

Silent Auction at Visit NC Conference

The Tourism Education Foundation of NC will hold its annual [Silent Auction](#) at the [Visit NC Tourism Conference](#) on March 6-8, 2023 in Asheville.

Click [here](#) to learn more about the Foundation's Silent Auction.

The Tourism Education Foundation of North Carolina is a non-profit corporation established by the NC Travel Industry Association.

The auctions proceeds will be designated towards academic scholarships and continuing education programs for North Carolina's tourism industry professionals and students.

NCTIA's Chelena Guest on Visit NC Panel

NCTIA Executive Director Vince Chelena will be a featured speaker during the Visit NC Xpress Session on Wednesday, March 7 from 10:10-10:40AM.

Chelena will be joined on stage by NC Restaurant & Lodging Association Executive Director Lynn Minges to discuss statewide efforts regarding workforce development and addressing the staffing needs of the hospitality industry.

Click [here](#) for a full conference agenda.

NCTIA All Smiles for Happy Hour Bill



Bipartisan legislation proposed by Representatives [Jason Saine \(R-Lincoln\)](#), [Allison Dahle \(D-Wake\)](#), [David Willis \(R-Union\)](#), and [Zack Hawkins \(D-Durham\)](#) (photos left to right) would allow restaurants and bars to offer its patrons discounts on alcohol drinks during the day. NCTIA supports the bill.

These times for discounted drinks are called happy hours and they have been illegal in North Carolina since 1985, a year after the National Minimum Drinking Age Act raised the drinking age to 21. Discounting a drink for an entire day is legal as is reducing the price for restaurant food.

[House Bill 94 \(ABC Laws/Local Sales Option\)](#) would essentially reverse the happy hour ban for drinks in the state, however with a twist, according to NCTIA Executive Director Vince Chelena.

"Rep. Saine and the bill sponsors are giving local governments the option of allowing happy hours," said Chelena. "If approved by the local government, a restaurant or bar would apply for a permit that costs \$100."

The legislation would also allow for the advertising of drink specials.

HB94 has been referred to the House [Alcoholic Beverage Control Committee](#) and if favorable, it goes to the [Finance Committee](#), and then the [Committee on Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House](#).

Rep. Saine told [WRAL](#) this past week that the bill will be debated between legislators who insist public safety improves with less alcohol availability and supporters of the bill who want to modernize the state's alcohol laws, which were written during the Prohibition era.



However, Rep. Saine is optimistic about the bill's chances, according to his [WRAL quote](#). "We've gone in the last two decades from what I'd call the 'Hell No' caucus, where they wouldn't go for anything, to now, we can actually have conversations about it."