



NC TRAVEL NEWS

A weekly newsletter on North Carolina General Assembly news relevant to the North Carolina tourism industry

Sen Todd Johnson at NCTIA Conference



Sen. Todd Johnson (R-Union) is confirmed as a guest speaker at the NCTIA NC Tourism

Leadership Conference on November 16-17 at the Charlotte Convention Center.

Click [here](#) to register for the conference.

Sen. Johnson, who co-chairs the Senate Commerce Committee, will be awarded the 2022 NCTIA Legislator of the Year Award at the Legislative Session on Thursday, November 17 and will participate in a 2023 General Assembly preview discussion led by NCTIA lobbyists Brian Lewis and Skye David from 1-2:30pm.

"NCTIA welcomes Senator Johnson to our conference and we look forward to honoring him for the legislative work he's done to modernize alcohol laws throughout the state," said NCTIA Executive Director Vince Chelena. "Senator Johnson was also an early champion for NCTIA's workforce development project funded by the General Assembly. Additionally, he worked with our industry to make elevators safer in short-term rental homes."

Esports Industry Good for NC Tourism

Esports (electronic sports) is a growing industry in North Carolina and with recent investments by the General Assembly in the last budget, the state is betting on its growth.

Esports feature video game players competing with one another in organized tournament style play for big winnings.

"It is predicted that the esports industry will reach \$1.6 billion by 2024," said NCTIA Executive Director Vince Chelena. "We've already seen premium tournaments in North Carolina and more are coming. Our destinations have a golden opportunity to attract these exciting games to cities across the state."

One of those tournaments was the Halo Championship Series hosted at the the Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau where more than 2,600 people attended the event, resulting in \$1.3 million in direct visitor spending.



Chelena credits the work of the General Assembly, specifically Rep. Jason Saine (R-Lincoln), for having the foresight to see esports as a boon to the North Carolina tourism industry. Rep. Saine is the senior budget writer in the NC House and is a video game enthusiast.

He told NCTIA members last year that a trip to Brooklyn, NC years ago with his son to see an esports tournament gave him the idea that North Carolina should host similar events. "I walked into the Brooklyn arena and it was full of gamers, fans, parents, vendors, and advertisers and I thought about the effect the tournament was having on nearby hotels and restaurants," he said. "Then I thought about how we could host all of this in North Carolina."



PNC Arena in Raleigh hosted the Apex Legends Global Series championship in Raleigh this past summer. \$2 million in prize money was at stake for this tourney. In lower photo, Rep. Jason Saine was seen at the tourney. (Photo credits: North State Journal)