUNCTIONS, POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE COMMISSIONER.

8     S 181-F. LEGISLATIVE INTENT. THE LEGISLATURE RECOGNIZES THAT PROFES-  
9     SIONAL BASEBALL HAS HISTORICALLY PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE ECONOM-  
10    IC AND CULTURAL LIFE OF THE STATE. THE PUBLIC IS GENERALLY FAMILIAR WITH  
11    THE TWO MAJOR LEAGUE TEAMS IN NEW YORK CITY, AS WELL AS WITH THE BASE-  
12    BALL HALL OF FAME IN COOPERSTOWN. THERE IS MUCH LESS PUBLIC AWARENESS  
13    THAT NEW YORK STATE IS ALSO THE HOME OF THIRTEEN PROFESSIONAL MINOR  
14    LEAGUE AND INDEPENDENT LEAGUE TEAMS SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE STATE. GREAT-  
15    ER PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THESE TEAMS AND THEIR GAME SCHEDULES HAS THE  
16    POTENTIAL TO SIGNIFICANTLY ADD TO THE STATE'S TOURISM TRADE. THE MINOR  
17    LEAGUE AND INDEPENDENT LEAGUE TEAMS ARE SMALL BUSINESSES THEMSELVES, AND  
18    COULD HELP TO DRAW IN-STATE AND OUT-OF-STATE TOURISTS TO THEIR RESPEC-  
19    TIVE AREAS OF NEW YORK, THEREBY INCREASING HOTEL, RESTAURANT AND OTHER  
20    TOURIST RELATED SMALL BUSINESSES. IT IS, THEREFORE, THE INTENT OF THIS  
21    LEGISLATURE TO HAVE CREATED A PROGRAM WHICH WILL SYSTEMATICALLY PROMOTE  
22    NEW YORK MINOR LEAGUE AND INDEPENDENT LEAGUE BASEBALL AS A TOURIST  
23    ATTRACTION, BY ESTABLISHING A BASEBALL TRAIL PROGRAM. IT IS THE FURTHER  
24    INTENT OF THE LEGISLATURE THAT THESE TRAILS BE LINKED THEMATICALLY, AND  
25    BE CONSTRUED SO AS TO BE EASILY TRAVELED BY TOURISTS AND BASEBALL FANS.

EXPLANATION--Matter in ITALICS (underscored) is new; matter in brackets  
[ ] is old law to be omitted.

LBD02840-01-3

1 THE LEGISLATURE SEEKS THE CREATION OF ITINERARIES TO AID TRAVELERS ALONG  
2 BASEBALL TRAILS, WHICH ALSO LINK TOGETHER OTHER ATTRACTIONS AND VENUES  
3 ALONG SAID TRAILS IN ORDER TO ATTRACT VISITORS WITH A SIMPLE AND EFFI-  
4 CIENT TRAVEL PLAN. FURTHER IT IS THE INTENT OF THIS LEGISLATURE TO SEE  
5 THAT THESE TRAILS ARE ADEQUATELY SIGNED SO THAT TRAVELERS MAY INDEPEND-  
6 ENTLY FOLLOW THE TRAIL WITH EASE.

7 S 181-G. DEFINITIONS. AS USED IN THIS ARTICLE THE FOLLOWING DEFINI-  
8 TIONS SHALL APPLY:

9 1. "BASEBALL TRAIL" SHALL MEAN A SERIES OF PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL  
10 VENUES IDENTIFIED BY THE COMMISSIONER, WHICH MAY BE LINKED BY GEOGRAPHIC  
11 PROXIMITY AND ALIGNMENT, AND GAME SCHEDULES.

12 2. "BASEBALL PASSPORT" SHALL MEAN A BOOKLET OR OTHER PUBLICATION,  
13 WHICH IS SPECIFIC TO THE PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL VENUES AND GAMES OR  
14 SURROUNDING ATTRACTIONS ON A BASEBALL TRAIL, AND MAY INCLUDE DISCOUNTS  
15 AND OTHER INCENTIVES RELATED TO ATTENDING BASEBALL GAMES AND VISITING  
16 THE BASEBALL VENUES AND ATTRACTIONS ON THE BASEBALL TRAIL.

17 S 181-H. GENERAL FUNCTIONS, POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE COMMISSIONER. 1.  
18 THE COMMISSIONER SHALL DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN "I LOVE NY BASEBALL"  
19 PROMOTION PROGRAM. THE COMMISSIONER, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE COMMISSION-  
20 ER OF PARKS, RECREATION AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND ANY LOCAL GOVERN-  
21 MENT OFFICIAL OR ENTITY, SHALL IDENTIFY A SERIES OF BASEBALL VENUES AND  
22 GAMES TO BE PART OF A BASEBALL TRAIL. NO FEWER THAN TWO BASEBALL TRAILS  
23 SHOULD BE IDENTIFIED FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE PROGRAM. IN IDENTIFYING  
24 SPECIFIC VENUES AND GAMES TO BE INCLUDED ON A BASEBALL TRAIL, SPECIAL  
25 CONSIDERATION SHALL BE GIVEN TO THOSE TRAILS WHICH PROMOTE MINOR LEAGUE  
26 AND INDEPENDENT LEAGUE BASEBALL. SPECIAL CONSIDERATION SHALL ALSO BE  
27 GIVEN TO TRAILS WHICH CAN BE LINKED TO SURROUNDING ARTS, CULTURAL,  
28 HISTORICAL, ENTERTAINMENT OR OTHER TOURISM DESTINATIONS OR EXHIBITS OF  
29 INTEREST TO TRAVELERS.

30 2. THE COMMISSIONER SHALL CAUSE TO BE DEVELOPED BASEBALL VACATION  
31 ITINERARIES BASED ON SPECIFIC BASEBALL TRAILS, WHICH SHALL IDENTIFY FOR  
32 VISITORS BASEBALL GAMES AND SURROUNDING ATTRACTIONS, RESTAURANTS, LODG-  
33 ING AND OTHER EXHIBITS OR PLACES OF ENTERTAINMENT AS MAY BE A PART OF  
34 THE THEME LINKING THE BASEBALL VENUES ON THE BASEBALL TRAIL.

35 3. THE COMMISSIONER SHALL WORK TO DEVELOP DISCOUNT PACKAGES FOR SUCH  
36 BASEBALL TRAILS, WHICH MAY INCLUDE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A BASEBALL PASS-  
37 PORT.

38 4. NOTHING SHALL PRECLUDE THE COMMISSIONER FROM CONTRACTING WITH AN  
39 INDEPENDENT VACATION OR TRAVEL PACKAGE COMPANY TO HELP DEVELOP BASEBALL  
40 VACATION PACKAGES ALONG A BASEBALL TRAIL.

41 S 2. This act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall  
42 have become a law.