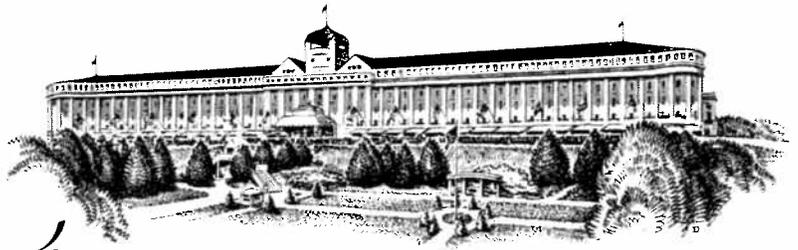


# Grand Hotel



WORLD'S LARGEST SUMMER HOTEL



MACKINAC ISLAND

R. D. MUSSER, III, *President*

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF

HB 5017-18  
HB 5088-89

DAN MUSSER, III  
GRAND HOTEL

before the

House Tourism-Outdoor Recreation & Natural Resources Committee

Tuesday, June 16, 2009

**ORAL STATEMENT OF R. DANIEL MUSSER III,  
PRESIDENT, GRAND HOTEL  
MACKINAC ISLAND, MICHIGAN  
HOUSE TOURISM COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY, JUNE 16, 2009**

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 5017 and 5018 and its importance to the tourism industry in the state of Michigan.

My name is Dan Musser and I am President of Grand Hotel. It is the 76<sup>th</sup> year my family has owned and operated the historic summer resort, and both my father and I feel that the Pure Michigan advertising campaign is the best state marketing campaign we have ever seen in our careers.

We commend the State for the commitment they have made to the tourism industry, allocating \$30 million dollars to fund the Pure Michigan advertising message. This national campaign, while impressive, will lose its effectiveness if it is only a one shot deal. We need to reinforce the message that is out there by continuing to spread the word on all of the tourism options available throughout our state, and in my area of northern Michigan and Mackinac Island.

We need the campaign to continue now more than ever so that we are in a position when the economy rebounds to reap the benefits.

Historically the Michigan resident base has generated 70% of total tourism outcomes. But that base is struggling with the lasting impact of a multi-year recession. As a result, hotel occupancy in Michigan is the weakest in the nation and with the top two industries, manufacturing and agriculture, struggling, it is imperative that we protect and support tourism and the dollars it brings to the state. In other words, there's never been a more important time to take the Pure Michigan message into the states with economies stronger than ours and bring their residents to travel here.

The travel industry continues to be extremely important to the economic recovery of Michigan. The next steps you take will determine the viability and visibility of Michigan as a vacation destination for much of the surrounding states and nation. This legislation is key to exposing the nation to the wide variety of tourism options that Michigan holds, from the museums and sporting options in and around the Detroit area and lower Michigan, to our wide variety of winter sporting locations and options, to the beauty of Northern Michigan and Mackinac Island. Tourism will be key to Michigan's recovery and this bill will assist in making sure that additional jobs are created while existing jobs are protected.

Studies have shown that this is a wise investment with each dollar spent returning \$2.00 to \$3.00 of new sales tax revenue to the state. It continues to be a smart investment in business in Michigan that will pay for itself as well as support jobs throughout the state.

Unfortunately, based on the current economic climate, we are set to experience the lowest occupancy levels since I have been affiliated with Grand Hotel. The beauty of Mackinac Island has not changed, the grandeur of our facility has not changed, and the quality of the food we serve is as good as ever. We are in a position that we have to get the word out about the value of the Grand Hotel experience, the Mackinac Island experience, the state of Michigan experience, and the best way to do that is to continue to fund the Pure Michigan campaign to bring additional revenue and attention to the huge value and variety travelers have in this state.

Thank you again for your time and attention to this very important piece of legislation.